

# UNDERCOVER POLICING INQUIRY

T1P4

[Redact]

BEFORE:

SIR JOHN MITTING

(CHAIRMAN)

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COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

MR DAVID BARR QC

MS DAISY MONAHAN

SOLICITOR TO THE INQUIRY

MR PAUL BISHOP

SECRETARY TO THE INQUIRY

MS CECILIA FRENCH

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MS AMY MANNION and MS GEORGINA BLOWER appeared on behalf of MPS-CL.

MR OLIVER SANDERS QC and MS CATHERINE COLLINS appeared on behalf of MPS-DL.

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PROCEEDINGS

DAY ONE

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MR FERNANDES      Thank you, HN21. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN            Thank you. We can refer to everybody by their real names. We are in closed session, so you do not have the awkwardness of always being referred to as HN21. Mr Barr.

MR BARR             Thank you, Sir. Could you give us your full name, please?

A                      *[Redact]*

Q                      You have provided a witness statement to the Inquiry dated *[Redact]* November 2019. I have been shown a letter written on your behalf by your legal team seeking to make three amendments to your witness statement.

A                      Yes.

Q                      The first of those is a correction to para.5. *[Redact] [Gist: HN21 provided an update to information in his original WS.]*

A                      That is correct, Sir.

Q                      The second correction is to para.120, and is it right that you wish to amend the name *[Redact]*?

A                      That is correct, Sir.

Q                      And the third amendment, or series of amendments, is also to para.120 and it is to the effect that your recollection now is that you had sexual relations with one woman and not as originally described with two?

A                      That is correct.

Q                      Subject to those corrections, are the contents of your witness statement true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief?

A                      It is.

Q                      I am going to start, first of all, by trying to anchor the start and finish dates of your deployment a little bit more precisely than they are set out in your witness statement. We have a document in the bundle -- for those who need the reference, it is at tab 4 -- and it suggests that you were transferred into the SDS on *[Redact]*.

A                      That is correct.

Q We have got a document in the bundle, which is at tab 2, which suggests -- it is one of your annual appraisals -- it suggests that you were engaged in a sensitive area and had been since [Redact]. Does that accord with your recollection as to your date of deployment?

A That is correct, Sir.

[Redact]

Q Right. I am going to move now to your training. You tell us that you can recall there being a folder in the back office. Could you help us a little bit with the size and appearance of that folder?

A Sorry, I recollected it was quite a large folder and it consisted of lots of not reports but they were notations from previous officers going back to the start of SDS about tradecraft basically, what is now known as tradecraft. I can't remember exactly what the folder looked like, but it wasn't categorised. It was literally you picked it up and looked at it and had a read and you could ask questions about it, but I can't remember exactly what it would have been.

Q Do you know whether that was a new publication or was it your impression it had been there for some time?

A I think it had been there for some time, judging by the contents.

Q And how certain are you of your recollection about the existence of this document?

A I am certain.

Q Can you help us with whether it gave any guidance about sexual matters?

A I am trying to recollect whether it did or not. I would ... I am trying to recollect. I don't think it actually did. It was more to do with tradecraft.

Q The Inquiry is in possession of a later document, or a document which we understand to have been generated later, which had some advice to the effect of "avoid sexual relationships if possible, but, if unavoidable, make any relationship fleeting and disastrous". Can you recall any advice to that effect?

A The advice that was given, maybe not in document form, was "Don't get involved with anybody if you could avoid it".

Q Was there any advice as to what to do if you could not avoid it?

A No, it was left up to your own discretion.

Q Did the folder give any advice about positions of responsibility within target groups?

A There was, I am trying to recollect now from the folder, but most of the guidance in the folder was a reference book and you expanded on the points that were made in there with experienced officers who were in the field and with the SDS management. From my recollection, it was that you got involved but you didn't get into positions of authority where you were making decisions, you know that you were actually producing the decisions to take action in demonstrations etc., etc.

Q Did it give any guidance about participation in crime?

A The guidance, again, I don't recollect that it was in writing but there was the constant reminder not to be what we would call participating informally, you know, being involved in action, deciding to commit a crime. You were told to steer well clear of that, and that was the whole point about coming below the decision-making process.

Q Was there any guidance about the particular group that you ended up infiltrating, [Redact] [Gist: namely the Socialist Workers' Party]?

A Yes, I read up on a lot of their publications and spoke to the officer -- I am trying to remember who the officer was [Redact] to get an idea of their organisation, their structure and so, therefore, this guidance built up, an advice built up over the time I was in the back office and reading Special Branch reports and publications. [Redact]

Q In a nutshell, what was the practical advice that was given to you by your predecessors [Redact]?

A It was nothing specific. It was more generic, in the fact that you were going into a particular group, which was revolutionary socialist, but it wasn't as extreme as the Maoists and it wasn't so regimented as anything to do with the Communist Party of Great Britain. You got an idea of the general makeup of it, that there was a lot of students and lecturers etc. and very few working class people apart from those up in, up in the North. So, it was, it was a general advice on what the makeup was, but it focused on what they were about to do with public order and their organisation.

