

UNDERCOVER
POLICING
INQUIRY

Undercover Policing Inquiry

Tranche 1 Interim Report

Tranche 1: Special Demonstration Squad
officers and managers and those affected by
deployments (1968–1982)

JUNE 2023

Undercover Policing Inquiry Tranche 1 Interim Report

**Tranche 1: Special Demonstration
Squad officers and managers and those
affected by deployments (1968–1982)**

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 26 of the
Inquiries Act 2005

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Foreword

The report which this foreword introduces is the first fruit of the work undertaken by the Undercover Policing Inquiry, under the chairmanship of Sir Christopher Pitchford from July 2015 until July 2017, and under my chairmanship since then. It covers the first 14 years, approximately, of the Special Operations Squad (SOS)/Special Demonstration Squad (SDS), a unit of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) set up in July 1968 (hereafter referred to as the SDS, unless specifically referring to the SOS). It attempts to set out the history of the unit and to draw conclusions about the purposes for which it was set up and continued, and their justification. The findings of fact and conclusions are mine and mine alone.

These findings are based on multiple sources of evidence. As in the case of any historical inquiry, the starting point must be contemporaneous documents created by those who participated in the events being investigated. Sufficient documents from the MPS and public sources have survived to permit reliable findings to be made about the creation of the unit and the purpose it served in 1968. The documentary record then becomes sketchier until November 1974. From then on, Security Service files contain an extensive and substantially complete record of the intelligence gathered by the undercover officers deployed by the unit. I know that different views are held about the lawfulness and propriety of the retention of so much personal information for so long. I do not intend to enter into this debate, but only to make the trite observation that, without this evidence, accurate reconstruction of what occurred would not have been possible. I wish to express my gratitude to the Security Service for the collation and production of these files.

Flesh was put on the bones of the documentary material by evidence given by surviving former undercover officers and their managers, and by members of the public with whom they interacted. As will be apparent from the content of this report, their evidence was, almost without exception, of significant value in enabling me to understand what had occurred, in particular about matters such as personal relationships, which were not documented. I acknowledge the inconvenience, at best, which the provision of this evidence has caused to them. I am grateful to all of them for the trouble they have taken to assist me in my task.

I also acknowledge, again with gratitude, the manifold tasks performed by all concerned – within the Inquiry team and within the teams representing the MPS, its former officers and non-state core participants – to process the documents and prepare for and conduct the Inquiry's hearings.

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This report is part of a work in progress. Some issues are better addressed when all of the evidence about them is in, notably:

- (i) the impact of the conduct of male police officers on women deceived into sexual relationships with them, and on the families of the officers;
- (ii) the impact on the surviving relatives of deceased children of the adoption of their identity; and
- (iii) the purpose of gathering intelligence on “justice” campaigns.

For the same reason, I have also refrained from expressing any general conclusions about the attitude of police officers and managers within the unit towards deceitful sexual relationships during deployments.

I have also refrained from expressing any view about many of the wider issues canvassed in submissions – for example, the proposition that the SDS was one of the instruments set up by a conservative state to suppress the aspirations of those who wished to produce radical change by political means. Those concerned about such issues will have formed their own opinion about them; and the addition of one further opinion based on limited evidence will serve no useful purpose.



Sir John Mitting
Chair

Introduction

1. On 12 March 2015, the then Home Secretary, the Rt Hon. Theresa May, announced the establishment of a statutory public inquiry to consider the deployment of police officers as covert human intelligence sources in England and Wales, and to review undercover policing practices, identify lessons learned and make recommendations about the way undercover policing is conducted for the future.
2. This announcement marked the culmination of the wide-ranging concerns over covert policing that had been brought to the public eye over the previous half-decade. As the result of investigations undertaken by journalists and activists alike, including, notably, women who had been deceived into sexual relationships, and the revelations of ‘Officer A’, now known to be Peter Francis, from 2010 media reports began to raise serious allegations of historical misconduct by undercover officers. A series of targeted institutional responses followed:
 - A review of the conduct of undercover operations – known as Operation Soisson, later expanded into Operation Herne – was established in 2011 by the then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe.
 - 2012 saw the establishment of the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review into the police investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, chaired by Mark Ellison QC, which included consideration of the role of undercover policing in the Lawrence case and concern over possible covert targeting of the Lawrence family during the police investigation.
 - In 2014, the Home Secretary announced to Parliament that Mark Ellison QC would also coordinate a multi-agency review “assessing the possible impact upon the safety of convictions in England and Wales where relevant undercover police activity was not properly revealed to the prosecutor and considered at the time of trial”.¹
 - The same year, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary carried out and published an inspection of undercover policing practice at the time in England and Wales.
 - 2015 saw a report by Stephen Taylor into links between the Home Office and the MPS Special Demonstration Squad (SDS).

3. The potential for an overarching public inquiry into the SDS was first raised by the Home Secretary for consideration by Mark Ellison QC during the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review. In 2014, his report concluded that such an inquiry, which could see and hear the evidence being tested and consider the wider issues, might indeed be better placed to make definitive findings.² Though the initial intent was to permit the conclusion of ongoing criminal investigations and Mark Ellison QC's further review into miscarriages of justice before any larger inquiry could begin,³ it became apparent during the latter that the issues involved in undercover policing and the work required to adequately review them were much larger than initially envisaged.⁴ The Undercover Policing Inquiry (the Inquiry) was therefore announced in 2015, to provide a more comprehensive investigation into undercover policing in England and Wales.
4. Though the remit of the Inquiry encompasses all undercover policing in England and Wales since 1968, special emphasis has been given to two historical policing units – the SDS, which operated from 1968 to 2008, and the National Public Order Intelligence Unit (NPOIU), which operated from about 1999 to 2010. Both units were primarily tasked to infiltrate political and activist groups, with the intention of gathering intelligence to assist in public order policing.
5. The Inquiry was to be chaired by Sir Christopher Pitchford,⁵ who opened the Inquiry on 28 July 2015⁶ under the following Terms of Reference:

“Purpose

To inquire into and report on undercover police operations conducted by English and Welsh police forces in England and Wales since 1968 and, in particular, to:

- investigate the role and the contribution made by undercover policing towards the prevention and detection of crime;
- examine the motivation for, and the scope of, undercover police operations in practice and their effect upon individuals in particular and the public in general;
- ascertain the state of awareness of undercover police operations of Her Majesty's Government;
- identify and assess the adequacy of the:
 1. justification, authorisation, operational governance and oversight of undercover policing;
 2. selection, training, management and care of undercover police officers;

- identify and assess the adequacy of the statutory, policy and judicial regulation of undercover policing.

Miscarriages of Justice

The inquiry's investigations will include a review of the extent of the duty to make, during a criminal prosecution, disclosure of an undercover police operation and the scope for miscarriage of justice in the absence of proper disclosure.

The inquiry will refer to a panel, consisting of senior members of the Crown Prosecution Service and the police, the facts of any case in respect of which it concludes that a miscarriage of justice may have occurred as a result of an undercover police operation or its non disclosure. The panel will consider whether further action is required, including but not limited to, referral of the case to the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

Scope

The inquiry's investigation will include, but not be limited to, whether and to what purpose, extent and effect undercover police operations have targeted political and social justice campaigners.

The inquiry's investigation will include, but not be limited to, the undercover operations of the Special Demonstration Squad and the National Public Order Intelligence Unit.

For the purpose of the inquiry, the term "undercover police operations" means the use by a police force of a police officer as a covert human intelligence source (CHIS) within the meaning of section 26(8) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, whether before or after the commencement of that Act. The terms "undercover police officer", "undercover policing", "undercover police activity" should be understood accordingly. It includes operations conducted through online media.

The inquiry will not examine undercover or covert operations conducted by any body other than an English or Welsh police force.

Method

The inquiry will examine and review all documents as the inquiry chairman shall judge appropriate.

The inquiry will receive such oral and written evidence as the inquiry chairman shall judge appropriate.

Report

The inquiry will report to the Home Secretary as soon as practicable. The report will make recommendations as to the future deployment of undercover police officers. It is anticipated that the inquiry report will be delivered up to three years after the publication of these terms of reference.”⁷

6. This is the first interim report to be published by the Inquiry, and relates to the time period from the establishment of the SDS in 1968 to early 1982, which the Inquiry has called ‘Tranche 1’. Tranche 1 evidence was divided into five phases, which included three sessions of open and one session of closed evidential hearings. Tranche 1 was subdivided in this fashion due to difficulties presented by the global COVID-19 pandemic.
7. The Inquiry’s opening statement hearings and Tranche 1 (Phase 1) evidence hearings took place from 2 November to 19 November 2020. In the Tranche 1 (Phase 1) evidence hearings, the Inquiry heard from undercover officers and non-state witnesses about the SDS between July 1968 and the end of 1972 approximately. The Tranche 1 (Phase 2) hearings took place from 21 April to 13 May 2021. In this phase, the Inquiry heard evidence from undercover officers and non-state witnesses about SDS undercover policing operations that started between 1970 and 1979. The Tranche 1 (Phase 3) hearings took place from 9 May to 20 May 2022. In this phase, the Inquiry primarily heard from SDS managers (1968–1982). The Inquiry also held closed evidential hearings (Tranche 1 Phase 4) to hear from undercover officers with restriction orders over their real and cover names. The final phase of Tranche 1 (Module 2B & C) concerned a documentary review of contemporaneous material in relation to senior police managers and the wider government. Written statements were provided by relevant witnesses. Oral closing submissions for Tranche 1 took place between 20 February and 22 February 2023.
8. A list of witnesses who provided evidence to this Inquiry can be found in Appendix 1, and a timeline depicting the deployments of the Tranche 1 SDS officers can be found on the Inquiry’s website.⁸
9. The report is divided into the following parts:
 - Chapter 1: Formation of the Special Operations Squad – the “Autumn Offensive”
 - Chapter 2: The Special Operations Squad after 27 October 1968
 - Chapter 3: The Special Operations Squad 1971 and the Special Demonstration Squad 1972 to 1973
 - Chapter 4: The Special Demonstration Squad 1974 to 1976
 - Chapter 5: The Special Demonstration Squad 1977 to 1982

- Chapter 6: Analysis and conclusions
 - Appendix 1: List of witnesses and evidence
 - Appendix 2: List of abbreviations
10. This report is, by nature of being an interim report, representative only of partial conclusions that can be reached on the evidence presented to the Inquiry to date. It is restricted to the Tranche 1 time period only. Consequently, not all aspects of the Terms of Reference can be addressed in this report, as they relate to broader and more overarching issues that may only be safely considered in light of the full evidence of the Inquiry. Such issues may be addressed in future interim reports, or only in the final report of this Inquiry, which will be published after all evidence has concluded.
 11. It should be noted that the delineation of the Tranche 1 time period is, to some extent, arbitrary. The dates in question were chosen primarily to help divide the extensive remit of the Inquiry into more manageable undertakings.⁹ As such, undercover deployments, management and issues may not fall neatly into the Tranche categories that the Inquiry has chosen to adopt.
 12. This report will not cover the deployments of the following undercover officers, who, despite an overlap in time with the Tranche 1 period, will be considered in Tranche 2: HN12 (“Mike Hartley”); HN19 (“Malcolm Shearing”); HN20 (“Tony Williams”); HN65 (“John Kerry”); HN67 (“Alan Bond”); HN83; and HN85 (“Roger Thorley”). HN86 and HN337’s deployments are being considered in Tranche 1 but on paper only and in closed.
 13. This published interim report can only refer to evidence presented in open sessions. A separate, closed interim report has been written and will be presented to the Home Secretary alongside this published report. The findings reached in this published interim report do take into consideration all the evidence so far, including closed evidence, even where it is impossible to detail that evidence safely within this open report. The open evidence considered by me in writing this report, including documentary evidence, transcripts and summaries of evidence hearings, and opening and closing statements from core participants, can be found published on the Inquiry’s website at www.ucpi.org.uk.

Endnotes

- 1 Home Office and Rt Hon. Theresa May, 'Review of potential miscarriages of justice', Written statement to Parliament, 26 June 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/review-of-potential-miscarriages-of-justice>
- 2 The Stephen Lawrence Independent Review, *Possible Corruption and the Role of Undercover Policing in the Stephen Lawrence Case: Summary of Findings*, March 2014, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/287030/stephen_lawrence_review_summary.pdf
- 3 Home Office and Rt Hon. Theresa May, 'The Ellison Review', Oral statement to Parliament, 6 March 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-ellison-review>
- 4 Home Office and Rt Hon. Theresa May, 'The Ellison Review', Oral statement to Parliament, 6 March 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-ellison-review>; Review of Possible Miscarriages of Justice, *Impact of Undisclosed Undercover Police Activity on the Safety of Convictions: Report to the Attorney General*, July 2015, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445551/2015-07-16_HC_291_Possible_miscarriages_of_justice_-_Web_Accessible_-_FINAL.pdf
- 5 The Inquiry's current Chair, Sir John Mitting, was appointed in May 2017, after Sir Christopher was required to step down for reasons of ill health.
- 6 Undercover Policing Inquiry, 'Chairman's Opening Remarks', 28 July 2015, <https://www.ucpi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Opening-Remarks.pdf>
- 7 It has proven impossible to fulfil the Terms of Reference within this anticipated timeframe. The Inquiry has kept the Home Secretary informed of progress.
- 8 Undercover Policing Inquiry, 'Tranche 1 Timeline', version 3.1, 27 April 2023, https://www.ucpi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Tranche_One_Timeline-v-3.1.xlsx
- 9 Undercover Policing Inquiry, 'How is the fact-finding work of the Inquiry structured', 5 August 2019, <https://www.ucpi.org.uk/faq-items/how-is-the-fact-finding-work-of-the-inquiry-structured/>

Chapter 1:

Formation of the Special Operations Squad – the “Autumn Offensive”

1. The Special Operations Squad (SOS) was the brainchild of HN325 Detective Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon. It was established on or immediately before 31 July 1968.¹ Two surviving founder members of the SOS, HN218 (“Barry Morris”) Barry Moss and HN328 Joan Hillier, have described the circumstances in which they were recruited. Their recollection differs in immaterial details explained by the passage of time, but both agree that a group of Metropolitan Police Service Special Branch (Special Branch) officers were invited to attend a meeting addressed by Conrad Dixon, at which the purpose of the squad was explained: to gather intelligence about the forthcoming demonstration to be staged in October in central London by the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC). The only reliable method of doing so was to attend preparatory meetings undercover – by pretending to be supporters of the demonstration.
2. HN3093 Roy Creamer was also recruited but for a different purpose. As a Special Branch officer since 1958, he had acquired an unrivalled knowledge of anarchists and anarchism, by study and by friendly interaction with two leading anarchists, Stuart Christie and Albert Meltzer. He had also studied and begun to acquire some understanding of Trotskyist and Maoist groups. His principal function was to inform Conrad Dixon’s assessments of the potential of these groups to cause trouble on the day of the demonstration.
3. A Special Branch file was opened on the VSC in May 1966.² An early report³ was the subject of a comment by Conrad Dixon on 8 August 1966.⁴ He concluded that it “does not warrant any police action”.⁵ Despite that, the VSC was the subject of a series of reports in 1966 and 1967, and of Special Branch interest using traditional techniques. These revealed that, on 14 December 1967, the VSC national executive committee proposed that a national ad hoc committee should be formed on 11 January 1968 to organise the staging of a demonstration in March 1968, “at the request of the Vietnamese people”, likely to celebrate what was considered to be the 18th anniversary of the first protest in Saigon against US military involvement in Vietnam.⁶ (The claim is questionable, for reasons that are not relevant to this report.)
4. Tariq Ali, who gave oral evidence to the Inquiry, explained the objective of the VSC – to support the victory of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam – and the means by which it hoped to provide that support. He was a truthful witness and his evidence was calm and reflective. He stood by the account he gave in his book, *Street Fighting Years: An Autobiography of the Sixties*, and expanded on it. The national executive committee of the VSC had been heartened by the success of a demonstration by about 10,000 people on

22 October 1967, which, to the surprise of both the organisers and the police, almost gained entry into the US embassy in Grosvenor Square. A core group of about seven or eight members of the committee discussed the possibility of gaining entry during a large demonstration and staging a media stunt inside it, such as sending a message to Vietnam saying that the enemy headquarters had been occupied. Tariq Ali proposed that, immediately before the demonstration left Trafalgar Square, he should announce the intention to occupy the embassy. He was dissuaded by Pat Jordan, on the basis that the police would be unlikely to be taken by surprise again, and by lawyers who supported the VSC, who said that he would lay himself open to prosecution for incitement to commit various crimes. He accepted their advice. Instead, a decision was made to assess the “balance of forces” on the day and decide what to do at the last minute.⁷ Tariq Ali maintained the hope that an incursion could be made into the embassy.

