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PolF50-6-50-13/SA/DDG

15 June 1984

Dear Mr [REDACTED] *ALC*

REVISED GUIDELINES FOR POLICE SPECIAL BRANCHES

Please refer to your letter of 30 May 1984. I regret the delay in dealing with this matter.

2. In relation to the guidelines themselves, having considered the matter again, we are inclined to agree that the definition of terrorism originally proposed, i.e that given in the Prevention of Terrorism Act, may be the most appropriate one to use in the guidelines. It is wider than necessary for our purposes but we recognise that there is some merit in using a definition given in statute. We also accept that, whereas a narrower definition would meet the needs of national security, this might be unduly restrictive in respect of requirements for public order purposes. Accordingly, under the heading "Politically Motivated Terrorism" in the definitions given in the new paragraph 6 of the guidelines we would have: "The use of violence for political ends, including any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public in fear".

3. With regard to the covering letter to Chief Constables, we propose that paragraphs 7 to 10 which deal with intelligence gathering in the subversive field should read as follows:-

/...

[REDACTED]
Home Office

[REDACTED]



"7. An organisation may operate currently within the law and yet be subversive in terms of the definition in the guidelines because its long-term aims satisfy that definition. Senior officers must exercise strict control over the selection of targets for investigation when the current activities of an organisation are legitimate and peaceful. When intelligence is gathered on subversive organisations, very great care should always be taken not to give grounds for Special Branch enquiries being misrepresented as wrongful police interference in the exercise of civil and political liberties. This applies especially to coverage of demonstrations and protest marches, which will often provide an opportunity for the collection of information about subversive elements in a particular organisation.

8. Special Branch investigations into subversive activities in particularly sensitive fields, for example in schools and other educational establishments, in Trade Unions and in industry and among racial minorities, must be conducted with particular care so as to avoid any suggestion that Special Branches are investigating matters involving the legitimate expression of views. Enquiries into subversive activities in these fields which may be necessary to meet the requirements of the Security Service should only be initiated after consultation with the Security Service.

9. Care should also be taken to ensure that investigations in relation to industrial disputes are not misrepresented as being aimed at the penetration of trade unions rather than the investigation of subversive groups which may be active in disputes or for public order purposes. Subversion should not be confused with industrial militancy. Industrial militancy is the use or threatened use of strikes, sit-ins or other disruptive action in the furtherance of industrial disputes, and an unwillingness to seek or accept compromise solutions through negotiations, conciliation or arbitration. The actions of industrial militants only become subversive when their intent is to threaten the safety and well-being of the State and to undermine or overthrow Parliamentary democracy.



3.

10. It is not the function of the force Special Branch to investigate individuals and groups merely because their policies are unpalatable, because they are highly critical of the Police, or want to transform the present system of police accountability."

4. As the above revised paragraphs include in broad terms the caveats given in the two circular letters to Chief Police Officers issued by the Security Service in 1974 and 1975, there is no longer any need to consider attaching copies of those letters to the present proposed letter to Chief Officers.

Yours sincerely

SyS Officer

(Dictated and signed
in his absence)