Q Thank you. You tell us in your witness statement that, at the end of your deployment, you added to the folder----

A Yes.

Q -- with some examples of when your cover identity was almost compromised or was at risk of being compromised. Can you recall what specific incident you added to the folder?

A It wasn't really historic. It sounds very pathetic, but my identity was the [Redact] and my birthday is [Redact] and I was asked quite casually what star sign I was and I nearly came out with [Redact], but I can't remember for the life of me what [Redact] was, so I put a little notation in there just saying "If your date of birth is different, it does sound very strange for a revolutionary Socialist Party, but star signs are quite important".

Q Can you recall whether there were any other incidents that you added to the folder?

A I can't. I can't really recall.

Q You tell us in your witness statement that [Redact]---

A Yes.

Q -- was identified to you as a contact who might be able to assist you during the early days of your deployment. Can you recall who put you in touch with [Redact]?

A It would be one of the management team.

Q So one of the management team within the SDS?

A One of the management team, probably one of the DIs. It could have been [Redact] but everybody who went out and were in the back office had somebody who was in the field with experience and could guide you on the practicalities and some of the technical issues that you needed to do just to establish your cover.

Q Was [Redact] helpful?

A Very helpful, a very experienced officer, very generous, very kind and, on top of that, he was available for you 24, 24/7 if you could get in contact with him.

Q And what kind of assistance was he able to give you?

A Well, there were a couple of times whereby, when you first started to get into the group, you gave a debrief to him about some of the things that you had done and some of the questions you had asked and he was very helpful in the fact of saying "Don't try and push yourself too hard, just be like it would be like you joined any other organisation, take a while to get in there" and not to display your cover straight out. "If you don't need to tell somebody about something, don't do it" and he also went into other things like [Redact] the time. So, it was both ... it wasn't so much to do with the idea to do with [Redact], so he couldn't advise me on that. It was more to do with the practicalities of the way I was going to proceed through events in the next few years.

Q You knew which group he had been deployed into?

A Yes, I did, yes.

Q *[Redact]*?

A Very much. Yes, very much so, Sir. I did understand I came to find that out through practical experience *[Redact]*.

Q Yes.

Q I am going to move now to your cover identity. You tell us that you adopted the name of a child who had died *[Redact]*.

A That is correct.

Q And you tell us that your recollection is that somebody else found that name for you. Is that right?

A That is correct. It was somebody in the office who, in those days, it was paper, a paper trail. *[Redact]*. I understand that one of the previous field officers had been compromised and that this was a way of not altering but adapting the identity.

Q Did you know which previous field officer had been compromised?

A It was Rick Clark.

Q And did you know that at the time?

A I did know that at the time, but I didn't know the exact details of how the identity was compromised.

Q And what was your understanding of what had happened to Rick Clark?

A Well, my understanding was that he was confronted with the fact that he was born and died.

Q Did anybody say anything about how he had come to be confronted?

A No.

Q Who researched the name *[Redact]* for you?

A I tried to recollect that. I don't know if it was somebody in the office or another officer. I can't recollect who actually it was. I think it was almost like a committee thing, so maybe two or three got together to try and work out that I wouldn't be compromised as was Rick.

Q Can you identify any member of that committee?

A It could have been [Redact]. I am trying to remember the [Redact] who was in there at that particular time. It could have been [Redact] but I, I got presented with it and was told to get on with it.

[Redact]

Q You say in your witness statement that you think the basis for your understanding about using deceased child's identities emanated from the Security Service. Can you tell us what the basis for that understanding is?

A Again, it wasn't a fully briefed, it wasn't "This is the way the Security Service does it". It was just an understanding that this was the way that it was achieved, but there was nothing formal.

Q Can you recall whether anybody told you that?

A There was no specific person that actually said it, that told me that. It was more of a discussion with other officers.

Q Just so that I am clear, are we talking speculation here or information?

A I would say it is more speculation or -- I am just trying to think which would be the best word to describe it -- somewhere between speculation and information. I know I am fudging it a bit, but it was almost tacit that this was the way the Security Service did things in Northern Ireland etc., etc., so this was something that we copied. I don't know how far it went back.

Q I am going to move now to the question of the sexual encounters that you have told us about in your witness statement. First of all, could you explain how it has come to pass that you signed a witness statement in 2019 referring to two different women and your recollection now is that there was only one woman?

A I think there was a mistake in the fact that it must have, what, what I said came out all wrong. It was when I saw it I thought this isn't right, so I amended it.

Q How carefully did you check your original witness statement?

A I checked it as much as I could and I did go through that, but I must have missed it.

Q I would just like to have a clear understanding about the state of your recollection. Is it the case that you had a recollection of two women which is now a recollection of one woman, or has your recollection always been simply of a single woman?



A A single woman.

Q How well did you get to know [Redact]?

A I got to know her quite well because we attended the same evening class.