5. The demonstration gave rise to a notorious confrontation between police and demonstrators in Grosvenor Square on 17 March 1968. On 18 March 1968, the Home Secretary told the House of Commons that 45 demonstrators had received medical treatment and 117 police officers had been injured.⁸ Proceedings were initiated against 246 people. There are different views about precisely what caused such a confrontation to take place. Tariq Ali and many demonstrators believe that the crowd was forced against police lines by being corralled in South Audley Street, and broke through due to weight of numbers alone. They were then repelled by mounted police. Media reporting suggested that a deliberate attempt, led by a contingent of German demonstrators, was made to force police lines.⁹ Police analysis, by PN1748 Detective Inspector Riby Wilson and signed for the Chief Superintendent by HN1253 Superintendent Victor Gilbert, suggested that “militant factions of the extreme left wing and their student supporters show a complete disregard for public order and intend to challenge the authorities on every possible occasion”.¹⁰ Violent overseas contingents were thought to pose a particular threat. Whatever the cause, these events gave rise to an intention on the part of the VSC national ad hoc committee to stage another demonstration, the largest so far, and on the part of the police and others to contain the threat to the embassy.
6. The “Autumn Offensive”¹¹ gave rise to concern at the highest levels of government. On 20 August 1968, a meeting was convened between: the Commissioner; the Assistant Commissioner responsible for “A” Division; the Commander of Special Branch, HN151 Ferguson Smith; two senior Home Office officials, one of whom was the Deputy Permanent Under Secretary with responsibility for policing, James Waddell; and the Deputy Director General and another officer of the Security Service.¹² James Waddell stated the Home Secretary’s view that the police should handle demonstrations by the use of traditional methods of crowd control, not “foreign importations” such as water cannon, a view with which the Commissioner concurred. The issue was then discussed at a specially convened ministerial meeting chaired by the Prime

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Minister on 16 September 1968.¹³ The Home Secretary stated that a hard core of agitators and militants were bent on violence, but it was undesirable to prevent the demonstration taking place. This was to remain his view throughout. He agreed with the decision of the Commissioner, expressed to him on 17 October 1968, not to use his power under section 3 of the Public Order Act 1936 to prohibit it (as a procession likely to cause disorder).¹⁴ On 24 October 1968, the Home Secretary told the House of Commons that, despite forceful suggestions that the demonstration should be prohibited, his conclusion was that “in the absence of plain evidence of widespread violence, interference with the right to hold meetings, even of this size, would be a bad precedent which would endanger freedom in this country”.¹⁵

7. One of the reasons that the Home Secretary was able to reach, and hold to, that conclusion was that he and his officials had been provided with weekly reports by Conrad Dixon about the intentions and likely actions of the organisers and participants in the demonstration.¹⁶ Those reports were in part based on traditional Special Branch sources of intelligence, but also on reports by undercover officers of the newly formed SOS.
8. The SOS was a small unit. Including Conrad Dixon and HN1251 Detective Inspector Phil Saunders, it had no more than 16 “field” (deployed) officers at the date of the October demonstration. All attended branch or district meetings of the various groups that were to participate in it. On occasions, they were joined by Special Branch officers who had not joined the SOS. None of them received training or created a “legend” (fictional back history) or obtained documents to support it. Some acquired cover accommodation or employment. Apart from using a false name if necessary, dressing more scruffily than usual and, for some, growing their hair longer, little attempt was made at disguise. It was not necessary, because what they were doing was little different from what they had done as Special Branch officers before joining the SOS. HN218 and HN328 explained the one significant difference. As Special Branch officers, they were instructed to and did attend specific public meetings. As SOS officers, they joined the groups on which they were reporting and sorted out their own tasking, albeit under the supervision of Conrad Dixon and Phil Saunders. They would begin by attending public (advertised) meetings and then attend private (unadvertised) meetings, of which a handful were held in private homes. There was little difficulty in doing so, because none of the groups paid much heed to security.
9. Conrad Dixon’s first two reports, dated 21 and 30 August 1968,¹⁷ must have been based on intelligence gathered from traditional Special Branch sources, such as an individual who knew what was going on in the VSC national ad hoc committee. They mainly concern the political affiliations and disagreements of the VSC national ad hoc committee, rather than branch or district activity. Six of his next eight reports were informed by the reports of undercover officers and his own attendance at meetings of the North West London district ad

hoc committee¹⁸ and at a national public meeting at Conway Hall on 17 September 1968.¹⁹

10. On 5 September 1968,²⁰ Conrad Dixon reported on continuing ambivalence about the use of violence: at the local level, tactics were being discussed which included the use of steel banner poles as offensive weapons; and there was discussion about the use of more sophisticated weapons, such as Molotov cocktails. No prior written report from an undercover officer to that precise effect survives. However, from 20 August 1968 onwards, HN331 and HN68 (“Sean Lynch”) attended and reported on 18 public and private meetings of the VSC Notting Hill branch, at some of which violent tactics were discussed. At a private meeting on 4 September 1968,²¹ one speaker suggested that marchers should be in groups of five, wear helmets and be armed with batons, to act as a vanguard to lead charges on police lines. Another said that it was stupid to fight the police and far easier to set fire to motor vehicles by turning them on their sides, puncturing the petrol tanks and setting fire to the petrol. There is no reason to doubt that these things were said and were accurately reported. Conrad Dixon’s report of 5 September 1968 did, however, rightly play down press reports of the large-scale manufacture of Molotov cocktails and the acquisition of small arms as “a carefully-constructed pastiche of information, gathered from a number of sources, and spiced with inspired guess-work”.²²
11. The VSC national ad hoc committee decided, at a meeting outside Sheffield on 7 September 1968,²³ that marchers should follow a route that avoided the US embassy in Grosvenor Square. The decision was the subject of a heated debate at the national ad hoc committee meeting at Conway Hall on 17 September 1968 referred to in paragraph 9. A Maoist proposal for a demonstration on 26 October 1968 at Downing Street, followed by another on 27 October 1968 directed at Grosvenor Square, was defeated by 108 votes to 70. The official route of the 27 October demonstration, avoiding Grosvenor Square, was announced on 25 September 1968. Eight SOS officers, including Conrad Dixon, and one other member of Special Branch, attended and reported on the meeting. Some of them may have taken part in the vote. They could not have influenced its outcome.
12. The decision was also debated at local level. At five meetings of the VSC North West London district ad hoc committee, attended by HN332 Cameron Sinclair and, on four occasions, by Conrad Dixon, the majority agreed to follow the official route.²⁴ The Earls Court and Notting Hill branches did not agree. On 9 September 1968,²⁵ at a meeting of the Earls Court branch attended by HN218, HN68 and HN331, as well as a Special Branch officer who was not in the SOS, a motion was passed that, whatever was decided nationally, the spearhead of the Earls Court branch should be the US embassy (this meeting was held in a private house, but only because the owner of the coffee bar in whose premises it was to have occurred was unwilling to let the VSC meet there). At public and private meetings of the Notting Hill branch on 16²⁶ and

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23²⁷ October 1968, attended by HN68 and HN331 (and HN328 on 16 October), the chairman Kenneth Murray proposed that groups of five should go armed with a wet and dry handkerchief as protection against tear gas, banner poles as protection against truncheons, pen knives for use on the soft underbelly of police horses, needles and pepper for the horses’ eyes and fireworks to make them rear. Another speaker suggested jamming a needle in a cork into a horse’s nose. Another advised carrying a stone or bit of wood to enhance the impact of a punch on a police officer. No agreement was reached at the branch about whether or not to follow the official route. Again, there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of these reports.

13. Before the defeat, on 17 September 1968, of the Maoist proposal for a march on Grosvenor Square, Abhimanyu Manchanda set up the October 27th Committee for Solidarity with Vietnam. HN218 attended and reported on its inaugural meeting on 15 September 1968²⁸ and three further meetings on 17,²⁹ 22³⁰ and 24 September 1968,³¹ at the second of which he introduced his replacement, HN335 Michael Tyrrell. HN335 attended meetings on 29 September³² and 13,³³ 15,³⁴ 16³⁵ and 20 October 1968.³⁶ At the last one, a route terminating in Grosvenor Square was agreed and marchers were advised to wear protective clothing and goggles in case tear gas was used. Again, there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the reports.
14. HN330 (“Don de Freitas”) and HN334 (“Margaret White”) reported on the newly formed Havering branch of the VSC, which was throughout committed to an orderly and peaceful march along the official route. Each took part in the demonstration on 27 October 1968 as members of the branch, all of whom conducted themselves peacefully and did not go to Grosvenor Square.
15. In all, approximately 60 reports of meetings of five branches and two districts of the VSC and of the October 27th Committee/Britain–Vietnam Solidarity Front (BVSF) by SOS officers have been retrieved. It is likely that there were more and that they were supplemented by personal and telephone reports.
16. Reports such as these, supplemented by the advice of Roy Creamer, enabled Conrad Dixon, in his report of 3 October 1968,³⁷ to produce a detailed analysis of the various groups that intended to participate in the demonstration. The last two reports, dated 16³⁸ and 22 October 1968,³⁹ contained details of contingents of demonstrators who would arrive from around the country, gleaned by a traditional Special Branch technique: a circular letter written to the chief constables of all provincial forces asking for details of coaches hired and likely numbers.⁴⁰ These reports also enabled him to assess as “bogus” a “confidential” memorandum purportedly issued by the VSC national ad hoc committee, describing a secret meeting, at which it was decided to depart from the plan and route agreed with the police, to permit marchers to enter and occupy Grosvenor Square.⁴¹

17. Conrad Dixon's assessments informed those of the Commissioner, HN1877 John Waldron, at his meeting with the Home Secretary on 17 October 1968: there would be a second march organised by an ad hoc committee under Maoist leadership, which would start in Trafalgar Square and end in Grosvenor Square; violence was to be expected, as on previous occasions, but not the use of firearms or extreme forms of explosives.⁴²
18. On 23 October 1968, Tariq Ali made a public announcement, reported in *The Times* of 24 October 1968: "We are avoiding Grosvenor Square because it inevitably leads to a punch-up. We do not want a confrontation with the police. What we want to see is a peaceful demonstration."⁴³ The statement was genuine and an accurate reflection of the intentions of the national organisers. It reflected Tariq Ali's view that the demonstration should be a "show of strength" (by numbers) not a "test of strength" (by force).⁴⁴ He expected the self-discipline of the demonstrators, supported by well-organised stewards, to ensure that this is what happened. The route was agreed with Commander Lawlor, in charge of uniformed police protecting the route.⁴⁵
19. All of this permitted the Home Secretary to reach the conclusion that he announced to the House of Commons in his statement on 24 October 1968: the organisers of the procession have agreed the route, but some proposed to part company and go to Grosvenor Square; traditional methods would be used to enforce the law.⁴⁶
20. The expectations of Tariq Ali and the national ad hoc committee, and the assessments of Conrad Dixon, the Commissioner and the Home Secretary, were justified by events. The main procession peacefully followed the agreed route. No marchers were arrested. Even the Notting Hill contingent, which included HN328 and HN323 Helen Crampton, followed the official route and caused no disorder. However, as Tariq Ali had expected, a number of Maoists and anarchists, estimated by him in the hundreds, but by the police at between 3,000 and 5,000, broke away and tried to enter Grosvenor Square. They were held back by uniformed police. On 28 October 1968, HN2857 Chief Superintendent Arthur Cunningham reported that, despite successive determined charges, accompanied by the throwing of fireworks, small homemade bombs, bottles, staves and other objects, the police prevailed.⁴⁷ A total of 14 police officers and about 50 demonstrators were hurt.⁴⁸ *The Times* reported on the same day: "The official march went impressively according to plan, orderly and comparatively well mannered."⁴⁹ The General Secretary for the National Council for Civil Liberties was reported as saying: "In general the police handling of the demonstrators has been exemplary."⁵⁰
21. The Commissioner's assessment, noted on the outside of the file containing Arthur Cunningham's report, was: "[I]t bears out in full the debt we owe to Special Branch for keeping us so fully informed of the plans of the various factions prior to the demonstration. One of the successes of yesterday's

operation was the efficient planning beforehand and this we were able to do because we knew – not guessed – what the other side were contemplating.”⁵¹

22. The deployment of undercover officers in the manner and for the purposes described was a proportionate and, with one possible exception, lawful means of gathering intelligence about an event that had the potential to result in serious public disorder, injury and damage. The possible exception is that, on a handful of occasions, undercover officers may have obtained the consent of the occupier of a private house to gain access to it by making an express false representation as to their identity. It is far from certain that that occurred. That apart, it did not involve any significant invasion of privacy or role in the organisation of activities or participation in crime. The deception used – pretending to be a political activist in sympathy with the aims of the groups reported on – harmed no one. It contributed to an intelligence picture, which then permitted the police to deal appropriately with the events that, in fact, occurred on the day. Tariq Ali rightly lays emphasis on the intentions and self-discipline of those participating in the VSC organised march; but in the light of what had happened on 17 March 1968, the Commissioner was entitled to seek intelligence about what might occur by the means adopted. SOS reporting provided him with much of what he needed to know.

Endnotes

- 1 [MPS-0728973](#) p4, [MPS-0724119](#) p9, [UCPI0000030045](#)
- 2 [MPS-0734507](#)
- 3 [MPS-0747773](#)
- 4 [MPS-0747772](#)
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 [MPS-0742407](#)
- 7 [Tariq Ali Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) pp15–17
- 8 See [MPS-0746712](#)
- 9 [MPS-0746712](#)
- 10 [MPS-0730078](#)
- 11 [MPS-0730093](#) p1
- 12 [MPS-0730060](#)
- 13 [DOC053](#)
- 14 [DOC054](#)
- 15 [Hansard, HC, Deb. vol. 770, col. 1598, 24 October 1968](#)
- 16 [MPS-0730061](#), [MPS-0730065](#), [MPS-0730066](#), [MPS-0730063](#), [MPS-0730064](#), [MPS-0730095](#), [MPS-0730096](#), [MPS-0730084](#), [MPS-0730091](#), [MPS-0730092](#)
- 17 [MPS-0730061](#), [MPS-0730065](#)
- 18 [MPS-0738815](#), [MPS-0733973](#)
- 19 [MPS-0738583](#)
- 20 [MPS-0730066](#)
- 21 [MPS-0722099](#) p44
- 22 [MPS-0730066](#)
- 23 [MPS-0730063](#) p5
- 24 [MPS-0722099](#) p57, [MPS-0722099](#) p124, [MPS-0722099](#) p116, [MPS-0733952](#), [MPS-0738435](#)
- 25 [MPS-0733965](#)
- 26 [MPS-0730070](#)
- 27 [MPS-0722099](#) p198
- 28 [MPS-0733972](#)
- 29 [MPS-0738583](#)
- 30 [MPS-0733974](#)
- 31 [MPS-0733929](#)
- 32 [MPS-0733934](#)
- 33 [MPS-0733947](#)
- 34 [MPS-0736481](#)
- 35 [MPS-0736480](#)
- 36 [MPS-0733951](#)
- 37 [MPS-0730096](#)
- 38 [MPS-0730091](#)
- 39 [MPS-0730092](#)
- 40 [MPS-0738706](#)
- 41 [MPS-0730088](#); the memorandum in question is [MPS-0730090](#)
- 42 [DOC054](#)

Formation of the Special Operations Squad – the “Autumn Offensive”

- [43](#) *The Times*, 24 October 1968, [DOC055](#)
- [44](#) [Tariq Ali Transcript of Oral Evidence p49](#)
- [45](#) [MPS-0742220](#)
- [46](#) [Hansard, HC, Deb. vol. 770, cols. 1597–605, 24 October 1968](#)
- [47](#) [MPS-0730093](#)
- [48](#) *Ibid.*
- [49](#) *The Times*, 28 October 1968, [DOC056](#)
- [50](#) *Ibid.*
- [51](#) [MPS-0730794](#)

Chapter 2:

The Special Operations Squad after 27 October 1968

1. Deployed undercover officers attended and reported on the post-mortem meetings of the groups they had joined. Some of them, including HN329 (“John Graham”), then expected that the Special Operations Squad (SOS) would be wound up, as did HN3093 Roy Creamer, who makes no secret of his disagreement with the principle of undercover policing. He anticipated that Special Branch would revert to traditional practices.
2. HN325 Detective Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon thought otherwise. In a memorandum to HN2857 Chief Superintendent Arthur Cunningham dated 8 November 1968,¹ Conrad Dixon said that the experience of the previous three months had revealed the basic requirements for the long-term penetration, in depth, of extreme left-wing political factions. The first requirement was for finance for a headquarters flat. Arthur Cunningham recommended that the proposal be approved.² On 9 November 1968, HN151 Commander Ferguson Smith forwarded the proposal to HN1876 Assistant Commissioner Peter Brodie, with a request that continued finance be made available. His view was that, given the existence of plans for another large demonstration in the spring of 1969, it would be necessary for the “penetration squad” to continue to provide information to Special Branch, the Home Office, the Security Service and uniformed colleagues.³ He noted that the Security Service had welcomed the intention to carry on with the squad.⁴ The proposal was referred to the Commissioner, who suggested that it be raised with the Home Office.⁵ It was, and on 13 December 1968, James Waddell, the Home Office’s Deputy Under Secretary with responsibility for policing, asked that it be kept under review as he did not think that the SOS should be a permanent feature of Special Branch.⁶ On 16 December 1968, he gave the Home Office’s approval to continued funding of the squad until midsummer 1969.⁷
3. On 26 November 1968, Conrad Dixon produced a study paper, setting out his template for the future conduct of the unit.⁸ Its primary objective would be to provide information in relation to public-order problems. A secondary by-product would be knowledge of extremist organisations and individuals. The advantages which the unit would have, by contrast with traditional Special Branch techniques, would be accuracy of reporting, the absence of delay and the ability to make accurate assessments of future trends.
4. Conrad Dixon’s paper was forwarded to Arthur Cunningham, who commented on 27 November 1968 that information gathered was not only more accurate, but could not have been obtained at all from “our usual sources”.⁹ His suggestion that the paper be forwarded to the Security Service was rejected

by Ferguson Smith on 28 November 1968.¹⁰ There is no documentary evidence that it was forwarded to the Home Office.