Q And this is [Redact] [Gist: an evening class]?

A That's correct, yeah.

Q To what extent did you socialise with [Redact] outside of the [Redact] [Gist: evening class]?

A It was sporadic and the [Redact] [Gist: evening classes led to other events] but it wasn't a one-on-one. It would be a group of maybe four or five of us. At that particular time, I recall that there was some form of festival on, so we went along to lots of concerts and various other things [Redact] and that was quite important to my cover to be able to have something that related to (inaudible) and she was present at some of them, she wasn't present at others and, after the classes finished where they were [Redact], we often used to go out for a drink [Redact] in the pubs in the [Redact].

Q I am getting the impression of a small group of friends. Is that fair?

A That is really it. That is correct. It was, it was enjoyable because I liked that [Redact] ... but for my cover it was really good.

Q And to what extent would you talk to and make friends with [Redact]?

A [Redact] we all talked. We sometimes would go out for a meal together afterwards, with the group again, but there was probably about three or four regular blokes, other guys, and then we would all disappear off home.

Q To what extent did you confide in her? For example, did you tell her your back story [Redact]?

A I, I alluded to that. I alluded to that, but I didn't go too much into detail. We talked [Redact].

Q Did this have any, have any political connotations? For example, was she a [Redact]?

A She was A-political. When she found out that I was a Trotskyist, she wasn't too keen on that. She was A-political.



Q Would it be right to say that she had no idea that you were a police officer?

A Yes.

Q How did you come to have sex with her?

A It was one evening whereby she was living in [Redact] and she was quite frightened and I stayed overnight because one of the guys [Redact] had been making approaches to her and she was a bit frightened and I stayed there one, one evening till slightly later and then, and then it just happened. We weren't too pleased about it because we were friends.

Q When you say "it just happened", was alcohol involved?

A Er yes.

Q A lot of alcohol?

A Yes.

Q On your part, her part or both?

A Both.

Q Did you tell anybody?

A No.

Q Apart from that occasion, were there any other occasions on which you had sex?

A I accept there was one other occasion when she moved flat [Redact], so I, it was one of the things that, because I had a car, you shift stuff around and that happened at her new flat and that was just a relaxing time, but it was some time afterwards.

Q That takes me to my next question. Over what period of time did the sexual encounters take place?

A I tried to recollect this because I dug out my, my textbook and it must have been six/seven months. As I say, it wasn't a regular occurrence, but I find it very difficult to place it in context, but it wasn't the next week and it wasn't the next month. It was quite, quite a distance, because she had broken up from somebody and she had this [Redact] and then found a place in somewhere down near [Redact] and I helped her to move and then after that we just stayed friends and that was it.

Q Were there any other occasions on which you had sex?

A What, with her?

Q Yes.

A No.

Q Was there any other sexual activity with her?

A No. Sometimes you get amorous, but then you would stop.

Q When you say "get amorous", could you----

A Well, it is a bit embarrassing at my age, but you would kiss and cuddle and then it could happen and then you decided it wasn't, it wasn't right.

Q I was asking that question because your witness statement in its original form referred to "fondling" one woman and "having sex" with another.

A Yes, it is the one person.

Q What I am driving at, to put it indelicately, is where did the fondling come in?

A Well, it came in as a closeness, a closeness sometimes, but, yes, it just came in as closeness between somebody.

Q Was that occurring during, between the two occasions on which you had sex or not?

A No, no.

Q So when was that occurring?

A I can't, I can't actually recollect. It was somewhere between them. No, I can't recollect exactly when it was.

Q When you were getting "amorous". What I am, what I am driving at----

A Yes.

Q -- is I am getting the impression that you form a friendship with [Redact].

A Yes.

Q You have sex with her one night----

A Yes.

Q -- when you were both in drink.

A Yes.

Q Seven months later you have sex again.

A Yes.

Q But, I am getting the impression that, from time to time in the interim, you would kiss and cuddle. Is that fair?

A Yes, it did happen on a couple of occasions, yes, but I couldn't say how many times it happened, but nothing else got any further.

Q Did you get the impression that she was fond of you?

A I thought we got on, but again I say we were more friends and I think that, when she started to have a relationship *[Redact]*, then she obviously wanted more.

Q Did you get the impression that she wanted more from you?

A Not really. I didn't have a lot to offer.

Q When you say "not really", were there----

A Well, no, I didn't have a lot to offer. *[Redact]*

Q Apart from the socialising in connection with *[Redact]* *[Gist: evening class]*, did you go out at all together as a couple?

A No, it was mostly as a group.

Q When you say "mostly"?

A It was as a group. It was as a group.

Q Why did you do it?

A Why did I do what?

Q Have sex with *[Redact]*.

A I don't really know. It is something I have regretted to this day.

Q Did you use contraception?

A Yes.

Q On both occasions?

A Yes.

Q But would [Redact] have consented to sex if she had known who you really were?

A I don't know.

Q What would it have taken for you not to have taken the step and crossed that Rubicon?