5. In the paper, Conrad Dixon proposed that service be for one year, except for special circumstances, and that there be a minimum of 12 deployed officers, plus one “uncommitted” officer, usually a woman detective constable.¹¹ Her purpose would be to obtain and give evidence about any serious crime encountered during the deployment of the other officers.
6. This was based on an event which had occurred on 9 October 1968 at a meeting of the Notting Hill branch of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC), which HN323 Helen Crampton attended with HN68 (“Sean Lynch”) and HN331.¹² HN323 was handed a leaflet headed “The Potential of a Militant Demonstration” by an activist. It proposed that the demonstration planned for 27 October 1968 should target the US embassy and that commando units of three to five people should arrange to carry bricks, instruments for puncturing car tyres, Molotov cocktails and cattle prods or pointed instruments to use against horses, to the place of confrontation. The leaflet also contained instructions for making homemade grenades.¹³ On 22 October 1968, the Director of Public Prosecutions agreed with the Commissioner that the activist should be arrested and prosecuted, but on the advice of the Attorney General, who had himself consulted the Home Secretary, his arrest was delayed until after the demonstration.¹⁴ He was prosecuted for incitement to riot, convicted after trial in early 1969 and sentenced to two years’ imprisonment. HN323 gave evidence at his trial.¹⁵
7. HN328 Joan Hillier was identified in the study paper as an “uncommitted” officer. She never undertook that role and was unaware of its existence.¹⁶ Like every other surviving officer of the period, she was unaware of the existence of the paper or its proposals.
8. Another element of Conrad Dixon’s proposals was also not made known to deployed officers. In the paper, he observed:

“[T]he incompetence of the British left is notorious, and officers should take care not to get into a position where they achieved prominence in an organisation through natural ability ... members of the squad should be told in no uncertain terms that they must not take office in a group, chair meetings, draft leaflets, speak in public or initiate activity.”¹⁷
9. Conrad Dixon’s command of the SOS came to an end in late May 1969. He was replaced by HN1251 Detective Inspector Phil Saunders.¹⁸
10. On 27 May 1969, Peter Brodie wrote to James Waddell seeking Home Office approval for continued expenditure until the end of the year.¹⁹ He acknowledged that there had been a lessening of the violence that had characterised political demonstrations in 1968, but he did not feel that “we are out of the wood yet”;²⁰

and, because targeted groups were becoming more security-conscious, it would be difficult to recreate the squad should circumstances so demand. He said that Ferguson Smith had told him that the Security Service fully supported the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) view that it should be allowed to continue, that its product was shared with them and that frequent consultation took place between officers of both services.

11. The letter was preceded by a memorandum dated 20 May 1969 by Arthur Cunningham, addressed to Ferguson Smith.²¹ He noted that, of all the sources of information available to the police about the 27 October 1968 demonstration, the deployment of undercover officers was the most successful. He stated: “[I]t was agreed that the Squad should continue to operate, and it was then possible to look at the larger canvas of the political scene, to establish what the new aims should be.” He listed four aims:

“(a) To supply information about the intentions of militant left wing extremists on the occasions of public demonstrations. (b) Identification of those who engage in preliminary planning or who take part in such demonstrations. (c) Obtaining evidence and identifying suspects in relation to breaches of the law before, during and after demonstrations. (d) Gathering and recording information for long-term intelligence purposes.”²²

He identified eight groups on which information was being obtained by undercover officers and noted that the emphasis of the squad’s work was shifting to (c) and (d): the need for accurate intelligence in the field of public order was indisputable, but the information referred to in (b), (c) and (d) “would, on its own, amply justify the continuance of the Squad”.²³

12. There is no documentary evidence that a copy of this memorandum was sent to the Home Office or read by James Waddell or another senior Home Office official. That is because the Home Office file, which would have contained all retained documents about the SOS, QPE/66 1/8/5, is missing. The Inquiry has not retrieved any document which casts doubt on the conclusion of the review conducted by Stephen Taylor, dated January 2015, that the only documents of this nature undoubtedly seen by the Home Office were the annual reports on the SDS prepared by its Detective Chief Inspector for 1983 and 1986. It is, nevertheless, inconceivable that James Waddell was not, throughout, aware of the general nature of the activities undertaken by the SDS. He was the Deputy Under Secretary with responsibility for policing from 1968 to 1975, at a time of major reform of the MPS, initiated by HN3810 Commissioner Sir Robert Mark, planned and undertaken with robust Home Office support (see Sir Robert Mark’s autobiography).²⁴ From September 1972 until early 1974, James Waddell was chairman of an inter-departmental group on Subversion in Public Life (the SPL group), in which MPS Special Branch was represented by its head, HN1253 Deputy Assistant Commissioner Victor Gilbert. The group met on nine occasions before 17 December 1973. The topics on which it reported

included the security significance of the extreme left wing in the UK. It is inconceivable that James Waddell was unaware of the long-standing practice of Special Branch collecting and reporting information about individuals and organisations categorised as subversive (see the copy of the printed instructions sent to the Security Service in 1966).²⁵ From 1969 until 1975, he was the addressee of annual letters from the Assistant Commissioner (Crime) seeking continued authority for special payments to cover the activities of the SDS, which described, in general terms, the nature and purpose of its intelligence-gathering. Letters giving that authority were signed by James Waddell on 23 January 1970,²⁶ and 21 December 1970²⁷ and 1971,²⁸ and 11 March 1975,²⁹ and those sent in April 1973³⁰ and 1974³¹ must have had his approval.

13. By the time of the next review, at the end of 1969, the number of deployed officers had diminished to seven, but the number of groups about which information was being obtained had increased to 19. In his memorandum to the Deputy Assistant Commissioner (Crime) dated 7 November 1969,³² Phil Saunders noted that none of the potentially troublesome groups had been able to rally significant support for any issue, but that it had soon become obvious that the situation in Northern Ireland would attract the attention of extreme elements on the mainland. SOS officers had penetrated the principal groups identified. In his letter to James Waddell dated 4 December 1969, Peter Brodie said that events in Northern Ireland were “a solemn reminder to us all of the need to have the best information possible about revolutionary and subversive organisations in our midst”.³³
14. These documents indicated or left unstated significant differences in SOS targeting and practice from those proposed in Conrad Dixon’s study paper. The targets were a wide variety of extreme left-wing groups, which did not then pose an immediate threat to public order or give rise to internal dangers arising from the actions of persons or organisations judged to be subversive of the state, but which might do so in the future. The emphasis of the squad’s work was shifting from supplying information about the intentions of left-wing extremists for public demonstrations, to long-term intelligence-gathering. There was no rule that deployments should not last for more than 12 months, save in special circumstances. There was no prohibition on accepting office within a target group. No provision was made for gathering evidence for a prosecution, via an “uncommitted” officer. Emphasis, previously absent, was laid on the gathering of information about individuals. The experiences and reporting of the officers considered below in this report bear out and illustrate these developments.
15. Two officers recruited before 27 October 1968, HN329 and HN321 (“William Paul Lewis”), continued to attend VSC branch meetings. HN329 attended and reported on the post-mortem meeting of Hampstead VSC on 30 October 1968,³⁴ then three meetings of the newly formed Kilburn and Willesden branch in

December 1968³⁵ and in January 1969,³⁶ and then meetings of the Camden VSC from February to August 1969.³⁷ The main topics of discussion were complaints about the International Marxist Group (IMG), participation in future peaceful demonstrations and the forthcoming meeting of the VSC in Sheffield on 10 and 11 May 1969 to discuss its future (a meeting he attended at which nothing was decided).³⁸ He befriended Dr Geoff Richman, the principal figure in the Camden branch and a member of the VSC national executive committee, whom he described as a very pleasant individual.³⁹ Neither Dr Richman nor other members of the branch made any attempt to hide what they were doing. HN329's conclusion was that, although members of Camden VSC were notionally revolutionary, none of them was capable of achieving revolutionary aims by force.

16. In February and March 1969, HN321 attended and reported on the fractious meetings of the Lambeth VSC,⁴⁰ which he noted was becoming increasingly dominated by the IMG.⁴¹ His reporting may have contributed to the conclusion, expressed in a review of subversive activities for January to March 1969, that the IMG had retained control of the VSC.⁴² His reporting was then devoted to the activities of the IMG. He attended private meetings, on 11 May 1969,⁴³ at which the expulsion of 11 members following serious political differences and the recognition of the IMG as the official British section of the Fourth International were reported and, on 14 May 1969,⁴⁴ at which IMG delegates to its ninth international conference spoke about it. The last significant event on which he reported was the IMG summer camp held in Scotland on 26 July to 2 August 1969.⁴⁵ It was devoted to political questions, including the stance the IMG should adopt in response to events in Northern Ireland and its intention to use the Irish Civil Rights Solidarity Campaign (ICRSC) as a platform for IMG propaganda.
17. HN335 Michael Tyrrell attended and reported on meetings of Maoist groups, including the Britain–Vietnam Solidarity Front (BVSF),⁴⁶ the Revolutionary Socialist Student Federation, which planned a demonstration on 14 December 1968,⁴⁷ and, possibly, on the March 9th Committee for Solidarity with Vietnam,⁴⁸ which planned a demonstration that was, correctly, predicted to be small and peaceful.
18. HN326 (“Douglas Edwards”) was recruited by Phil Saunders and joined the SOS on 4 November 1968. His understanding was that his task was to learn about extreme left-wing groups who were fomenting trouble on the streets and to assist with the deployment of uniformed officers. He attended the VSC post-mortem on 11 November 1968 at Conway Hall, together with Conrad Dixon, HN321 and HN329.⁴⁹ He then reported on a small and largely inactive anarchist group in the East End of London, on which he prepared a comprehensive report, dated 26 April 1969.⁵⁰ Some of its members caused minor damage and made a nuisance of themselves locally. On instruction,⁵¹ he then became a card-carrying member of the Tower Hamlets branch of the Independent Labour

Party (ILP), a group with a long and chequered history which ceased to exist in 1975. He produced a thoughtful analysis of its current state on 16 June 1969.⁵² There is no suggestion in any of his reports that anyone within the ILP intended to foment public disorder. He became treasurer of the Tower Hamlets branch.⁵³ He described his infiltration of the ILP as “a handle to swing” – to provide an entrée into other groups.⁵⁴

19. It did so: HN326 then joined the Action Committee Against NATO (ACAN) and the Tri-continental Committee. ACAN discussed plans for demonstrations, but nothing came of them because of lack of funds.⁵⁵ The Tri-continental Committee, which published a magazine founded after the Tri-continental conference in Havana in 1966, decided at its annual general meeting to change its name to the British Tri-continental Organisation (BTO).⁵⁶ It was not a large organisation: it was reported to have few members.⁵⁷ Despite that, it was riven with internal dissent: leading members accused others of being agents for foreign powers.⁵⁸ In May 1970, its members resolved that it should cease to exist.⁵⁹ HN326 also infiltrated the Dambusters Mobilising Committee (DMC),⁶⁰ a group opposed to the construction of the Cahora Bassa dam in Mozambique. He reported on meetings of the VSC in September⁶¹ and October⁶² 1970 about a demonstration to be held in the City of London. He concluded that the majority of those attending favoured an orderly demonstration. In the event, it did not take place. His last deployment was, with HN340 (“Andy Bailey” / “Alan Nixon”), to the Red Europe conference in Brussels on 21–22 November 1970.⁶³ They travelled in a coach arranged by the IMG, and HN326 was surprised to find that they had been issued with British visitors’ passports with consecutive numbers.⁶⁴ In the event, no harm befell them. He was then assigned to back-office duties and left the SOS in early 1971.
20. With the possible exception of his deployment into an anarchist group in the East End in 1968–1969 and the ILP, HN326 chose his own targets. None of them posed a threat to public order or to the state, as his reporting and oral evidence demonstrated. Despite that, the ILP, ACAN and the Tri-continental Committee were specifically identified as three of the groups considered to be the main threat to public order in Phil Saunders’ memorandum of 7 November 1969.⁶⁵
21. HN333 was tasked to infiltrate a left-wing group. He did so by accepting the invitation in an advertisement to attend a group which no longer exists. He was partly greeted and partly grilled. The group, in theory, subscribed to violence and did participate in demonstrations which occasionally resulted in minor disorder, but it posed no threat to the state. His deployment was curtailed by illness.⁶⁶
22. HN336 (“Dick Epps”) joined the SOS in early 1969. He was not tasked to infiltrate a particular group, but, given his previous experience in Special Branch, to gather intelligence on groups which might be involved in future public

disorder. The first group he infiltrated was the BVSF. He attended a meeting on 18 February 1969, at which the forthcoming demonstration on 9 March 1969 (on the plans for which HN335 may also have reported) was discussed.⁶⁷ Together with HN135 Michael Ferguson, he also attended the post-mortem meeting on the same day.⁶⁸ Both attended further private and open meetings at which the main topic of discussion was the correctness of Maoist doctrine.⁶⁹ HN336 also attended student meetings addressed by Abhimanyu Manchanda and Tariq Ali.⁷⁰

23. HN336 then drifted away from the BVSF and into the Camden branch of the VSC.⁷¹ Its meetings were small and friendly.⁷² He also attended working meetings of the VSC,⁷³ then the VSC April 26th ad hoc committee,⁷⁴ formed to prepare for a demonstration on 26 April 1970 which passed off without recorded incident. He also attended meetings of the British Campaign for Peace in Vietnam for about six months.⁷⁵ In the “True Spies” TV programme, as “Dan”,⁷⁶ and in his oral evidence, he recounted an incident which is not recorded in any surviving document: he infiltrated the IMG, was entrusted with its office keys for two days and took an imprint of them which he understood would be provided to the Security Service, though he cannot now say that it was.⁷⁷ He also attended meetings of the newly formed North West London branch of Stop the Seventy Tour (STST) in April and May 1970.⁷⁸
24. The passage of time may have dimmed his memory of the detail; but what is clear is that he was largely left to his own devices about which groups to infiltrate and did not encounter or report on anything that posed a serious threat to public order or to the state.
25. HN135 joined the SOS in February or March 1969. He began by attending meetings of the BVSF with HN336 and continued to report on it after HN336 had moved to Camden VSC.⁷⁹ He reported on the Revolutionary Socialist Student Federation.⁸⁰ Nothing of moment occurred in either group apart from the expulsion of three members at the instigation of Abhimanyu Manchanda.⁸¹ He then undertook two deployments of greater significance: in July 1969, he joined the Islington branch of the ICRSC⁸² and, in December 1969, began to attend and report on meetings of the ad hoc committee of the STST.⁸³
26. The STST was, as Lord Hain stated in his written and oral evidence, a loose and rapidly expanding association of individuals and groups opposed to apartheid in South Africa. They believed that a weak link in the South African state’s relationship with the Western world was its sporting links, in particular, tours to England by its all-white rugby and cricket teams. They concluded that traditional methods of attempting to attract public support for their cause – demonstrations outside sporting grounds and media campaigns – had not worked and needed to be supplemented by publicity-seeking stunts, by “non-violent direct action” (NVDA). As Lord Hain explained, the essence of NVDA was surprise.⁸⁴ This meant that, as had been the case with traditional demonstrations and marches, advance notification would not be given to the

police. Lord Hain, Professor Rosenhead (who was a member of the so-called “special action group”) and Ernest Rodker are adamant that they expressly disavowed violence to the person or the threat of it as a tactic and assert that their view was shared by the great majority of STST supporters. I accept that this was their view and that Lord Hain repeatedly and expressly stated it publicly. Nevertheless, as he accepts, NVDA was bound to cause disruption for participants and spectators at the sporting events targeted and to cause problems for the police if they reacted angrily, as happened at a rugby match at Swansea on 15 November 1969. Further, some individuals, acting on their own initiative, were likely to, and did, go beyond what prominent STST figures intended. Hence, the spreading of weedkiller at New Road cricket ground, Worcester, on 7 January 1970 and the digging up of the pitch at Swansea on 19 January 1970.

27. The ad hoc committee of the STST met in Peter Hain’s parents’ home. The purpose of the first meeting attended by HN135 on 5 December 1969⁸⁵ was to discuss tactics for the Twickenham rugby match on 20 December 1969. He reported on 9 December 1969 that it was proposed to hold a demonstration outside, to buy 300 tickets and to stage a stunt on the pitch: two demonstrators were to handcuff themselves to the goalposts. Lord Hain confirmed that this was what was planned and attempted.⁸⁶ It was in keeping with the NVDA discussed by Jonathan Rosenhead’s special action group and practised by Ernest Rodker and others: pitch invasions, letting off flares, taking over the coach in which the Springboks were to travel to the match on 20 December 1969 and glueing the locks of the bedroom doors of a hotel at which they were staying.⁸⁷
28. HN135 and two other Special Branch officers attended the morning public session of the first national conference of STST on 7 March 1970, and HN135 stayed on for the afternoon private session.⁸⁸ It was attended by about 150 delegates, including Michael Brearley, Peter Hain and David Gower. HN135 reported that the meeting was well conducted and orderly. The policy to be adopted was that of NVDA, including a “welcome” for the cricket team at Heathrow, a national demonstration at Lords cricket ground on 6 June 1970 and local demonstrations at earlier matches. He reported on meetings of Jonathan Rosenhead’s special planning group held on 7 and 13 May 1970, in his room at the London School of Economics, at which plans for action when the cricket team arrived were discussed.⁸⁹ They included the disruption of the Lords match, a mass invasion of the pitch and noises off during play. By the time of the next meeting on 24 May 1970,⁹⁰ the tour had been cancelled.
29. Although details of the reporting and its tone are criticised by Lord Hain and Professor Rosenhead, I have no reason to doubt its essential accuracy. It supports their truthful written and oral evidence: that the small groups which made plans for disrupting the tour intended to do so by non-violent means.

30. In his memorandum of 18 November 1970, Phil Saunders made the following observation:

“When there was a sufficiently emotive issue – such as the ‘Stop the Seventy Tour’ campaign which guaranteed broad-based support and the attention of the mass media [–] the extremists were able seriously to threaten the maintenance of order, making it imperative that advance information of their plans was available.”⁹¹

Even without the benefit of hindsight, his observation is difficult to understand or to justify. It may reflect his fears of what might have happened had the tour not been called off, but it is not an accurate reflection of what in fact occurred.