A I don't really know. It was at a particular time and place which was slightly surreal and there were occasions when you were deployed that it became unreal. It became unreal. You forgot about what your actual work was and you started to relax, which is really dangerous. That's when things go terribly wrong. So, I regret it from a personal point of view, from my upbringing and also from a professional point of view, but it was a weakness which I regret.

Q Because you were not just friends, you were also a police officer on duty, were you not?

A That is right. That is correct. It was, it was me not being professional and not following what I should have done.

Q And did you know at the time that it was wrong?

A [Redact] I think, when you -- and I was married -- I think the guilty conscious thing comes up, but I think it would have come up no matter whether I was a police officer or an individual, that I had strayed from my marriage and that I had forgotten about it.

Q Did you consider that it was worse because you were a police officer on duty when it happened?

A Sorry?

Q I said did you consider that it was worse because you were a police officer on duty when it happened?

A I think, if it had been with one of my comrades, I would have felt as though I was exploiting the person. There could be an interpretation that it was worse being a police officer, but I didn't consider that at the time.

Q How old were you at the time?

A Er I must have been [Redact].

Q How old was she?

A About 25/26.

Q And at what stage of your deployment did this occur?

A Again, I am trying to, I think it was towards the later part of my deployment, perhaps [Redact], somewhere around there.

Q Did you remain in contact with [Redact] after the second time that you had sex with her?

A No, she started another relationship and then I don't think I enrolled in the, in the next class and so we drifted apart.

Q Why didn't you enrol?

A Because I didn't want to, to carry on. You know, it would have been awkward.

Q I think it is clear from your witness statement and also from what you said to the *True Spies* programme that you recognise that sexual relationships were off limits.

A Correct.

Q Coming back to my question about what would it have taken to stop you doing this, is there anything your managers could have said or done which would have stopped you doing this?

A If they had found out, yes, but it was something that I looked upon as a mistake rather than, and as something that I wouldn't have shared with anybody else and I didn't.

MR BARR Sir, would now be a convenient time to break?

CHAIRMAN Certainly. We normally have a break of a quarter of an hour in the middle of sessions and you are welcome to take it now.

WITNESS Thank you very much, Sir.

CHAIRMAN We all will.

WITNESS Thank you.

CHAIRMAN Thank you.

(Short break)

MR FERNANDES Welcome back everyone. I will now hand over to the Chairman to continue proceedings. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

Mr Barr.

MR BARR

Thank you, Sir. *[Redact]* *[Gist: HN21]* can we go back now, please, to April 1979 and the death of Blair Peach? Shortly after the death of Blair Peach, we understand that you were involved in reporting on the Justice Campaign. Can you help us with who it was who asked you to report on the Justice Campaign?

A

I tried to recollect exactly who it was, but one of the members *[Redact]* was a close associate of Blair Peach and it was decided by the committee that we would go over and support the demonstration, I don't know if it was the funeral or the demonstration. There was a demonstration and then there was the funeral afterwards. *[Redact]* I am a bit confused now, I do apologise, but I think the actual funeral was in East London and I believe that one of the management asked me if it was possible for me to go there to see who turned up and I went there.

Q

Can you recall which manager?

A

It could have been Geoff Craft again. I can't remember the specifics, but his name springs to mind or (inaudible), one of the two.

Q

Did they explain why?

A

It was, part of the role was to identify who was there and to provide intelligence on what was occurring. It was highly unlikely at the interment that anything would happen; whereas the demonstration in Southall, the possibility is there could be confrontation between the left and right and it could all turn into disorder.

Q

*[Redact]*. Was the campaign regarded as a threat by Special Branch?

A

The word "threat", the possibility of public disorder, which is what we were there for, was likely and it could have led to confrontations between the left and right. So, therefore, I think it was certainly seen by the senior officers of the Metropolitan Police as potential for quite serious disorder, so therefore we provided the information on who was there and the likelihood. It was mostly dealt with by the West London area.

Q

It was a campaign against the police, wasn't it?

A

Yes, yes, and to do with the murder.

Q

Was there a sense that it was a threat to the Metropolitan Police's reputation?

A

I think you would have to ask the senior officers of that, but, from our point of view, it was purely to do with potential disorder.

Q Did you ever witness any public disorder arising from the campaign?

A I didn't personally, no.

Q No, and to what extent were you involved in it other than the two events you have already described?

A It was a general, the word used to be was "solidarity", making the public more aware of the violence of the police and of the murder. So, wherever there was any possibility of exploiting that, we were there. So, it was certainly (inaudible) delivering stuff.

Q And was that to advance the SWP's anti-establishment, anti-police message?

A It was the general move towards the anti-Nazi league and towards confronting the Right Wing and also to highlight what they termed as police brutality.

Q Did the Far Right interfere with the campaign?

A I don't recollect they actually did. My memory of that particular time, [Redact], I tried to remember whether they were at major demonstrations, but there was always the threat of the Far Right turning up and trying to exploit it for their purposes.