31. There was a postscript to the reporting of HN135. On 27 October 2002, the BBC broadcast the first episode of “True Spies”, a programme with which Special Branch cooperated. “Wilf”, HN474 Wilf Knight, speaking for the SDS, told of the infiltration of the STST by HN135.⁹² He said that HN135 had worked his way up the organisation, becoming Peter Hain’s number two. HN135 had reported on plans for the Twickenham match: flare bombs, smoke bombs and metal tacks were to be thrown onto the pitch. “Wilf” said that this did happen, but it was frustrated by forewarned uniformed police. At a meeting later on, Peter Hain said that there was a spy in their midst. HN135 pointed to another man in the room and said that he thought it was him, whereupon the other man got thrown out. Although Lord Hain said in the programme that he recalled the incident and has now been informed of the cover name of HN135, he now has no recollection of the incident. He is adamant that the rest of what “Wilf” said is not true: he did not have a “number two”, there were no plans to throw tacks onto the pitch and none were thrown.⁹³ HN135 was dead when the programme was broadcast and “Wilf” is now dead. The documentary evidence obtained by this Inquiry suggests that “Wilf” never served in the SDS, so that his version of events may have been second-hand at best. It is not now possible to establish the truth about the incident at the meeting, if it occurred. As to the rest of what “Wilf” said, Lord Hain is clearly right: the STST was not a hierarchical group, tacks were not thrown onto the pitch at Twickenham and HN135’s report of the plans for the match discussed at the meeting on 5 December 1969 mentioned no such plan. The likely explanation for these statements by “Wilf” is confusion and exaggeration, though on whose part it cannot now be said.
32. HN346 Jill Mosdell, too, reported on anti-apartheid groups. The first was North West London STST, which planned lawful activity in April and May 1970⁹⁴ and renamed itself the North West London Action Committee Against Racism in July 1970.⁹⁵ The second was the South West London Action Committee Against Racism, which planned to disrupt Peter Hain’s court appearance on 21 September 1971 and the Miss World contest on 10 November 1971.⁹⁶ The third was the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Surviving reports, from November 1971 to June 1972, deal with plans for peaceful demonstrations at a variety of London sites, including 10 Downing Street on 21 March 1972⁹⁷ and South Africa

House on 9 June 1972.⁹⁸ None of these plans posed any real threat to public order.

33. HN135 and HN68 were, at the same time, reporting on Irish groups of potential interest to the MPS, which had lead responsibility for mainland Irish Republican activity. From May 1969 until the end of 1971, HN68 attended private meetings of the London branch of People's Democracy (PD) (a group founded at Queen's University Belfast on 9 October 1968),⁹⁹ the Hammersmith branch of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA)¹⁰⁰ and the ICRSC,¹⁰¹ formed on the proposal of Gerry Lawless at a PD meeting on 15 May 1969. HN135 joined the Islington branch of ICRSC in August 1969 and reported on its affairs until May 1970.¹⁰² Both undercover officers reported on the bitter disagreements which occurred within and between the groups – about the alleged misappropriation of funds¹⁰³ and about the politics of leading members.¹⁰⁴ In the light of later events, the most striking disagreement was between Gerry Lawless and Noel Jenkinson in the Islington branch of the ICRSC, about the refusal of the latter to allow the former to have any involvement in the fielding of a candidate in the Parliamentary by-election expected on 30 October 1969, because he was a Trotskyist.¹⁰⁵
34. HN340 was recruited into the SOS by Phil Saunders in late 1969.¹⁰⁶ He was not tasked to infiltrate any particular group, but was encouraged to attend a public meeting at Conway Hall organised by the IMG. At the suggestion of Tariq Ali, whom he met at the meeting, he attended meetings of the North London Red Circle, a discussion group loosely affiliated with the IMG.¹⁰⁷ Nothing of significance occurred. On his own initiative, he took over the role of tea club secretary of the group, to find out members' surnames.¹⁰⁸ As already noted, HN340 travelled with HN326 on an IMG organised coach to the Red Europe conference in Brussels on 22 November 1970.¹⁰⁹ He also succeeded HN135 as an undercover officer in the Islington branch of the ICRSC,¹¹⁰ soon to be renamed the Irish Solidarity Campaign (ISC). Together with HN68, he attended the founding conference of the ISC on 10–11 October 1970.¹¹¹ Both produced a detailed and perceptive analysis of its proceedings and concluded that the IMG had gained control of it. This was recorded as a noteworthy achievement in Phil Saunders' memorandum of 18 November 1970.¹¹²
35. None of the undercover officers whose deployments are cited above received any training in the SOS, beyond reading the reports of deployed officers and speaking to them. None of them took steps to bolster their cover identity by researching the register of births, deaths and marriages. Once deployed into a field or area by their managers, many chose their own target groups. There are common threads in the three memorandums cited in support of the application for continued Home Office approval and funding: although there had been no serious outbreak of public disorder in 1969 and 1970, all that was required was an emotive issue to give rise to one; a number of potential issues were identified, including Vietnam, Northern Ireland and sporting ties with South

Africa; in that event, “extremists” would exploit the issue; because they operated in smaller groups and with less advance notice and/or publicity than before, it was imperative that their intentions were discerned by undercover officers deployed into the groups. It would be difficult to restart an effective undercover unit if circumstances should require it to be done. Further, and in any event, the gathering of intelligence about extremists was a worthwhile and justified end in itself.

36. Lord Hain makes two general criticisms of the SOS: there was a lack of clarity about, and of checks and balances within, the unit; this led to an institutional culture of inappropriate and highly politicised surveillance.¹¹³ The first criticism is justified, as is demonstrated by the fact that in the years immediately after 1968, once deployed by their managers, many undercover officers selected their own targets within the field or area into which they had been deployed. The second is partly justified. As several of the surviving undercover officers of the period have testified, they did have a common understanding of the need to protect existing institutions, in particular those which supported and gave effect to parliamentary democracy, from left-wing extremists who wished to undermine them. Their managers appear to have had an underlying belief that there was a body of extremists bent on exploiting any emotive issue to create public disorder. There was an element of truth in this, as later deployments into Trotskyist groups would demonstrate; but it was an inadequate explanation for most serious incidents of public disorder on the infrequent occasions on which they occurred; and it did not begin to justify the infiltration of groups which posed no such threat, such as the STST. But for what is set out in the next paragraph and for the continuing and legitimate need to keep an eye on mainland Irish Republican activity while the “Troubles” lasted, it is difficult to understand why approval and finance for the unit continued.
37. HN68’s membership of NICRA allowed him to gain access to the Hammersmith branch of (Provisional) Sinn Fein, known as the “Terence McSweeney cumann”, on which he began to report on 26 January 1971.¹¹⁴ He participated fully in its activities, including fundraising and leaflet-pasting. In November 1971, he was elected chairman of the branch, appointed to be one of the delegates to the district committee of London (Provisional) Sinn Fein and elected as finance officer for the district.¹¹⁵ He was able to report not only on its day-to-day activities, such as plans for public events,¹¹⁶ but also on instructions from (Provisional) Sinn Fein headquarters in Dublin about the attitude it should adopt to the recently formed Anti-Internment League.¹¹⁷ He reported on the distribution of cash raised by the London district: at the annual general meeting of the South London district on 10 November 1971, it was reported that £1,100 had been sent to Ireland in the last year;¹¹⁸ on 28 July 1972, the treasurer (not HN68) reported that half of the £488 raised had been allocated to the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA).¹¹⁹ HN68 was the first SOS undercover officer to be deployed long term. His reporting was, rightly, valued by senior officers. This aspect of HN68’s deployment illustrates a recurring

theme in the history of the unit: among questionable deployments, some of undoubted value occurred. If the SOS had not existed, the deployment of HN68 would have had to have been undertaken by another section of the MPS, such as B Squad, which had long experience of Irish Republican affairs.

38. On 15 June 1970, “Terms of Reference for a Special Branch” were circulated by the Home Office to all chief constables.¹²⁰ They had previously been agreed and proposed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). They included responsibility for acquiring security intelligence “as directed by the Chief Officer to assist the Security Service in its task of defending the realm ... from actions of persons and organisations which may be judged to be subversive of the security of the State.... Broadly speaking these are any organisation or individual whose purpose is the undermining or overthrow of the established democratic order.”¹²¹ Its tasks included: “(d) in consultation with the Security Service to collect, process and record information about subversive or potentially subversive organisations and individuals”.¹²² The document did not address the means by which security intelligence might be acquired and so made no mention of the existence or deployment of undercover officers to do so.
39. The Inquiry has found nothing to indicate that the detective chief inspectors and detective inspectors in operational charge of the SDS saw this document, but more senior officers must have done so; and, as noted in paragraph 14 above, SOS practice already fulfilled that task.

Endnotes

- [1](#) [MPS-0724121](#)
- [2](#) [MPS-0730219](#) p1
- [3](#) [Ibid.](#) pp1–2
- [4](#) [Ibid.](#) p2
- [5](#) [Ibid.](#) p3
- [6](#) [MPS-0724117](#)
- [7](#) [MPS-0724116](#)
- [8](#) [MPS-0724119](#)
- [9](#) [MPS-0730219](#) p5
- [10](#) [Ibid.](#)
- [11](#) [Ibid.](#)
- [12](#) [MPS-0739187](#)
- [13](#) [MPS-0739152](#)
- [14](#) [MPS-0739147](#)
- [15](#) [MPS-0739149](#)
- [16](#) [HN328 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p31 line 16
- [17](#) [MPS-0724119](#)
- [18](#) [MPS-0724107](#) (first memorandum signed by Saunders)
- [19](#) [MPS-0728973](#)
- [20](#) [Ibid.](#) p1
- [21](#) [Ibid.](#) p4
- [22](#) [Ibid.](#) p4
- [23](#) [Ibid.](#) p5
- [24](#) [DOC057](#) pp125 and 135–6
- [25](#) [MPS-0748348](#)
- [26](#) [MPS-0724100](#)
- [27](#) [MPS-0724130](#)
- [28](#) [MPS-0724177](#)
- [29](#) [MPS-0730676](#)
- [30](#) [MPS-0724161](#)
- [31](#) [MPS-0724156](#)
- [32](#) [MPS-0728973](#) pp6–11
- [33](#) [Ibid.](#) p18
- [34](#) [MPS-0722099](#) p201
- [35](#) [UCPI0000007684](#), [UCPI0000007685](#)
- [36](#) [UCPI0000007686](#)
- [37](#) [UCPI0000007688](#), [UCPI0000007690](#), [UCPI0000007692](#), [UCPI0000007693](#), [UCPI0000007694](#), [UCPI0000007695](#), [UCPI0000007696](#), [UCPI0000007697](#), [UCPI0000007699](#), [UCPI0000007700](#), [UCPI0000007698](#), [UCPI0000007701](#), [UCPI0000007702](#), [UCPI0000007703](#), [UCPI0000007704](#), [UCPI0000007705](#)
- [38](#) [UCPI0000005799](#)
- [39](#) [HN329 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p24 line 7
- [40](#) [UCPI0000007687](#), [UCPI0000007689](#), [UCPI0000007691](#)

The Special Operations Squad after 27 October 1968

- 41 [First Witness Statement of HN321](#) para 67
- 42 [MPS-0731636](#)
- 43 [UCPI0000015669](#)
- 44 [UCPI0000015670](#)
- 45 [UCPI0000015671](#), [UCPI0000007885](#)
- 46 [MPS-0733949](#), [MPS-0736481](#), [MPS-0736480](#), [MPS-0733951](#), [MPS-0736479](#), [MPS-0736476](#)
- 47 [UCPI0000005785](#)
- 48 [MPS-0736470](#)
- 49 [MPS-0730768](#)
- 50 [UCPI0000008161](#)
- 51 [First Witness Statement of HN326](#) para 51
- 52 [UCPI0000008203](#)
- 53 [First Witness Statement of HN326](#) para 133
- 54 [HN326 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p106 line 22
- 55 [UCPI0000008209](#), [UCPI00000035178](#)
- 56 [UCPI00000035170](#)
- 57 [UCPI00000035174](#)
- 58 [UCPI00000035305](#)
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 [UCPI0000008111](#), [UCPI0000008112](#), [UCPI0000008113](#), [UCPI0000008114](#), [UCPI0000008115](#),
[UCPI0000008116](#), [UCPI0000008117](#), [UCPI0000008118](#), [UCPI0000008119](#), [UCPI0000008109](#)
- 61 [UCPI0000005814](#)
- 62 [UCPI0000005816](#)
- 63 [First Witness Statement of HN326](#) para 112
- 64 [First Witness Statement of HN340](#) para 51
- 65 [MPS-0728973](#)
- 66 [First Witness Statement of HN333](#)
- 67 [MPS-0732691](#)
- 68 [MPS-0732690](#)
- 69 [MPS-0732688](#), [MPS-0732971](#), [MPS-0732689](#), [MPS-0736439](#), [MPS-0736446](#)
- 70 [First Witness Statement of HN336](#) para 58
- 71 [UCPI0000007770](#), [UCPI0000007769](#), [UCPI0000007771](#), [UCPI0000007772](#), [UCPI0000007706](#)
- 72 [First Witness Statement of HN336](#) para 63
- 73 [UCPI0000005803](#), [UCPI0000005804](#), [UCPI0000005805](#)
- 74 [UCPI0000005806](#), [UCPI0000005807](#), [UCPI0000005808](#), [UCPI0000005809](#), [UCPI0000005810](#),
[UCPI0000005811](#)
- 75 [First Witness Statement of HN336](#) para 66
- 76 [UCPI0000031845](#) p5
- 77 [HN336 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) pp67–9
- 78 [MPS-0736281](#), [MPS-0736268](#), [MPS-0736257](#), [MPS-0736296](#), [UCPI0000014418](#),
[MPS-0736346](#), [MPS-0736364](#)
- 79 [MPS-0736430](#), [MPS-0736433](#)
- 80 [UCPI0000005788](#), [UCPI0000005789](#)
- 81 [UCPI0000005789](#)
- 82 [UCPI0000008662](#), [UCPI0000008678](#), [UCPI0000008691](#), [UCPI0000008555](#)

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- 83 [UCPI0000008656](#)
- 84 [Lord Peter Hain Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p42 line 21
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 [Lord Peter Hain Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p46 line 14
- 87 [UCPI0000031857](#), [First Witness Statement of Lord Peter Hain](#)
- 88 [MPS-0736190](#) (Special Branch report), [UCPI0000008660](#) (SDS report)
- 89 [UCPI0000008607](#), [MPS-0736368](#)
- 90 [UCPI0000008635](#)
- 91 [MPS-0728972](#) p3
- 92 [UCPI0000031845](#)
- 93 [First Witness Statement of Lord Peter Hain](#) paras 55 and 63
- 94 [UCPI0000014419](#), [MPS-0736273](#), [UCPI0000014420](#), [UCPI0000014413](#), [MPS-0736386](#)
- 95 [UCPI0000014427](#)
- 96 [UCPI0000008245](#)
- 97 [MPS-0737004](#), [MPS-0737014](#), [MPS-0737006](#), [UCPI0000008446](#)
- 98 [MPS-0737071](#)
- 99 [UCPI0000009872](#), [UCPI0000009873](#)
- 100 [MPS-0739888](#), [UCPI0000016112](#), [UCPI0000016015](#), [UCPI0000016029](#), [UCPI0000016058](#),
[UCPI0000016063](#), [UCPI0000016065](#), [UCPI0000016068](#)
- 101 See [UCPI0000009873](#), [UCPI0000016100](#), [UCPI0000008642](#), [UCPI0000008648](#),
[UCPI0000008652](#), [UCPI0000009875](#), [UCPI0000008654](#), [UCPI0000008661](#), [UCPI0000008657](#),
[UCPI0000008666](#), [UCPI0000008667](#)
- 102 [UCPI0000008678](#), [MPS-0732189](#)
- 103 [UCPI0000008601](#)
- 104 [UCPI0000008564](#)
- 105 [UCPI0000008571](#)
- 106 [First Witness Statement of HN340](#) para 12
- 107 Ibid. para 34
- 108 Ibid. para 103
- 109 Ibid. para 48
- 110 [MPS-0732319](#), [MPS-0738663](#)
- 111 [UCPI0000022302](#)
- 112 [MPS-0728972](#) p3
- 113 [First Witness Statement of Lord Peter Hain](#) para 9
- 114 [MPS-0728824](#)
- 115 [MPS-0728449](#), [MPS-0728451](#)
- 116 [MPS-0739672](#)
- 117 [MPS-0741375](#)
- 118 [MPS-0728450](#)
- 119 [MPS-0739324](#)
- 120 [UCPI0000004425](#)
- 121 Ibid. p1 and p3
- 122 Ibid. p2

Chapter 3:

The Special Operations Squad 1971 and the Special Demonstration Squad 1972 to 1973

1. In 1972, two changes of no significance for the purposes of this report occurred: the Special Operations Squad (SOS) was renamed the Special Demonstration Squad (SDS) – and shall be referred to as the SDS hereafter; and the accounting year was changed to coincide with the fiscal year.¹ Between 1971 and 1973, an unannounced change of greater significance also occurred: the standard duration of operational activity by a typical undercover officer settled down to about four years. The number of undercover officers deployed at any one time increased to 12.² The officers in operational charge of the SDS were HN332 Detective Chief Inspector Cameron Sinclair in 1971, and HN294, a detective inspector in 1972 and detective chief inspector in 1973.
2. Self-tasking by undercover officers continued, but tended to focus on individuals and groups within the following categories: Irish, Trotskyists, Maoists, anarchists and opponents of apartheid.
3. The memorandum produced by the detective chief inspector in operational charge of the unit had, by now, become in all but name its annual report. It focused on groups within these categories. The three annual reports for 1971 to 1973³ acknowledged that, with the possible exception of a demonstration in Whitehall held soon after “Bloody Sunday” in 1972 (on 5 February 1972), no significant public disorder had occurred. HN294 acknowledged, in the 1972 annual report, that that demonstration “underlined the lesson police have learned in recent years – that a demonstration held about a week after an emotive event, though small, is likely to be violent”.⁴ By contrast, those held sooner were “disjointed and poorly supported”; and those later, “usually too far removed from the motivation to achieve anything like the sharpness of the more immediate protest”.⁵ This appears to have been the common understanding of those working within the SDS in this period, because it was repeated by HN103 David Smith, a back office sergeant between 1970 and 1974, in an essay prepared during the Bramshill inspectors’ course in 1979.⁶
4. The groups identified in the annual reports do not coincide precisely with those in retrieved intelligence reports or with the evidence of living undercover officers. Nothing is likely to turn on this and the narrative set out below is mainly based on the last two.

5. A total of 634 written reports have been retrieved from Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and Security Service records for the calendar year 1972 and analysed, to permit an assessment to be made of the topics covered by them. These break down as follows: 182 deal with the identification and lives of individuals; 456 deal with the political activities and organisation of the groups infiltrated and/or reported on; and 160 contain some reference to activities, past and future (mostly the latter), which might have something to do with public order. (The total number exceeds 634, because many of the reports in the last two categories cover more than one topic – typically, a report on the political activities of a group will contain a brief reference to a future event in which its members may participate.)
6. Irish groups were penetrated by HN68 (“Sean Lynch”) and HN340 (“Andy Bailey”/“Alan Nixon”), as already noted in Chapter 2. HN340 was the first undercover officer to be withdrawn because of concerns about his safety. He reported that the owner of his cover accommodation overheard a threat to him, in an Irish accent, in a telephone conversation. He was immediately withdrawn.⁷
7. In early 1972, HN585 Commander Matthew Rodger made arrangements to transfer HN344 (“Ian Cameron”), who had already acquired some knowledge of the Irish Republican field in Special Branch, into the SDS, with a view to him reporting on a small new quasi-military group, the Northern Minority Defence Force (NMDF).⁸ At a meeting of ten men on 25 March 1972, he was appointed to the “headquarters staff” of the group, which discussed sending a military unit to Northern Ireland to take part in what they believed to be the imminent outbreak of civil war.⁹ He had by then also become the NMDF delegate to another Irish group, the Anti-Internment League (AIL).¹⁰ Both the NMDF and HN344’s deployment were short-lived. The former split at a meeting attended by HN344 on 18 May 1972.¹¹ His deployment ended when he was asked to go to Londonderry by one member of the group with three others. Permission for him to go was refused after Matthew Rodger reported to the Deputy Assistant Commissioner that it would be too dangerous for him to do so.¹²
8. HN298 (“Michael Scott”), HN301 (“Bob Stubbs”) and HN338 also reported on the AIL. HN301 infiltrated the Hammersmith and Fulham branch from May 1972 until it ceased to function in February 1973.¹³ HN298 attended meetings of the Central London branch from September 1972 until the central delegate committee decided not to reconvene on 2 October 1973.¹⁴ All three officers attended the AIL national conference on 7 and 8 October 1972, at which support was expressed for the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) bombing campaign.¹⁵ That apart, with the exception of discussions about plans for a “Bloody Sunday” march in central London on 28 January 1973,¹⁶ meetings were generally held to listen to talks on Irish affairs and relations with other Republican support groups.

9. A variety of Maoist groups were infiltrated. HN45 (“David Robertson”) was tasked to do so. As frequently occurred, he began, in mid-1970, by attending public meetings – of the English Communist Movement (Marxist–Leninist)¹⁷ – and talks by Abhimanyu Manchanda on Marxist topics at the Britain–Vietnam Solidarity Front (BVSF)¹⁸ and the Revolutionary Marxist–Leninist League (RMLL).¹⁹ By January 1971, he was admitted to private meetings of the RMLL and was able to witness the disputes between its members about both political and personal matters.²⁰ Diane Langford doubted that he would have been able to gain entry to all of the meetings on which he reported. She also criticises the tone and accuracy of his reporting and its completeness (because it omits reference to a particularly striking accusation of personal misconduct by one male member).²¹ I am satisfied that he did attend the meetings on which he reported and that his reporting is broadly accurate. In one respect, it was plainly right: he predicted that the group would soon disband.²² It became inactive by September 1972.²³ He also reported on attempts to revive the BVSF²⁴ and on its committee’s plan for a demonstration against the inauguration of President Nixon on 20 January 1973.²⁵ His deployment came to a sudden end in circumstances described below.
10. On 22 January 1971, HN45 reported on plans for the recently formed North London branch of the Women’s Liberation Front (WLF), to be led by two female members of the RMLL.²⁶ This led to the deployment of HN348 (“Sandra”), one of only two female officers then serving in the SDS. She attended a public meeting of the WLF on 17 February 1971²⁷ and was invited to attend a private meeting on 25 February 1971.²⁸ She attended and reported on that and subsequent meetings. The group devoted most of its time to ideological discussion. In the opinion of HN348, it was “really just a disorganised group with a couple of very vocal members” (the two who had been identified by HN45 as its leaders).²⁹ By the end of 1971, they had fallen out. As reported by HN348, the issues that gave rise to the falling out were as follows: disagreement about their reports of a Women’s National Liberation Conference held on 16–17 October 1971, which had ended in turmoil;³⁰ a proposal to change the name of the group to the “Revolutionary Women’s League”;³¹ and an accusation by one against the other that she was disruptive.³² That led to a showdown on 20 March 1972, at a meeting attended by ten people, at which the accused woman responded to a resolution calling for her suspension by making a statement on behalf of the Marxist–Leninist Workers Association members of the Revolutionary Women’s Union (RWU). She and her two supporters then left.³³
11. Thereafter, HN348 continued to report on the yet more sparsely attended meetings of the RWU. Despite the lack of enthusiasm for activities, it did support the Schools Action Union strike on 8 May 1972,³⁴ supported by about 800 children in North London, and the nurseries campaign.³⁵ She also reported on national conferences: the third National Women’s Liberation Conference on 25–26 March 1972,³⁶ reportedly dominated by anarchists; the National Women’s

Conference Committee of the Women's Liberation Movement on 9 September 1972, which she described as "childish, disjointed and unrealistic";³⁷ and the better organised fourth National Women's Liberation Conference on 3–5 November 1972.³⁸

12. HN348 did not question the justification for her deployment at the time, but in hindsight does so.³⁹ Her contemporaneous reporting must have made it clear to her superiors that the groups on which she was reporting posed no threat to public order or to the state. Despite that, the WLF was named in the 1970 and 1971 annual reports, and the RWU, WLF and Schools Action Union in the 1972 annual report. It is hard to credit that penetration of or even reporting on these groups could have been thought worthwhile. Perhaps for that reason, she was not replaced when she was withdrawn from deployment at the same time as HN45.
13. HN45, HN348 and HN346 Jill Mosdell, who had just started to report on Maoist groups, were withdrawn from deployment in February 1973, when HN45 was recognised by a member of the public – an Irish woman who was a work colleague and friend of Diane Langford – who knew him to be a policeman. Exactly what happened has been the subject of disputed evidence. What is not in doubt is that the incident occurred on 6 February 1973 at a meeting of the Indo-China Solidarity Conference held at the London School of Economics (LSE), attended by Diane Langford, HN45 and HN346, and about 60 others, and that the Irish woman recognised HN45 as a policeman.⁴⁰
14. I am satisfied, for reasons explained in the closed interim report, that they did know each other and that HN45 did know that she was an Irish woman. He has a vivid recollection of her saying, as he entered the room from the stairs, in a loud voice, "Here are Scotland Yard come to take us away," whereupon he pretended to give her a hug, told her to say nothing and departed hurriedly, alone.⁴¹ Diane Langford's evidence is that the Irish woman recognised HN45 and that he grabbed her by the wrist and said that he wanted to talk to her outside, whereupon both of them left. The Irish woman spoke to Diane Langford about a week later and told her that HN45 worked for Special Branch, and would cause something nasty to happen to her family in Ireland if she told Diane Langford or Abhimanyu Manchanda.⁴² Diane Langford made a note of what had been said, to which she referred in a dissertation written in 2005.⁴³
15. Because the Irish woman has not been traced and has not provided any evidence of her own about the incident, I cannot reach or express a considered view about exactly what happened, save in two respects. I believe that it is very unlikely that the Irish woman identified HN45 as a policeman in a loud voice within earshot of the group attending the meeting. Someone else, not least Diane Langford, would have remembered if she had done so. I also believe that it is very unlikely that HN45 made a threat about what would happen to her family in Ireland if she revealed his identity. She had nothing to fear from him

and he knew nothing that could have caused him to believe that such a threat might be effective. What matters is that he and HN348 and HN346 had to be immediately withdrawn from deployment as a result of the incident. Their withdrawal meant that there were no female undercover officers in the SDS for the first time since its formation.

16. Their withdrawal occurred immediately before the date on which the 1972 annual report was signed, 14 February 1973. Detective Inspector HN294 stated: "Whenever there has been doubt [suspicion that an undercover officer was a spy] the officer's personal safety and the security of the operation have been given priority and the officer has been withdrawn."⁴⁴ If HN45's recollection is right, the true reasons may have included a wish to protect the secrecy of the SDS within the MPS and the reputation of the MPS. HN45 said that the Head of Special Branch, HN1253 Deputy Assistant Commissioner Victor Gilbert, and an officer identified by HN45 by name as Deputy Commissioner Roland Watts (presumably HN1254 Chief Superintendent Rollo Watts) told him that, if he was ever confronted about being an undercover officer, he should say that he was acting "off his own bat" and that his superior officers were unaware of what he was doing.⁴⁵
17. HN347 ("Alex Sloan") was recruited into the SDS in late 1970 or very early 1971. He was tasked to report on a specific Maoist group, the Irish National Liberation Solidarity Front (INLSF).⁴⁶ This was a small group of which Edward Davoren was the leading figure. Dr Norman Temple joined it in September 1970 and remained a member for about a year.⁴⁷ He has provided an interesting and detailed account of its affairs during the time that he and HN347 belonged to it. It accords with the retrieved reporting and current recollection of HN347. Edward Davoren was a charismatic and dominant leader who considered that he was always right. Despite its name, he insisted that the INLSF was a British revolutionary group. Much time at meetings was devoted to the need for revolutionary change, to be achieved by violence; but, as both Dr Norman Temple and HN347 realised, that was for the theoretical future.⁴⁸ The group did not practise or advocate violence in the present. Its main activities were producing and selling its newspaper, the *Irish Liberation Press*, and planning small demonstrations.
18. HN347 reported on one incident of note, in advance of its occurrence: a public meeting at Islington Town Hall on 15 March 1971, when a "People's Court" would be held to try "the pigs who murdered Stephen McCarthy".⁴⁹ At two subsequent meetings, on 21 March⁵⁰ and 2 May 1971,⁵¹ Edward Davoren told meetings of the group about plans for possible legal action to further the McCarthy family campaign. HN347 reported on these events. He did not infiltrate the family's campaign.
19. As HN347 reported and Dr Norman Temple remembers, the INLSF inevitably split when, on 16 June 1971, Edward Davoren secured the expulsion of those

who disagreed with him from the inner core of the group.⁵² They forestalled their expulsion from the group as such at a special conference on 26 and 27 June 1971, attended by 26 members, by their departure and declaration that they would have nothing further to do with him.⁵³

20. Both HN347 and Dr Norman Temple have provided a truthful account of how HN347's deployment ended. On paper, their accounts differed. Once both had given oral evidence, it became clear that the differences were marginal and readily explicable by differences of perception and knowledge at the time and by the passage of time. Dr Norman Temple's understanding of what was happening was based on a more intimate knowledge of Edward Davoren and the inner workings of the INLSF than that possessed by HN347, who never penetrated the inner core of the group. HN347 was accused of being a police informant by one of the dissidents. Edward Davoren shared that belief, but pretended not to and publicly held it against the dissident. Both Dr Norman Temple and HN347 say that the dissident reacted angrily to the accusation. HN347 remembers being followed to his cover address by two INLSF members, one of whom was his accuser,⁵⁴ though it is not clear whether this occurred before or after the accusation was made. In his written evidence, Dr Norman Temple stated his belief that HN347 was trying to sow further discord within the group by identifying the two who followed him as being on different sides of the split.⁵⁵ This would have been a refinement too far: all that HN347 was determined to do was to leave the group unscathed.
21. The reason and justification for the deployment of HN347 into the INLSF is far from clear. It was, and was throughout known to be, no real threat to public order or the state.
22. The infiltration of Trotskyist groups began to become a regular feature of deployments in this period. The first group infiltrated by HN339 ("Stewart Goodman") was the Dambusters Mobilising Committee (DMC) in the autumn of 1970, in succession to HN326 ("Douglas Edwards"). As HN326 had found, this group's preferred tactic was peaceful disruption, by sit-ins at branches of Barclays bank and by protests at shareholders' meetings. HN339's reports contain no reference to any past or prospective breaches of the criminal law. In hindsight, he believes that he was tasked to infiltrate this group as a means of gaining entry to a more militant group.⁵⁶ He may be right. It is difficult to conceive of any other justification for infiltrating the DMC.
23. HN339 was then tasked to infiltrate the International Socialists (IS). His recollection is that he answered an advertisement in the IS newspaper for volunteers and got in touch with the organiser of the Lambeth branch.⁵⁷ The first surviving report by him about IS is dated 9 February 1971 and concerns its forthcoming annual conference on 10–12 April 1971.⁵⁸ He attended the conference and produced a detailed report on what had transpired and who attended.⁵⁹ His recollection, which is confirmed by instances of similar reporting

by other officers, is that he prepared it with the aid of an account of the conference circulated to IS members.⁶⁰ He produced regular reports on the affairs of the branch, which he acknowledged to be of little Special Branch interest. He also attended the autumn rally in Skegness, on 16–17 October 1971,⁶¹ and reported on the forthcoming conference to be held in December 1971, to discuss the expulsion of the “Trotskyist Tendency”.⁶² He did not attend that conference because, by then, his deployment had ended abruptly. When returning, intoxicated, from a meeting with activists in a public house, in his SDS car, he crashed into a tree. Uniformed officers attended the scene. He told them who he was. He was charged with driving without due care and attention and pleaded guilty. HN1251 Detective Chief Inspector Phil Saunders attended court and took steps to ensure that HN339 was not compromised.⁶³ There is no reference to this incident in the 1971 annual report.

24. HN338’s principal target was the International Marxist Group (IMG). According to retrieved reports, he had begun to report on Notting Hill IMG and the London aggregate in April 1972.⁶⁴ He attended the annual general meeting held on 21–23 April 1973,⁶⁵ at which two groups and four tendencies were unable to agree on the key issue for decision: whether or not to achieve progress by concentrating on local or national organisations. His report was careful and detailed and not without humour: he noted that because of discrepancies in the accreditation of delegates, those voting were required to raise playing cards, with the Union Jack printed upside down on the back. On 11 June 1973, his report was commended by Matthew Rodger, who commented, prematurely as it turned out, that the IMG no longer posed any real threat to public order.⁶⁶ During his deployment, HN338 also reported on the decision of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC) committee, on 16 November 1971, to cease activity in its own right, and continue only within the IMG;⁶⁷ and, on 26 October 1972, on the fact that the AIL was now controlled by the IMG.⁶⁸ The only meeting of note (of 12 members of the West London AIL) on which he reported occurred on 5 March 1973: a (Provisional) Sinn Fein speaker’s statement that the Irish war was motivated by nationalism and was not a class war was roundly denounced by the audience.⁶⁹
25. HN343 (“John Clinton”) was tasked to infiltrate IS, but left free to decide which branch he would join.⁷⁰ He joined the Croydon branch in the autumn of 1971 and the Hammersmith and Fulham branch in late 1972 or early 1973. Surviving reports show that he obtained, probably from the branches, details of what was occurring at national level. On 9 December 1971, the Croydon branch secretary reported on the outcome of the special national conference on 4 December 1971, at which it was decided that the “Trotskyist Tendency” and IS would split.⁷¹ In March 1972, he obtained a report of the national committee, to be presented at the forthcoming annual conference on 1–3 April 1972.⁷² He attended the conference and on 27 April 1972 produced a detailed report on what had transpired and who had attended.⁷³ Thereafter, he provided periodic reports on the internal organisation of IS, its senior personnel and medium-term aims,

which, in November 1973, included industrial intervention.⁷⁴ His deployment ended, at his own request, in 1974.⁷⁵