Q You've explained that you were asked to report on attendance at the interment -- and for those following the references, there is a document at volume 4, tab 320 [Gist: UCPI0000021047] which lists some of the attendees -- and I understand you have made clear that you think you contributed to that report but are not the sole source.

A That's correct.

Q Can you help us with why it was that the SDS wanted to report on who was attending the funeral?

A It was with the ... part of the core business was to identify people, individuals who were connected to groups, and I think this particular instance was just that. I don't think there was personally any possibility of disorder, but it was, it turned out to be a quiet demonstration, I think.

Q Was it a large event?

A It was a large event.

Q Although there is a long list of names in the report, I do not think anyone is suggesting it is a complete attendance list.

A Not at all, no. [Redact].



Q So, how would one's name get on that list?

A It would be if they were identified being as a member of an extreme left group or if they were if a prominent figure. I think, I am trying to remember what Parliamentarians were there, but they would, that would be noted that they were there.

Q Was any consideration given, to your knowledge by anyone, about the proportionality of deploying undercover police officers at the funeral of a man who had died in an altercation with the police?

A Judging by today's standards, I don't think this would have occurred, but, at that particular time, it was also on the other side, it was not so much a three line whip, but those people who could go to the funeral, again, it was part of your cover, but that would again be a senior management decision.

Q I have taken you through some very [Redact]. I would now like to ask you some more general questions about confrontations between the SWP and the extreme Right Wing. You have told us that there were a lot of confrontations and you have told us that not all of them have turned up in the reporting that we have been able to find. There are some examples though. Can you give us some impression overall about the nature and gravity of the confrontations between the SWP and the Far Right other than the matters we have already covered?

A There were other standing sort of demonstrations where you would get tasked by the SWP or it would be decided it was on your rota. One of them was Brick Lane, which was constant or a constant confrontation across the police lines. There were instances locally, [Redact] there would be confrontation there because you would be selling the papers and then suddenly out of the blue some National Front or National Party people would turn up and try and have a go at you.

Q Verbally or physically?

A Er physically, physically. [Redact] I had a fight with somebody who was trying to attack me. So, it was constant.

[Redact]

Then, of course, there was the myriad of other left-wing groups as well and, of course, if the Maoists turned up, it would all go horribly wrong. A lot of it would be just verbal, you know, but they were quite big and, you know, some of us were puny creatures. So, it wasn't in our interest to confront them physically.

Q Can you help me with the Maoists? [Redact] Can you help us with any specific examples [Redact] about Maoists being involved in trouble?

A Well, there always was direct confrontation even with the other left groups. They would, they would turn up at some, at meetings that you were chairing and disrupt them. [Redact]

Q Did it ever tip over into frank violence?

A Not against the Left. Sometimes it did. Sometimes it did. It was mostly scuffles. It was mostly scuffles, but, against the police, it was full-on, full-on, [Redact]. Yes, they were a very strange bunch.

Q Coming back now to the confrontations between the SWP and the Far Right, was there any pattern in who initiated violence or was it where different incidents were initiated by different sides?

A It depended on exactly where it was and how many people were there, how many police were there. From the SWP side, it was mostly shouting. From the Far Right thing, it was mostly physical violence. You know, you knew if the police weren't there, then you would have to run for it.

Q Were there hot heads amongst the SWP?

A There were. Eventually, [Redact] it turned into a group called Red Action, which was ... this was the genesis of Red Action when, whereas people were rather reticent to get involved, they started to move towards this more violent stuff. There were a couple of people in our, in our group who, who literally went out looking for a punch-up, but, mind you, they were, they were violent anyway.

[Redact]

MR BARR A final question about the SWP and public disorder. You have described being close to pretty violent events and personal risk to yourself. At the time, did you think that the exposure to risk was worth the intelligence that you were able to provide?

A Yes.

Q What is your view now?

A With the prism of hindsight, I still think that it was useful. Coming from a police background, it is one thing that you expect to confront violence and to be subject to violence and I think, on this particular occasion, because of the work we did in preventing more violence, it is part of what you got paid for.

Q And, apart from the evidence of confrontation, there is some evidence in the bundle that the SWP had an agenda of trying to win the debate against the Far Right. For those following the references, it is volume

1, tab 67, p.3. How big a part of SWP activity was the winning the debate side?

A

It was a large part. As the Left always breaks up, it was, the SWP were one of the dominant forces on the Far Left during that particular, particular time. So, it was important for them to get national coverage, to highlight police misconduct, racism, sexism. If you think of any of the isms or any of the issues which are current, they wanted to be part of the debate and lead those into their analysis of the way society should change. So, they wanted to be at the header of that and to move into student organisations, to exploit local social justice movements and to ... one of the big things that it used to do would be socialists working on placards.

You know, you would get a call and "Could you go over to so and so and so and pick up placards" and then you would hand them out to people who weren't members of the Social Workers' Party, but they had the banner with Socialist Worker, you know, "Fight for the Right to Work" or whatever.

It is interesting to note when I watch now at certain public order activities, but there it is. In fact, I can remember walking out once by Central Hall and that was a whole few years ago, but there was the whole placard and just like it was going back in time. They were selling the *Socialist Worker* and of course it is online now. It is not a very good read.

[Redact]

Q

Now, the administration. We understand that reports made their way from officers through the SDS office out eventually to A8 via C Squad. Can you assist us at all as to the nature of the reporting which you think is missing from your pack and the system for reporting to A8?

A

If I can answer the second part first, I am not aware of the system that was passing to A8, about how much was verbal and how much it was (inaudible). There is, there appears to be, a considerable amount of reports just on the, almost like an amalgamation of what, some of the ones you have referred to earlier, of other areas that we were involved in. I don't know where those went. They could possibly be in A8, but a lot of them were then redacted down to protect the source. So, they were considerable because they seemed to be gaps in, you know of things and I am sure that happened then.

[Redact]

Q

Can I move to the question of the SWP's position on Ireland and Irish-related terrorism? [Redact] What was, in your experience, the attitude of the SWP to terrorist violence?

A Confused. Confused. It was one of conclusion that they couldn't see themselves aligning themselves with Provisional Sinn Féin. They considered them to be nationalists. I think they had briefly flirted with the Official IRA, which were known as the Stickies. They also flirted with the Irish Republican Socialist Party and its fallout, the Irish National Aggression Army, that they were mostly staffed by psychotic killers, so that became a problem.

The group they actually supported was a small group of Trots in the South of Ireland called the Socialist Workers' Movement, who were insignificant. So, it always was a problem then and there always were these debates about whether the armed struggle should take priority over the political struggle. It was confused.

I think, when it became issues such as the H Blocks and certain single issues, that's when they, they could, they could mobilise because it was not so much a political thing. I mean, it was a political thing. It was a single issue that they could say, you know, fight tooth and nail the system whatever it was.

So, they got involved in H Blocks, but it was contradictory, a lot of the stuff, [Redact] and you have the revolution communist tendency, which was really quite vociferous on this, but it wasn't clear-cut.

Q Did you ever come across anyone in the SWP providing any practical assistance to any terrorist group?

A No.

Q The SWP and the PLO is next. [Redact]

Q To your knowledge, did the SWP provide any practical assistance to the PLO?

A I don't think so, and it would have been more theoretical than anything else. It would have been about solidarity, solidarity on a political front, but, as for practicalities, I cannot see why. None of, none of the people in my group would ever have gone along with that.

Q And, *vice versa*, did the PLO provide any practical support to the SWP?

A Well, on a political, on a political level, I should imagine it did, but that was done at a higher level than I was, our particular group.

Q Entryism, which you have dealt with in your witness statement. [Redact]  
[Redact]

Q Was there any covert entryism into trade unions that came to your attention?

- A Nothing came to my attention. It always appeared to me to be the SWP declared themselves as distinct from the Communist Party of Great Britain, that they wore the badge with pride, so to speak.
- Q You joined *[Redact] [Gist: a Union]*. Did you attend any of their meetings?
- A No.
- Q Did you attend any trade union organised activity?
- A *[Redact] [Gist: Attended some meetings but not as a trade union member]*.
- Q Did your lack of trade union activity cause any problems with your infiltration of the SWP?
- A Yes, it did. *[Redact]*
- Q Was there any covert entryism into the Labour Party to your knowledge?
- A To my knowledge, that was being done by Militant, so the Young Socialists from the Labour Party, the Militant organisation. The SWP, as far as I was clear, didn't want anything to do with the Labour Party.
- Q *[Redact]* Were there, was there any guidance given to you about what you should do if you came across politicians during the course of your infiltration?
- A To report that they were there and then it was up to management to decide what references they put beside their name. I can't remember the name of the MP for that particular guy, but, if he didn't have a reference, then it just had to show that the guy was there, that he was there, that he was present.
- Q Would it make a difference depending on what the MP was actually doing if that MP was just a speaker?
- A No, if it was an MP, you would just put, you would just report that MP was there.
- [Redact]*
- Q Were there any other instances when you attended meetings of organisations which were entirely legitimate and advanced the SWP line?

A Yes. By your mere presence and giving support, it was seen as part of the agenda for the SWP. Whether or not you got deeply involved in those, in those campaigns was like a group decision, but it was mostly the practice that you retreated from them. Certainly, for myself, because a lot of these campaigns, *[Redact]* and, you know, I felt, you know, the SWP were exploiting people who had a genuine cause.

Q When you say you discussed as a group, are you talking about within the SDS or within the SWP?

A Within the SDS, yes, well both, whether it was worth, whether it was, I think you used the word "proportionate" earlier to actually get involved in these.

*[Redact] [Gist: HN21 shown a report that makes reference to the SWP views on the ANL.]*

Q Does that accord with your experience of the relationship between the SWP and the ANL?