26. HN343 understood, from the start, that the purpose of his deployment was twofold: to provide advance intelligence of events that might disturb the public order; and to gather information about subversive activity and those participating in it, which would be provided to the Security Service.⁷⁶
27. HN299/342 (“David Hughes”) joined the SDS in 1971. He was not tasked to infiltrate a specific group, but began by going to the public meetings of left-wing groups advertised in *Time Out* magazine.⁷⁷ By November 1971, he was attending private meetings of a small number of members of the Spartacus League (SL) and IMG.⁷⁸ For most of his deployment, he reported on the IMG: on its alignment with SL in 1971 and 1972, on its unsuccessful attempts to infiltrate the Labour Party,⁷⁹ trade unions⁸⁰ and the Troops Out Movement (TOM)⁸¹ and on meetings of the Irish Solidarity Campaign (ISC).⁸² Together with HN338, he attended and produced an extensive report on the IMG/SL fusion conference held 27–29 May 1972.⁸³ Little in the way of activity disruptive of public order or threatening to the state was mooted during these meetings. The statement by an IMG speaker, at a meeting of the committee for the defence of student unions on 21–22 January 1972, that he was looking for three volunteers for special action during a demonstration that would involve breaking the law,⁸⁴ and the proposal for a collection among building workers for PIRA at a meeting of the ISC on 10 February 1972,⁸⁵ stand out because of their rarity.
28. HN299/342 also produced occasional reports on Red Circle,⁸⁶ AIL,⁸⁷ Fight On (the renamed Lotta Continua)⁸⁸ and on the North London Claimants Union.⁸⁹ He was a frequent attender at small meetings of Marxist/Maoist study groups and witnessed, like HN45 and HN348, vehement disagreements between participants⁹⁰ and, like HN347, discussions about large-scale violence in the theoretical future. By way of example, at one class held on 30 April 1974, one speaker said that, when the socialist revolution took place, two million people in the UK would have to be liquidated, because they could not be converted to the cause of the revolution or would present a threat to it.⁹¹ In his witness statement, HN299/342 observes, accurately, that the people he reported on talked about revolution a lot and attended a lot of demonstrations, but did not actually engage in subversive activities.⁹² He did not witness or participate in any public disorder.⁹³ His deployment continued until 1976.⁹⁴
29. HN301 joined the SDS in 1971 and was deployed in early 1972.⁹⁵ He was tasked to befriend a member of the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign. He did not succeed.⁹⁶ He then began to report on IS and produced a careful and detailed account of its annual conference on 17–20 March 1973.⁹⁷ A good deal of his reporting has not been retrieved, but it is clear that he did become a member of the Wandsworth and Battersea branch⁹⁸ and, by early 1976, of the Paddington branch, of which he became treasurer.⁹⁹ His understanding was that the function

of the SDS was to gather intelligence about those who posed a threat to public order, but that it “gradually morphed into more of a general intelligence-gathering unit”.¹⁰⁰ As already noted in paragraph 8, he also attended and reported on meetings of the AIL.¹⁰¹

30. Two undercover officers had short deployments, which appear to have achieved nothing. HN349 was tasked to infiltrate anarchist groups, but failed to do so because he was unable to gain the trust of participants.¹⁰² HN345 (“Peter Fredericks”) served in the SDS for a matter of months in 1971.¹⁰³ For reasons that I need not resolve, but which reflect no personal discredit on him, he was then returned to another squad within Special Branch. Two reports attributable to him have been retrieved, both of small meetings of the Black Defence committee in September 1971, during which nothing of interest to Special Branch occurred.¹⁰⁴ His recollection is that he also reported on one of the groups protesting at the actions of the Pakistan Government in what was then East Pakistan.¹⁰⁵ His reporting is likely to have been the foundation for the reference to Action Bangladesh and, perhaps, the Afro-Asian American Association in the 1971 annual report.
31. One officer merits lengthier analysis, because of the range and nature of the groups penetrated by him and because of one incident, which has given rise to a referral to the Home Office panel charged with considering possible miscarriages of justice arising out of the deployment of an undercover officer. He is HN298.
32. HN298 knew of the existence of the SDS and wanted to join it.¹⁰⁶ He did so towards the end of 1971.¹⁰⁷ As is the case with other officers recruited at this time, he received no formal training.¹⁰⁸ He may well have been the first undercover officer to research the name of a person at Somerset House for the purpose of constructing a cover identity. He did not choose the identity of a deceased child.¹⁰⁹ He had cover accommodation, and chose his own cover work.¹¹⁰ He was not tasked to infiltrate any particular group.¹¹¹
33. The first group he infiltrated was the Putney branch of the Young Liberals, of which Peter Hain was honorary president. It is likely that, as David Smith explained, he did so as a stepping stone to other groups.¹¹² The first meeting he attended of which there is a retrieved report took place in the home of Peter Hain’s parents on 6 January 1972.¹¹³ Within a fortnight, he was elected membership secretary of the branch, as he reported on 26 January 1972.¹¹⁴ He attended and reported on meetings of the national council of Young Liberals in Leicester on 29–30 January 1972,¹¹⁵ of the branch on 3 February 1972¹¹⁶ and of the Easter conference held in Morecambe from 31 March to 3 April 1972. He produced a comprehensive retrospective report of its proceedings on 4 May 1972, which included a list of the names of some of the 600 people who had attended and of those elected as its officers.¹¹⁷ Discussions at all levels were purely political. Only three topics on which he reported had anything to do with

public order: forthcoming marches on 19 February and 14 May 1972; and the progress of a transit van, with a loudspeaker on board along the proposed route of the West Cross Route, accompanied by leafleting, an event which passed off without untoward incident, as he reported on 30 June 1972.¹¹⁸ He reported on the outcome of Young Liberal conferences in 1973 and 1974.¹¹⁹ It is not clear if he attended them. His superiors must have realised that the Young Liberals were not a legitimate target for infiltration, because they did not feature as an organisation penetrated by the SDS in the annual reports for 1972 and 1973.

34. At the same time, HN298 attended meetings of “Commitment/Croydon Libertarians”, an ineffectual group of libertarian anarchists. The high point of their activity, on which HN298 reported on 12 April 1973,¹²⁰ was the hanging of a chain, for five minutes, across Church Street, Croydon, on 6 April 1973, to support the pedestrianisation of the street. They were identified as a penetrated group in the annual reports for 1972 and 1973.¹²¹
35. The incident that has given rise to the referral to the Home Office panel occurred on 12 May 1972 outside what was then known as the Star and Garter hotel in Richmond. The British Lions rugby team had gathered there to prepare for their departure by coach to Heathrow airport to catch their flight to South Africa. Information about their intention was provided to Peter Hain by friendly sports journalists opposed to apartheid.¹²² A plan, mainly organised by Ernest Rodker, was mooted to disrupt it.¹²³ On the afternoon of 12 May 1972, a meeting of 21 people was convened at Ernest Rodker’s home.¹²⁴ HN298’s evidence is that he learnt of the plan from Peter Hain’s mother, probably by telephone.¹²⁵ Lord Hain told the Inquiry that his mother, given her experience in South Africa, would not have alerted him about the meeting by telephone and wonders whether or not he learnt of it by other means.¹²⁶ His suspicion may be misplaced: HN298 was the membership secretary of the branch of the Young Liberals, of which her son was honorary president, and he had attended meetings in her home. However, what matters for the purposes of this report is not how HN298 came to learn of the meeting, but what happened at it and at the hotel.
36. HN298 reported that the plan discussed was for two people to disable the coach and for its exit from the car park to be blocked by three cars.¹²⁷ Professor Jonathan Rosenhead, who attended both the meeting and the protest, accepts that his description of the plan is accurate, but insists that there was no intention to obstruct the highway outside the car park.¹²⁸ Whatever the intention, the presence of a uniformed police officer deterred the disabling of the coach, and building workers removed the cars. About 20 protesters then sat down to obstruct the departure of the coach. Uniformed police arrived and removed the protesters. Fourteen were arrested and charged with obstructing the highway and with obstructing a police constable in the execution of his duty.¹²⁹ Ten were tried at Mortlake Magistrates’ Court on 14 June and 12 July 1972, convicted of both charges, fined £10 on the first and conditionally discharged on the second.

HN298, Ernest Rodker and Christabel Gurney were among them. Jonathan Rosenhead was convicted of the first charge only and fined £10. No evidence was offered against him on the second. One man was sentenced at Sutton Crown Court, following his committal on a connected driving charge. One was acquitted of both charges on 23 August 1972.¹³⁰

37. All defendants advanced a defence: that the incident had taken place entirely in the car park. If it had, they should not have been convicted of obstructing the highway; and, because the protest did not give rise to any apprehended breach of the peace, should also not have been convicted of obstructing a police constable in the execution of his duty, by refusing to move at his direction. HN298 participated in the proceedings under his cover name and, with the other defendants, pleaded not guilty.
38. The facts and circumstances of the arrest and pending court proceedings were reported by HN298 to Detective Inspector HN294, and by him to Matthew Rodger. In a note dated 16 May 1972, HN294 contemplated that HN298 would probably have to apply for legal aid and attend meetings with all those arrested and discuss tactics.¹³¹ He and Matthew Rodger decided to await developments. HN151 Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ferguson Smith decided that, provided the charges remained as then formulated, “[W]e should not run into difficulties and [HN298] will have to go through with it.”¹³² In a note dated 26 June 1972, HN294 recorded his opinion that the outcome was beneficial to the SDS.¹³³ There is no suggestion in the evidence of HN298, or in the two notes described, that the court was informed of the fact that one of the defendants was an undercover police officer.
39. HN298 recalls that solicitor Benedict Birnberg spoke to all arrested at the police station as a group and advised them to plead not guilty.¹³⁴ On 21 May 1972, HN298 attended a meeting at the home of Jonathan Rosenhead at which the evidential value of press photographs of the event, which Benedict Birnberg had obtained, was discussed.¹³⁵ On 11 June 1972, at a meeting of those arrested, Jonathan Rosenhead reported on advice that they had been given on the previous day by Benedict Birnberg.¹³⁶
40. The reasons for the referral of the case to the Home Office panel are set out in the note dated 7 June 2021.¹³⁷ This is the first occasion on which a deliberate decision was made not to disclose to the prosecutor or the court the participation of an undercover officer in the events, which gave rise to the contested case with which both were dealing and in the hearings themselves. The case was referred by the Criminal Cases Review Commission to Kingston Crown Court, which allowed the appeal on 17 January 2023.
41. As already noted in paragraph 8, HN298 also reported from September 1972 onwards on the AIL.¹³⁸ His later reporting on the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) will be dealt with in Chapter 4.

Endnotes

- 1 [MPS-0728970](#)
- 2 [MPS-0728971](#)
- 3 [MPS-0728971](#), [MPS-0728970](#), [MPS-0728975](#)
- 4 [MPS-0728970](#) p11
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 [MPS-0747444](#)
- 7 [First Witness Statement of HN340](#) para 111
- 8 [MPS-0734406](#)
- 9 [MPS-0734410](#)
- 10 [MPS-0734416](#)
- 11 [MPS-0734415](#)
- 12 [MPS-0724171](#)
- 13 [MPS-0728847](#), [UCPI0000008047](#)
- 14 [MPS-0728836](#), [UCPI0000008097](#)
- 15 [MPS-0728845](#)
- 16 [MPS-0728904](#)
- 17 [UCPI0000014373](#)
- 18 [UCPI0000010254](#)
- 19 [UCPI0000011737](#)
- 20 [UCPI0000010567](#), [UCPI0000011741](#)
- 21 [Diane Langford Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p72
- 22 [UCPI0000011741](#)
- 23 [UCPI0000014363](#)
- 24 [UCPI0000010246](#)
- 25 [UCPI0000010247](#)
- 26 [UCPI0000010567](#)
- 27 [UCPI0000026988](#)
- 28 [UCPI0000026989](#)
- 29 [First Witness Statement of HN348](#) para 32
- 30 [UCPI0000027017](#) (conference), [UCPI0000027024](#)
- 31 [UCPI0000010906](#)
- 32 [UCPI0000010907](#)
- 33 [UCPI0000010917](#)
- 34 [UCPI0000010928](#)
- 35 [UCPI0000011753](#)
- 36 [UCPI0000008274](#)
- 37 [UCPI0000008280](#) p4
- 38 [UCPI0000008284](#)
- 39 [First Witness Statement of HN348](#) para 133, [HN348 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) pp45–7
- 40 [UCPI0000016247](#)
- 41 [First Witness Statement of HN45](#) para 85
- 42 [First Witness Statement of Diane Langford](#) para 219

Special Operations Squad 1971 and Special Demonstration Squad 1972 to 1973

- [43](#) Diane Langford, 'The Manchanda Connection', dissertation, [DOC058](#)
- [44](#) [MPS-0728970](#) para 19
- [45](#) [First Witness Statement of HN45](#) para 86
- [46](#) [First Witness Statement of HN347](#) para 27
- [47](#) [Witness Statement of Norman Temple](#) para 6
- [48](#) Ibid. para 11, [HN347 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p135
- [49](#) [MPS-0739483](#) p2
- [50](#) [MPS-0739487](#)
- [51](#) [MPS-0739317](#)
- [52](#) [MPS-0739470](#)
- [53](#) [UCPI0000007822](#)
- [54](#) [First Witness Statement of HN347](#) para 78
- [55](#) [Witness Statement of Norman Temple](#) para 19
- [56](#) [First Witness Statement of HN339](#) para 28
- [57](#) Ibid. para 33
- [58](#) [UCPI0000007921](#)
- [59](#) [UCPI0000007924](#)
- [60](#) [First Witness Statement of HN339](#) para 56
- [61](#) [MPS-0731841](#)
- [62](#) [MPS-0735903](#) p1
- [63](#) [First Witness Statement of HN339](#) paras 66–9
- [64](#) [UCPI0000008948](#)
- [65](#) [MPS-0729047](#)
- [66](#) [MPS-0729093](#)
- [67](#) [UCPI0000005835](#)
- [68](#) [MPS-0736961](#)
- [69](#) [UCPI0000008059](#)
- [70](#) [First Witness Statement of HN343](#) para 52
- [71](#) [MPS-0731828](#)
- [72](#) [UCPI0000007889](#)
- [73](#) [UCPI0000007931](#)
- [74](#) [UCPI0000007920](#)
- [75](#) [First Witness Statement of HN343](#) para 153
- [76](#) Ibid. paras 19–23
- [77](#) [First Witness Statement of HN299/342](#) para 65
- [78](#) [MPS-0732356](#)
- [79](#) [UCPI0000007598](#)
- [80](#) [UCPI0000009616](#)
- [81](#) [UCPI0000008229](#) p7
- [82](#) [UCPI0000008275](#)
- [83](#) [UCPI0000015694](#)
- [84](#) [UCPI0000007940](#) para 9
- [85](#) [UCPI0000008275](#) para 3
- [86](#) [UCPI0000008952](#)

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87	UCPI0000007952
88	UCPI0000016221
89	UCPI0000008158
90	UCPI0000014712
91	UCPI0000008823
92	First Witness Statement of HN299/342 para 180
93	Ibid. para 177
94	Ibid. para 201
95	First Witness Statement of HN301 para 8
96	Ibid. para 27
97	UCPI0000007905
98	UCPI0000015010
99	UCPI0000009537
100	First Witness Statement of HN301 para 35
101	MPS-0728913
102	First Witness Statement of HN349 para 24
103	First Witness Statement of HN345 para 21
104	UCPI0000026455 , UCPI0000026456
105	First Witness Statement of HN345 para 36
106	First Witness Statement of HN298 para 9
107	Ibid. para 6
108	Ibid. para 13
109	Ibid. para 17
110	Ibid. paras 29 and 31
111	Ibid. para 39
112	HN103 Transcript of Oral Evidence p61 lines 4–20
113	UCPI0000008551
114	UCPI0000008240
115	UCPI0000008241
116	UCPI0000008244
117	UCPI0000008255
118	UCPI0000008259
119	UCPI0000008267 , UCPI0000008268
120	UCPI0000008152
121	MPS-0728970 , MPS-0728975
122	First Witness Statement of Lord Peter Hain para 146
123	First Witness Statement of Ernest Rodker para 156
124	MPS-0526782
125	First Witness Statement of HN298 para 157
126	First Witness Statement of Lord Peter Hain para 147
127	MPS-0526782 p9
128	First Witness Statement of Jonathan Rosenhead para 61
129	MPS-0737087
130	MPS-0737126

Special Operations Squad 1971 and Special Demonstration Squad 1972 to 1973

- [131](#) [MPS-0526782](#) p7
- [132](#) [Ibid.](#) p2
- [133](#) [Ibid.](#) p3
- [134](#) [First Witness Statement of HN298](#) para 93
- [135](#) [MPS-0737109](#)
- [136](#) [MPS-0737108](#)
- [137](#) [First reference to the Miscarriages of Justice Panel \(ucpi.org.uk\)](#)
- [138](#) [MPS-0728836](#)

Chapter 4:

The Special Demonstration Squad 1974 to 1976

1. HN3810 Sir Robert Mark was Commissioner throughout this period. According to HN304 (“Graham Coates”), he visited the SDS once after he joined the unit in late 1975.¹ It may be his visit that was recorded in the 1977 SDS annual report. In his letter to the Deputy Under Secretary with responsibility for policing, Sir James Waddell, dated 18 February 1975, seeking Home Office approval for the continuance of the SDS, HN3557 Assistant Commissioner (Crime) Colin Woods stated that the Commissioner continued to take a close personal interest in SDS activities.² Closed contemporaneous evidence establishes, beyond doubt, that he did. It is inconceivable that he was less well informed about the SDS than his immediate predecessor, HN1877 Sir John Waldron (whom he succeeded on 16 April 1972). Sir Robert Mark had, as one would expect, a clear and unequivocal view of the threat posed by potential targets of the SDS, which he expressed in his autobiography, published in 1978:

“The simple truth is that fascists, communists, Trotskyites, anarchists *et al* are committed to the overthrow of democracy and to the principle that the end justifies the means. Democracy must therefore protect itself by keeping a careful eye upon them. It is not difficult because they have never represented a serious threat. Paradoxically, they are less likely to do so if the state continues to treat them, as at present, as a bad joke.”³

2. Before October 1972, the definition of subversion was derived from the Maxwell Fyfe Directive of 1952, which defined the relevant task of the Security Service: to defend the realm from internal dangers arising from actions of persons and organisations which may be judged to be subversive of the state.⁴ In 1972, the Director of F Branch in the Security Service defined subversion as “activities threatening the safety or well-being of the state and intended to undermine or overthrow Parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means”.⁵ This definition was adopted and repeated by Lord Harris of Greenwich in a formal statement to the House of Lords on 26 February 1975:⁶ “Subversive activities are generally regarded as those which threaten the safety or well-being of the state, and which are intended to undermine or overthrow Parliamentary democracy by political, industrial and violent means.”⁷ This definition was restated in the House of Commons by the Home Secretary on 6 April 1978⁸ and by Leon Brittain, Minister of State at the Home Office, on 7 November 1979, and remained the public position of the Government until the enactment of the Security Service Act 1989. These statements contain two basic elements: activities which threaten the safety or well-being of the state; and an intention to overthrow parliamentary democracy by one or more of

three means. The second element is purely subjective. The first contains an objective element.