A There was an attempt by SWP to distance itself. It didn't do very well because, when many people who felt generally, who agreed with that cause, such as Brian Clough actually signed off on that, when they found out that it was just a SWP front, they deserted it, but there was tremendous enthusiasm for that, so it wasn't tainted by revolutionism or socialism, it was a grass roots -- that is another word they always used -- a grass roots that was coming from the bottom up, that was it.

Q I mean, one senses from the report that the SWP is struggling to resist the temptation of interfering. Is that a----

A Yes, that's right.

Q -- fair way of putting it?

A I would agree with you. It was a ... as usual, they could exploit, they could exploit it to their own ends.

Q I am going to come on now to positions of responsibility. *[Redact]*

*[Gist: HN21 confirmed that he obtained positions of local responsibility within the SWP].*

Q Were there ever occasions when a vote was taken?

A *[Redact]* I think there was, there was one once *[Redact]*

Q But, where there were differences of opinion, how did you decide which way to go?



A I just went with the majority and kept a low profile.

Q How could you tell what the majority was going to be?

A Because I had worked with them [Redact] and it was all sorted out beforehand anyway.

[Redact]

Q And what extra intelligence did that bring?

A Well, it allowed you to get more details about members.

Q And was that welcomed by your managers?

A It appeared to be, yes.

Q Did anyone ever tell you to be careful how far up the administrative chain you went?

A It goes back to the original thing that we discussed that you had to be somewhere around the decision-making process to understand what was going on, but not to be the driver for decisions, especially those to deal with public order or demonstrations. [Redact]

Q Moving now to the nature of the Socialist Workers' party, you tell us that you learned that they were "highly centralised and open to violence". Starting first with the "highly centralised", was that something that was generally known anyway?

A Yes, it was, yes. It depended on a, as I say, democratic centralism, but it depended on the major people like Tony Cliff and Duncan Harris and other luminaries of the SWP and everything went through them.

Q And can you help us in terms of openness to violence? Can you help us with the nuance of how that expressed itself as senior levels of the SWP?

A The senior members of the SWP were ones that I listened to at public speaking. They were always talking about "smashing this" and "smashing that", but most of them were more intellectually confrontational, but, as it filtered down, the ethos was to try and win the argument and then you saw, when confronted, that there were more chances that some of the more "heavies" -- the word you used earlier - - were starting, if there was like a disagreement with confrontation, violence as we know it, but the top level distanced themselves from that, well almost all of them couldn't be violent themselves. They were quite old.



Q There is reference in the papers to the SWP wanting to build a revolutionary party and, in at least one place, a need to build a revolutionary party now. Within the SWP how imminent did they think revolution was?

A It depended on who you talked to.

Q So were there people who thought it was imminent?

A [Redact] ANL [Redact] and other things and I think they had their majority of, they had a larger membership than we had, I don't think they all thought the revolution was around the corner, but they felt as though they were getting closer to influencing the political changes.

Q In your opinion, how realistic were they?

A As with most left-wing groups, they all live in a bubble and, if you go to places like (inaudible) and Situationist Internationale all the time, you feel as though you are just on the edge of it. It was quite heady, but I don't think, other than that, I think it was more just influencing, but they wanted to, they wanted to get rid of parliamentary democracy or change it.

Q You told the *True Spies* programme that you thought the SWP were "nice people but wrong".

A Yes.

Q Do you stand by that analysis?

A Yes, yes, some of them were.

Q And you also said that you were "very proud of what we did".

A Yes.

Q Do you stand by that?

A Yes, I do, I really do. I think that was, if I can make a point that it is interesting that, when this process first started out, and when we see the issues there are now through politics and people talking about "winters of discontent" and various other issues, it puts into context what it was like living through that particular time with the decline of the Labour Party and the rise of Thatcherism etc., etc., so it was an interesting political time.

Q I am going to move now to visits to the SDS by senior officers. You have described David McNee attending [Redact].

A Yes.

Q Could you help us with the depth of explanation that he received when he attended the SDS about what the SDS was doing?

A He was brought down by the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Special Branch and he was, he had obviously been briefed and we were all introduced to him. [Redact] so he was aware of what we did and who we were.

Q Do you think he was aware of your targets?

A Yes.

Q Aware of the sort of length of deployment that SDS officers were undertaking?

A Yes.

Q The extent of your immersion into your target groups?

A Yes.

Q The type of intelligence product you were producing?

A Yes.

Q Was the SDS, as it were, sold to him as a success story?

A Very much so. Very much so. It appeared to me that he was, if I can be rude, it was a senior management "Look at our lovely boys".

Q Would he have been made aware of the SDS' methods and tactics?

A Yes.

Q Would that have included the high levels of autonomy that the SDS officers were given in the field?

A I really don't know that because he wasn't a, he wasn't a Met officer. He had come from Strathclyde. So, I should imagine his experience of agent-running in other areas, he would have been quite surprised about the individuality of things.

Q But did he know, or was he told by any of you, that once in the field you had quite a lot of autonomy about how you advanced your deployment?

A Yes, he wasn't briefed by me personally, but I should imagine he would have been, or I would hope that he would have been briefed about that.