3. I have cited these statements because they provide the contemporaneous public yardstick against which the infiltration of extremist groups by the SDS undercover officers in this and later periods can be assessed.
4. From inception, much of the written intelligence reporting generated by the SDS undercover officers was forwarded to the Security Service, and intermittent meetings occurred between the managers of both. On 4 December 1973, HN1253 Deputy Assistant Commissioner Victor Gilbert and John Jones, then head of the Security Service section responsible for internal subversion, agreed that there should be six-monthly meetings at a senior level to discuss targeting and operational requirements.⁹ The first such meeting occurred on 30 August 1974.¹⁰ A list of organisations penetrated by the SDS was provided to the Security Service.¹¹ After the meeting, arrangements were made to ensure that SDS material should be the subject of special handling safeguards within the Security Service. On 11 November 1974, it was agreed that SDS reports would be sent by courier direct to F6, each marked with a generic code to indicate that its source was the SDS and filed in a single file.¹² This system remained in place from November 1974 until March 1985. It is the source of most of the recovered written SDS intelligence reporting between those dates.
5. From then on, most SDS undercover officers understood, correctly, that their written reporting would be forwarded to the Security Service. They also understood, again correctly, that the interest of the Security Service in their reporting would arise principally from its responsibility for monitoring and countering subversion.
6. On 16 February 1976, at a meeting between Sir Robert Mark and Sir Michael Hanley, Director General of the Security Service, attended by, among others, Victor Gilbert, as Head of Special Branch, it was agreed that the liaison should be deepened: a Security Service liaison officer would be appointed who would be provided with an office at Special Branch for frequent use, and there would be twice-yearly informal conferences attended by officers from both services to discuss topics of mutual interest.¹³ These arrangements were put in place and appear to have lasted for a period of years. The Home Office was informed about them on 11 March 1976.¹⁴ Despite them, it is likely that the Commissioner insisted that Special Branch should not do the Security Service's work: see the manuscript note under the typed note by David Heaton, dated 2 October 1978, that Sir Robert Mark "took a strong line in this regard and the Met did much less under his command, without apparent harm".¹⁵
7. By early 1974, it had become the established practice for SDS undercover officers to be sent to Somerset House to research the date of birth and death of a child, with a view to adopting the name of the child as a cover name. It is probable that the first officer to research and in part adopt the name and date

of birth of a real person was HN298 (“Michael Scott”), in 1971; but there is no reason to believe that his initiative prompted the routine use of the name of a deceased child by undercover officers. No surviving SDS manager has been able to explain when or for what reason the practice was started. No document has been retrieved from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to identify its origin. It is possible, but no more than possible, that the germ of the idea was prompted by the prosecution of Cecil Mulvena in 1966–1967 for using the identity of a dying man to obtain a passport in his name. The investigation was conducted by HN585 Matthew Rodger, who later, as Commander, had responsibility for the oversight of the SDS. A further possibility is that the successful adoption by a closed officer of the identity of a deceased person on the initiative of the officer contributed to the adoption of the practice. It is unlikely that the idea was simply borrowed from *The Day of the Jackal*, at least without some thought having been given to the security of the technique. No surviving manager thought that the parents or relatives of the deceased child would be affected by its use, because they would never learn of it. With the possible exceptions of HN80 (“Colin Clark”) and HN200 (“Roger Harris”), there is no evidence that anyone gave any thought to the propriety of its use.

8. The long-term deployment of male undercover officers into political groups had a further consequence. Some of them not only formed friendships with members of target groups of both sexes, but entered into sexual relationships in their cover identity with female members and other women. This was to become a perennial feature of the SDS throughout the remainder of its history. The extent, if at all, to which its managers and other undercover officers knew about the relationships and/or tolerated them is a matter of controversy and conflicting evidence (see paragraphs 42 and 43 below).
9. HN819 Derek Kneale replaced HN294 as the Detective Chief Inspector of the SDS in the spring of 1974. HN34 Geoffrey Craft was the Detective Inspector under him until promoted to acting, later substantive, Detective Chief Inspector in January or February 1976. HN244 Angus McIntosh joined the SDS as Detective Inspector in spring 1976. A curious feature of the evidence of two honest witnesses, doing their best to recall what happened, is that neither recalls serving with the other. This is in part because Angus McIntosh spent several months during his tenure on courses away from the SDS. However, they did serve together and took part in the events described below.
10. From the early 1970s until the late 1990s, Trotskyist groups were regularly infiltrated by SDS undercover officers. As is apparent from the tenor of their written reporting, the purpose of the infiltration was twofold: to gather intelligence about the threat, if any, which the groups posed to the maintenance of public order, and, after the adoption by the Security Service in October 1972 of the “Harris” formulation, to the safety and well-being of the state. The principal Trotskyist groups were the International Socialists (IS), which became the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the International Marxist

Group (IMG) and the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP). The first two, IS/ SWP and IMG, were infiltrated throughout this period, and the last, WRP, until early 1976.

11. Two undercover officers infiltrated the WRP: HN303 (“Peter Collins”) and HN298. HN303 joined the SDS in the second half of 1973 and began to report on the WRP in January 1974.¹⁶ It was dominated by Gerry Healy, who was determined that it should be the revolutionary vanguard of the working class in Britain. He was insistent that correct lessons be learnt from the Bolshevik experience in pre-revolutionary Russia. Deviation from the party line was not permitted, and tight security was imposed, even at well-attended meetings. HN303 attended and reported on a number of such meetings. Typical examples were: the special delegate conference on 13–14 July 1974;¹⁷ the conference convened for 15–17 December 1974,¹⁸ to ratify the expulsion of a revisionist faction; and the special delegate conference, which took place at two venues on 12 and 13 July 1975,¹⁹ at which the possibility of infiltrating the Labour Party was considered. The WRP did adopt topical causes, such as support for the “Shrewsbury Two” and opposition to the Common Market. HN303 mastered the intricacies of WRP ideology and organisation and provided detailed and comprehensive reports on the events described.
12. HN298 began to infiltrate the Little Ilford branch of the WRP (often referred to as the “East Ham Sub-district Committee”) in early 1975,²⁰ probably by attending public lectures on Marxism attended by members of the branch.²¹ Little of any consequence was discussed at branch or sub-district meetings. He may have been the author of two reports on dissension at local level resulting from the reactions of local members and officials to the well-publicised police raid on the WRP education centre in Derbyshire on 27 September 1975.²²
13. HN298 attended a course at the WRP education centre at White Meadows in Derbyshire from 8 to 14 or 15 February 1976 in ignorance of the fact that permission for him to do so was about to be withdrawn. A careful and detailed report, dated 4 February 1976, about the centre and the elaborate procedures adopted to protect its security was produced and forwarded to the Security Service on 11 March 1976.²³ HN298 does not believe that he was the author of the report. If it is correctly dated, he cannot have been. HN303 was due to attend a weekend course at the centre on 31 January–1 February, but there is no surviving evidence that he did so. The report was described by Matthew Rodger as the author’s “swan song”, and HN298’s deployment ended immediately afterwards. HN303 remained an undercover officer until 1977. The likelihood is that the document sent to the Security Service was part of a report to which HN298 made a substantial contribution as author and has been misdated. Elizabeth Leicester, who, with her husband Roy Battersby, ran the education centre for the WRP, gave truthful evidence about it. She stated that the report was generally accurate, but she believes that some of what is in it could only have been known to someone who had infiltrated the WRP at a

central level. Her reasoning is sound, and it is likely that HN303 also contributed to the report.

14. Either in part of the report not sent to the Security Service or in another written or oral report, HN298 concluded that the elaborate security precautions taken by the WRP were designed to boost the importance of its leaders, rather than to prepare for public disorder. The reporting was praised by Geoffrey Craft and HN1254 Commander Rollo Watts. They appear to have acted upon its conclusion, because infiltration of the WRP was not resumed after February 1976. They were right to do so. As HN3093 Roy Creamer noted about its predecessor, the Socialist Labour League, it was kept under tight control by Gerry Healy.²⁴ Its demonstrations were disciplined and closely stewarded and posed no threat to public order. In his evidence, Geoffrey Craft stated that the WRP was not a public order problem. As the evidence of Elizabeth Leicester, confirmed by the reporting of HN303 and HN298, made clear, whatever its long-term aims, it was a small group which posed no threat to the safety or welfare of the state and was not therefore subversive within the "Harris" definition.
15. In 1975, HN303 began to report on extreme right-wing groups the Legion of St George and the National Front (NF).²⁵ He did so at the instigation of the WRP, as Geoffrey Craft noted in the 1976 annual report.²⁶ His access to these groups was noted by Derek Kneale in paragraph 3 of the 1975 annual report. It is evident that HN303 found this aspect of his deployment uncongenial.²⁷
16. The IMG featured in the 1974 annual report and in the national news because of the part its members played in the incident in Red Lion Square on 15 June 1974, in which Kevin Gately sustained fatal injuries. The NF had hired the main room at Conway Hall for a meeting and staged a march to get there. An ad hoc group opposing them, called the Libertarians, hired a smaller room at Conway Hall at the same time. The event attracted the attention of Trotskyist groups and others, who staged a counter-march. It clashed with police, who tried, successfully, to keep right- and left-wing groups apart. The death of Kevin Gately prompted an inquiry by Lord Justice Scarman, who concluded that the precise circumstances in which an apparently minor injury to his head caused fatal internal bleeding could not be established, but was very unlikely to have been the result of a blow from a police truncheon or other deliberate violent action by a police officer; and that the riot in which he died was caused by a deliberate and violent attack by IMG supporters on the police.
17. In the 1974 annual report, Derek Kneale stated that the SDS "gave forewarning of both the size of the demonstration and the possible disorder which might occur".²⁸ There is no surviving written report to that effect, possibly because any report would only have concerned the potential for public disorder and might not have been copied to the Security Service or filed by them in a manner which would have facilitated its retrieval. Two open undercover officers, HN353 ("Gary

Roberts”) and HN301 (“Bob Stubbs”) attended the event (at which the latter was struck a blow by a uniformed officer). HN353 recalls providing reports on it. Lord Justice Scarman concluded that the police had accurate forewarning of numbers likely to attend – set out in an operation order dated 13 June 1974 (1,500 left-wing marchers and up to 1,000 NF marchers). It is probable that reporting by SDS officers contributed to the assessment of left-wing numbers and the route of the march which they proposed to take. I have no reason to doubt that the statement in the annual report was accurate. There is an interesting correlation between the observation of Lord Justice Scarman that attendance by the IS was sparse, and the report by HN353, on 18 June 1974, that IS members criticised a member of the national executive, Chris Harman, for failing to attend a “Liberation” meeting on 6 June 1974 to discuss plans for the demonstration and to mobilise IS members to do so.²⁹ Uniformed police did, however, have other readily available public information that trouble was afoot, as Lord Justice Scarman noted. SDS reporting supplemented it. The event is significant because it was the first time that serious public disorder occurred as a result of Trotskyist attempts to obstruct NF, and later British National Party (BNP), activities – a recurring, if intermittent, theme of SDS reporting from then on.

18. HN353’s recollection is that he was deployed into the IMG in South East London in mid-1975; and that, not long after, he was put to an election by the IMG to choose between it and the IS. He chose the IMG and thereafter reported extensively on its activities.³⁰ There is little written reporting on plans that might affect public order. Topics covered included the decision in September 1975 to infiltrate the Labour Party,³¹ a retrospective report on a “day of action” to save the Weir Maternity Hospital in Balham in April 1977³² and a report on IMG involvement in the Greater London Council (GLC) election campaigns in May 1977.³³ He also mastered the IMG’s complex rules for the practising of internal politics, based on “tendencies” and “factions”, on which he reported extensively in November 1975³⁴ and February 1976.³⁵ He produced a comprehensive analysis as part of a detailed report on the IMG national delegate conference held between 29 May and 1 June 1976, which was commended by the Security Service and his superior officers.³⁶ He attended the national delegate conference on 15–18 April 1978 and produced a comprehensive retrospective report on it on 4 August 1978.³⁷ His recollection is that his deployment ended in June 1978.
19. The largest and most active Trotskyist group was the IS. During this period, different IS London branches were infiltrated by HN301, HN351 (“Jeff Slater”), HN353 and HN200.
20. In late 1974, HN301 belonged to the Wandsworth and Battersea branch.³⁸ By early 1976, he belonged to and reported on the Paddington branch. He was noted as treasurer of that branch in January 1976.³⁹ By May 1976, he had left the SDS.

21. HN351 joined the SDS in spring 1974 and by November 1974 was reporting on branch meetings in North London.⁴⁰ His reports mostly concern routine IS business, for example the downward dissemination of proceedings at the latest national conference.⁴¹ On 2 January 1975, he was designated the *Socialist Worker* organiser of the Tottenham branch.⁴² Much of his reporting on branch and public meetings was about the political stance urged by IS speakers. There was little written reporting about activities which might pose a risk to public order. HN351 says that he found his deployment debilitating and exhausting and concluded that he was not suited to it.⁴³ His request to leave was granted without hesitation, and he was withdrawn from the field by 2 April 1975.⁴⁴
22. HN200 was recruited into the SDS in April 1974. He joined the Twickenham branch of the IS in, or shortly before, October 1974.⁴⁵ He was appointed contacts secretary at a private business meeting on 29 May 1975.⁴⁶ He produced regular reports on the activities of the branch from December 1974 until late October 1975. Most of these concern organisational details and political topics, including the attitude of branch members to the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) bombing campaign in England and the Common Market referendum.⁴⁷ There are occasional reports of proposed participation in demonstrations. He reported on a development which produced a significant split in the IS: the formation of a group of opposition members, which became the Workers League. Together with many members of the Twickenham branch of the IS, he transferred to it and reported on its founding conference on 17–18 January 1976.⁴⁸ Thereafter, he reported extensively on the Workers League at branch and national level. The main topics of discussion were politics and relations with other left-wing organisations. The group appears to have achieved little and attracted few new members. It featured in the annual SDS reports for 1976⁴⁹ and 1977⁵⁰ as one of several small, left-wing splinter groups. HN200's deployment ended without incident in the autumn of 1977.
23. None of the Trotskyist groups posed any threat to the safety or well-being of the state. Some members of the IS and the IMG posed an occasional and intermittent threat to public order, as the events of 15 June 1974 demonstrated. The annual reports for 1974,⁵¹ 1975⁵² and 1976⁵³ set out in detail the occasions on which Trotskyist groups posed a threat to public order but, with the single exception of 15 June 1974, do not suggest that advance warning of specific threats by undercover officers made a material contribution to dealing with them. Given the nature of the reporting described above, that is not surprising.
24. The deployment of two undercover officers gave rise to striking problems.
25. The first was HN300 ("Jim Pickford"), who followed the pattern of many of his predecessors, by infiltrating numerous disparate groups. He joined the SDS in the second half of 1974.⁵⁴ In November 1974, he began to report on activists in the Battersea area, notably Ernest Rodker and the groups with which he was

associated, in particular the Battersea Redevelopment Action Group (BRAG) and the Pavement Collective. Neither group was a legitimate target for infiltration by an undercover officer. The aim of the first group was to prevent the construction of a Disneyland park on the site of the former Battersea funfair.⁵⁵ The second group produced a local anarchist newspaper. According to Ernest Rodker, whose evidence on this point is undisputed,⁵⁶ both staged modestly attended pickets at Wandsworth Town Hall and attended Council meetings there. Neither posed any threat to public order. HN300's reporting on both groups effectively ceased in March 1975.

26. HN300 then began to report on the Anarchist Workers Association (AWA), which regarded itself as a group of libertarian communists. He attended a meeting on 9 March 1975⁵⁷ to promote the foundation of a new, Kingston, branch and attended its inaugural meeting on 12 March 1975, as one of five potential members.⁵⁸ He was made a full member on 30 April 1975 and thereafter played a full part in its activities.⁵⁹ He attended the national conference on 3–4 May 1975.⁶⁰ On 7 May 1975, he was selected to contact the Campaign Against Jenkins's Oppressive Laws and write articles on the matter for *Libertarian Struggle*.⁶¹ He chaired branch meetings. He helped implement a decision in July 1975 to separate the Wandsworth branch from the Kingston branch.⁶² He was elected to attend the sparsely attended AWA delegate conferences on 16 August 1975⁶³ and the AWA national conference on 14–15 February 1976.⁶⁴ He was elected treasurer of the Wandsworth branch on 17 July 1975⁶⁵ and retained that position when it changed its name to the "South London Group".⁶⁶ On 1 April 1976 (an aptly chosen date),⁶⁷ he was chosen as its delegate to the Federation of London Anarchists Groups (FLAG) meeting held on 3 April 1976, attended by 16 people, at which no conclusions about any topic were reached.⁶⁸
27. HN300 also took part in meetings of the Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council Anti-Fascist Committee. The only occasion on which it came close to posing a public order question was on 11 November 1975, when the five people who attended a meeting of the committee decided that they would attend Battersea Lower Town Hall on the same day, in case the NF decided to protest against the local authority's decision to cancel its booking of the hall.⁶⁹
28. None of the groups on which HN300 reported were a legitimate target of undercover policing. Despite that, all three featured, by name, but not by description, in the 1974 annual report, and the AWA was named in the reports for 1975 and 1976.
29. On 18 August 1976, HN357 Chief Superintendent David Bicknell noted that he was making arrangements to move officers, including HN300, "early next year".⁷⁰ What happened was somewhat different. According to a closed officer, whose evidence I have no reason to doubt, HN300 told him that he had fallen in love with one of his target group and wanted to tell her that he was an undercover officer.⁷¹ The closed officer arranged a meeting between HN300

and Angus McIntosh, after which HN300 was withdrawn from his deployment. It ended on 16 December 1976 when, as HN300 reported on 4 January 1977, as “Jim Pickford” he announced at a meeting of the South London branch that he intended to resign from the AWA in protest against the “minority tendency”.⁷² The evidence of the closed officer about the relationship is confirmed by the second wife and daughters of HN300, who state that during his deployment he began a relationship with a woman who sometimes referred to him as “Jimmy”.⁷³ She became his third wife after he left the SDS.