- Q Do you know whether there was any mention at all, humorous or serious, about sexual relationships?
- A I didn't hear any comment at all.
- Q How many Commissioners can you, different Commissioners can you recall visiting the SDS?
- A That's the only one.
- Q You told the *True Spies* programme that you have never seen a person more "flabbergasted", "jaw-dropping" and you mentioned that "his knighthood appeared to be disappearing out of the window".
- A Yes, he did look a bit shocked. I think he hadn't been properly briefed and then suddenly there he was in accommodation in a grotty part of [Redact], where he met a lot of long-haired people and I think it was beyond his particular experience at that particular time.
- Q And why would "his knighthood be disappearing out of the window"?
- A That was a cynical remark that sometimes senior officers did not take responsibility and then I think being faced with us.
- Q Were you referring----
- A I don't know if he was a knight then actually or not.
- Q But were you referring to the fact that there may have been some disapproval of the methods that were being used, if they had become known?
- A I wouldn't know if it was disapproval, but I would say it was possibly that he was quite not taken back. Maybe I used too strong a word for dramatic effect, but I think it not necessarily shocked him, but he was surprised.
- Q And you have referred to Commanders from the Special Branch visiting. Can you recall which ones?
- A Saunders, Wilson, Watts, Moss had probably come down (inaudible) coming down. Whoever was Commander at that particular time.
- Q And were they given a similar level of briefing or was there a difference?
- A I don't know because usually they came down after a specific event or if they wanted to talk to somebody, but it wasn't a regular occurrence.
- Q Did they exhibit any concerns about the SDS?

A No.

Q Did they exhibit praise for the SDS?

A Yes.

Q I am going to move now to welfare issues. You have been very candid in your witness statement that your deployment took a toll on you.

A Yes.

*[Redact]*

A I think a clearer ... it is very difficult to describe because it is a different time now. It is a different age. At that particular time, it was more proving yourself and not showing any weakness. I think now, today, thank god, people are more open with the way they feel and I don't want to sound like a softie, but it was difficult. I think with more welfare, and I am not criticising the officers who supervised us, because for the most part they were doing their best with the available tools they had, but I think people should have been more carefully monitored throughout their service and I think that, if that had happened with me, I think it would have been better. But it doesn't take away from your own personal choices that you decide to do certain things.

Q When you say monitoring, do you think that monitoring by police officers would have been sufficient or would it have required, for example, availability of access to a psychologist or something like that?

A It could have done, but a lot of the stuff from my experience in that particular area was tick box stuff and so, therefore, it could cause more problems than enabling a solution. Today, I think it would be useful. I think the biggest time would have been after and the way that people exit SDS. I think that would have been the real, real time to look to have a program that allowed people to come off, because I always used to say to officers who were going out that that is the most difficult part. It is not getting in and it is not staying there, although that is difficult. It is actually coming out.

Q And why was that?

A Because you want to be a success. You want to have a successful operational period and you want to come off with causing less fuss to everybody and to successfully then build on the next stage of your career and that's always in your mind "What do I do next? What do I do next?" I think some of the officers had more problems than me. Some of them put their hands up and said "I can't do this anymore" and I think perhaps *[Redact]* I should have put my hand up and said "I can't do this anymore", but you carry on.

Q You say in your witness statement that you complained about the lack of support. Who did you complain to?

A I complained later on, not necessarily at the time, but I complained later on to management when we had discussions. I just said it was wrong. I said that I thought there should be something in place to mentor people and to look after their mental and physical health, because the physical side is also tiring because you were working so many hours.

Q And what was the result of your complaint?

A Eventually, again I can't get into context when it started, but there was a mentoring scheme whereby we tried to do a bit more self-help to kickstart and there were a couple of officers who were then in charge when the climate was right to do it. You know, it was starting to be recognised that there were more and more problems and so we kept pushing, pushing and pushing for people to be mentored and monitored, not in an overt thing.

I think the difficulty with the Police Service is that sometimes, if you say monitoring, then the individual officer thinks "They are watching me all the time", and the senior officer thinks "Well God almighty, if I don't monitor him and he does something wrong, what happens to me?" So, it is easier said than done. It has to be thought through.

Q You said "we" then and you did refer in your witness statement to others complaining.

A Yes.

Q Who else was pushing for change?

A I can't actually remember. [Redact] and we were trying to get something where we could be almost like a first aider and refer, be able to refer people to professionals to deal with them.

Q And did that bear any fruit?

A It did up to a point. It did up to a point. I always feel as though, with a little bit more impetus, I think it could have been structurally organised better, but then we did our best and then, as necessity comes, you don't want operationally, you don't want to influence current operations because you are out of date and you just retire from it and go back. So, I really don't know.

[Redact]

MR BARR [Gist: HN21] you have been enormously helpful and enormously patient. Thank you very much indeed.

CHAIRMAN

Mr Sanders

MR SANDERS

No, thank you, Sir.

*[Redact]*