30. Angus McIntosh stated that he had no recollection of such a meeting and believes that the deployment of HN300 ended without incident on time. He did, however, state that he became aware towards the end of the deployment of HN300 that he was a womaniser.⁷⁴ He did not state what caused him to have this awareness. The explanation which is most consistent with the evidence of a truthful witness – the closed officer – is that he was first alerted to that possibility by the events described by that officer. Although Angus McIntosh was doing his best to tell the truth as he remembered it, I am satisfied that his memory of these events is imperfect.
31. The second undercover officer whose deployment gave rise to striking problems was HN297 (“Rick Gibson”) Richard Clark. He joined the SDS in July 1974.⁷⁵ His purpose was or soon became to infiltrate the Troops Out Movement (TOM), whose stated aim was the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland and “self-determination” for “the people of Ireland”.⁷⁶ It was of interest to MPS Special Branch because of its support for Irish Republicanism. Unusually in this era, there are two living witnesses able to speak in detail about his activities from the standpoint of activists who knew him and believed him to be one of them: Richard Chessum and “Mary”. Richard Chessum has provided a careful and balanced witness statement and supplemented it by detailed oral evidence. His evidence was truthful and, on questions of fact, even allowing for the passage of time, reliable. Although “Mary” did not give oral evidence, for understandable personal reasons, I have no reason to doubt the truth of her witness statement.
32. In the autumn of 1974, HN297 enrolled as a student of Portuguese at Goldsmiths college. He had written to the national office of TOM to state that he wanted to become active in its affairs in South East London. His letter was forwarded to Richard Chessum, then a politically active student at the college. There was no South East London branch, so they agreed to found one.⁷⁷
33. At a meeting at the college on 6 February 1975, HN297, Richard Chessum, his girlfriend and future wife, and “Mary”, who were both members of Lewisham IMG, and one other individual decided to invite every left-wing group in the area to send a representative to an inaugural meeting of the branch.⁷⁸ After an inaugural meeting at the college of the newly founded group on 12 March 1975, attended by 14 people,⁷⁹ a further meeting took place on 18 March 1975 at the

college.⁸⁰ Eleven people attended. The first item on the agenda was the election of officers. HN297 and Richard Chessum's girlfriend were elected unopposed as secretary and treasurer of the branch. The second item was the selection of Richard Chessum and HN297 to attend the next TOM London Liaison Committee meeting. Thereafter, HN297, usually accompanied by Richard Chessum until 19 September 1975, attended and reported back on the meetings of the committee. A repeated theme of their reports was the outbreak of factional disputes between independent members of TOM and Trotskyists, including the IS and IMG. Richard Chessum genuinely, and HN297 purportedly, professed to support the "independents". In Richard Chessum's opinion, HN297 had a poor understanding of the political views which he purported to espouse, but was accepted by activists because he was non-sectarian and a willing and enthusiastic secretary. He participated fully in the affairs of the South East London branch.

34. HN297 also seized the opportunity to infiltrate TOM at the London regional and national levels. Richard Chessum explained what happened. His account of events is supported by a contemporaneous report by HN297 dated 24 September 1975 about a meeting of the "Big Flame Ireland Commission" on 17 September 1975.⁸¹ Big Flame was a relatively undogmatic socialist group which had an interest in Irish affairs. Both HN297 and Richard Chessum attended its meetings, although neither was a member. HN297 reported Richard Chessum's statement that the South East London branch of TOM was being taken over by members of two Trotskyist groups, Workers Fight and the Revolutionary Communist Group. At a meeting of the branch before 19 September 1975, of which no report by HN297 has been retrieved, HN297, but not Richard Chessum, was re-elected by the branch to the TOM London coordinating committee. At a meeting of that committee on 19 September 1975, it was proposed, and he accepted, that he should be elected to the organising committee.⁸² At an all London meeting of TOM on 7 November,⁸³ he was selected to stand for the post of TOM London organiser, a post to which he was subsequently elected.
35. HN297 played a full part in the organisational activities of the London coordinating committee, later renamed the Central coordinating committee, until 15 September 1976. He then abruptly departed. The reason for his departure was that he had been confronted by two members of Big Flame with the birth and death certificate of "Rick Gibson", the deceased child whose identity he had assumed.
36. There is no first-hand evidence to explain the discovery, by the Big Flame members, that he was not who he said he was. A closed officer, who knew HN297, says that he was told by him that he had conducted sexual relationships with two different women, to whom he had given different accounts of his background.⁸⁴ Richard Chessum learnt after the event that members of Big Flame researched his background when he applied to join the group and

discovered the birth and death certificate at St Catherine's House and the local registry for "Rick Gibson".

37. What is not in doubt is that HN297 conducted sexual relationships with at least two and probably four female activists. Two of them were "Mary" and her flatmate. "Mary" had a brief and lacklustre sexual relationship with him and knows that her flatmate did as well.⁸⁵ "Mary" believes that HN297 undertook both relationships to further the ends of his deployment. Richard Chessum considers that HN297's relationship with "Mary's" flatmate, who belonged to a Trotskyist group, may have caused her to vote against her political inclinations for HN297 at the branch vote to elect delegates to the TOM London coordinating committee before 19 September 1975. Richard Chessum wisely accepts that chance may have played a part in the achievement by HN297 of senior positions in TOM at London regional and national level; and the proposition that he deliberately exploited sexual relationships with female activists to gain advancement is not established by the evidence that has been given about it. If, as HN297 told the closed officer, his exposure occurred because he gave two female activists with whom he was conducting sexual relationships different accounts of his background, it is unlikely that he was referring to "Mary" and her flatmate, neither of whom belonged to Big Flame. Richard Chessum has provided the likely answer: he knew at the time of one relationship being conducted with a female member of Big Flame and, after the event, saw a farewell letter addressed by HN297 to another female member, which apparently evidenced deeper feelings for her.
38. Geoffrey Craft and Angus McIntosh gave evidence about the sudden withdrawal of HN297 from his deployment. Both recall keeping observation outside a public house in South London with a small surveillance team when they knew that HN297 was going to be confronted by activists who had discovered the birth and death certificate of "Rick Gibson". HN297 survived the encounter unscathed and, as Richard Chessum remembered, claimed to have bluffed his way out by pretending that he was on the run from the police. Despite that, Geoffrey Craft decided that his deployment must come to an immediate end, which it did. Neither he nor Angus McIntosh remember the other being present on this occasion. I am satisfied that both were and that no other senior officer was.
39. The closed officer gave evidence that the sudden withdrawal of HN297 was announced at one of the regular safe-house meetings for undercover officers.⁸⁶ He was satisfied that Geoffrey Craft did not know the underlying reason for the discovery of the birth and death certificate of "Rick Gibson" – that HN297 had been conducting relationships with female activists. His belief is justified. HN297 would surely have realised what the consequences would have been at the hands of a forthright detective chief inspector who believed that sexual activity by a police officer on duty was strictly prohibited: disciplinary proceedings which might well have resulted in his dismissal from police service.

40. The withdrawal of HN297 from his deployment was dealt with laconically in the 1976 SDS annual report: “The sinister Big Flame organisation ... was the subject of close scrutiny until September when, for security reasons, it was decided to withdraw ... [N]o organisation has shown practical ingenuity in the field of investigation to compare with that of Big Flame.”⁸⁷ The report was signed by Geoffrey Craft and this part of the wording must have been his. He could not honestly have written it if he knew or even had good reason to believe that the trigger for the investigation by Big Flame was the conduct of illicit sexual relationships by HN297 in his cover identity. As already stated, Geoffrey Craft was a forthright man of traditional views. He would not have stooped to deceiving his superiors by this choice of words. The closed officer was of the same opinion.
41. HN304’s deployment began shortly before HN297 was withdrawn from the field. He provided a detailed witness statement and gave oral evidence. He was a careful, plainly truthful, witness. He described the exchange of sexual banter between some SDS undercover officers at the regular twice-weekly meetings at one of the two “safe houses”.⁸⁸ From what was said, he was able to form a clear opinion about the sexual activities of some of his fellow officers. HN297 had a reputation for being a “ladies’ man” and had his “leg pulled”, in terms which HN304 found offensive, about a sexual encounter with a female activist, as did another undercover officer, whose name he cannot remember.⁸⁹ HN300 had a reputation as a philanderer, a belief confirmed in his oral evidence by HN200⁹⁰ and others. HN304’s view was that life as an undercover officer was stressful enough without the complication of sexual entanglements. In hindsight, he believes that there should have been much stricter guidance, because of the potential damage that such relationships would cause to individuals and families. His belief is unanswerable.
42. One of the issues which Counsel to the Inquiry has investigated by searching questioning of the two SDS managers who have been able to give oral evidence about this period – Geoffrey Craft and Angus McIntosh – is why they did nothing about it. In the case of Geoffrey Craft, the answer is straightforward: he did not know that it had occurred. He believed that all police officers, including undercover officers under his management, would have had it instilled in them, as it was in him, that sexual relationships on duty were a serious disciplinary offence. Angus McIntosh did realise that there was a potential problem: sexual relationships could jeopardise the security of the SDS operation and the careers of undercover officers, because it would amount to misconduct.⁹¹ The likely impact on any woman who might become involved in a sexual relationship with a male undercover officer acting in his cover identity was not considered.⁹² Undercover officers brought up the issue of fake girlfriends. A way of solving the problem was investigated, but it was thought to be operationally impracticable.⁹³ He did not say that anything else was done to minimise the evident risks. I am satisfied that nothing else was done.

43. The evidence of undercover officers, in particular HN304 and the closed officer referred to, establishes that the occurrence of sexual relationships between some male undercover officers in their cover identity and women they encountered during their deployment was common knowledge among many of them. It does not establish that they were deployed as a tactic generally used by undercover officers to gain acceptance by infiltrated groups; and I am satisfied that their managers would have disapproved if they had done so.

Endnotes

- 1 [First Witness Statement of HN304](#) para 140
- 2 [MPS-0730906](#) p3
- 3 [DOC057](#) p293
- 4 [UCPI0000034262](#)
- 5 [First Witness Statement of Witness Z](#) para 13
- 6 [Hansard, HC, Deb. vol. 357, col. 947, 26 Feb. 1975](#)
- 7 [UCPI0000034265](#)
- 8 [Hansard, HC, Deb. vol. 947, col. 619, 6 Apr. 1978, UCPI0000034265](#)
- 9 [MPS-0735752](#)
- 10 [MPS-0735815](#)
- 11 [UCPI0000030896](#)
- 12 [UCPI0000030053](#)
- 13 [MPS-0735760](#)
- 14 [MPS-0735761](#)
- 15 [UCPI0000035084](#) p3
- 16 [UCPI0000009963](#)
- 17 [UCPI0000009950](#)
- 18 [UCPI0000012168](#)
- 19 [UCPI0000022002](#)
- 20 [First Witness Statement of HN298](#) para 176
- 21 [UCPI0000012162](#)
- 22 [MPS-0741130, UCPI0000009257](#)
- 23 [UCPI0000012240](#)
- 24 [HN3093 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p143
- 25 [UCPI0000006931, UCPI0000012751, UCPI0000009480, UCPI0000009553](#)
- 26 [MPS-0730099](#)
- 27 [MPS-0747771](#)
- 28 [MPS-0730906](#) para 20
- 29 [UCPI0000007917](#)
- 30 [First Witness Statement of HN353](#)
- 31 [UCPI0000007598](#)
- 32 [UCPI0000017379](#)
- 33 [UCPI0000017335](#)
- 34 [UCPI0000009350](#)
- 35 [UCPI0000008229](#)
- 36 [UCPI0000021343, MPS-0730725](#)
- 37 [UCPI0000011360](#)
- 38 [First Witness Statement of HN301](#)
- 39 [UCPI0000009537](#)
- 40 [First Witness Statement of HN351](#)
- 41 [UCPI0000015056](#)
- 42 [UCPI0000012014](#)

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43	First Witness Statement of HN351
44	MPS-0730681
45	First Witness Statement of HN200
46	UCPI0000007328
47	UCPI0000012141, UCPI0000007328, UCPI0000015002
48	UCPI0000009608
49	MPS-0728980
50	MPS-0728981
51	MPS-0730906
52	MPS-0730099
53	MPS-0728980
54	MPS-0724152
55	UCPI0000012093
56	First Witness Statement of Ernest Rodker
57	UCPI0000006950
58	UCPI0000006975
59	UCPI0000007200
60	UCPI0000007287
61	UCPI0000007190
62	UCPI0000012805
63	UCPI0000007469, UCPI0000007625
64	UCPI0000012220
65	UCPI0000012685
66	UCPI0000012250
67	UCPI0000012355
68	UCPI0000012356
69	UCPI0000009315
70	MPS-0730732
71	Closed Officer Gist para 21, Unattributed Excerpts from Closed Officer Evidence Excerpt 26
72	UCPI0000017642
73	Witness Statement of HN300's Second Wife and Family
74	HN244 Transcript of Oral Evidence pp86-7
75	MPS-0741092
76	MPS-0728667 p4
77	First Witness Statement of Richard Chessum
78	MPS-0728678
79	MPS-0728701
80	MPS-0728710
81	MPS-0728754
82	MPS-0728755
83	MPS-0728762
84	Closed Officer Gist para 24
85	First Witness Statement of "Mary"
86	Unattributed Excerpts from Closed Officer Evidence Excerpt 26

- [87](#) [MPS-0728980](#) para 7
- [88](#) [First Witness Statement of HN304](#) p43
- [89](#) [Ibid.](#) p41
- [90](#) [HN200 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p196
- [91](#) [HN244 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) pp74–91
- [92](#) [Ibid.](#) p76
- [93](#) [Ibid.](#) pp76–7, p118

Chapter 5:

The Special Demonstration Squad 1977 to 1982

1. HN2697 David McNee succeeded HN3810 Sir Robert Mark as Commissioner following the latter's resignation in March 1977. HN34 Detective Chief Inspector Geoffrey Craft was succeeded as the officer in operational charge of the SDS by: HN608 Superintendent Kenneth Pryde in September/October 1977; HN135 Detective Chief Inspector Michael Ferguson in January/February 1978; HN218 Detective Chief Inspector Barry Moss in February/March 1980; and HN307 Detective Inspector Trevor Butler in January 1981. HN244 Angus McIntosh was the Detective Inspector, until succeeded by Trevor Butler at the end of 1979 and by HN68 in January 1981. Michael Ferguson was the first SDS detective chief inspector to have served as an undercover officer before his appointment.
2. Surviving records of the interaction between the Security Service and the SDS between the end of 1974 and early 1979 are sparse. On 23 June 1977, the Security Service conveyed the gratitude of their Socialist Workers Party (SWP) desk to Geoffrey Craft for the flow of information about the SWP,¹ and on 15 September 1977 Geoffrey Craft told them that most SDS effort was being put into the SWP.² However, Security Service thoughts of coordination in the deployment of agents came to nothing when, in December 1977, HN1254 Commander Rollo Watts stated that the Commissioner had made it clear that agents were to be run solely in the context of law and order.³
3. From 1979 onwards, the relationship became closer. On 17 August 1979, the Security Service noted that the SDS was ready to accept a Security Service brief (i.e. set of questions) on organisations and individuals and to respond to "specific feedback". The Security Service stated its requirement for "high grade political intelligence particularly on the SWP", unlikely to be obtained by traditional means.⁴
4. From then on, regular discussions between the Head of section F6 and the Detective Chief Inspector and Detective Inspector in operational command of the SDS took place, at which Security Service requests for intelligence were discussed. The topics covered in 1979 included the following: the Fourth International World Congress held 5–14 November 1979;⁵ the SWP National Conference in 1979;⁶ and the debriefing by the SDS of HN354 ("Vince Miller") Vincent Harvey.⁷
5. The relationship became even closer after the appointment of Barry Moss as the Detective Chief Inspector of the SDS in 1980 and of Trevor Butler in 1981. Monthly meetings were held from February 1981 onwards, at which requests and comments from both the Security Service and the SDS were exchanged.

The Security Service frequently expressed appreciation of SDS coverage of the SWP, so that on 20 October 1982, F6 was able to explain to HN99 Detective Chief Inspector Nigel Short (known as Dave Short), who replaced Trevor Butler in early 1982, that the Security Service's coverage of the SWP had lessened because of the excellence of the SDS coverage.⁸ Requests were made for coverage of other Trotskyist groups, including the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP),⁹ and of anarchist groups.¹⁰ In an internal note dated 14 May 1981, F6's visits to the SDS were described as routine.¹¹ An appendix dated 8 July 1981, prepared in anticipation of the visit to the Security Service by Sir David McNee and HN2187 Assistant Commissioner (Crime) Gilbert Kelland on 12 August 1981, stated that the extreme left-wing section of F6 worked in close liaison with the SDS and that monthly targeting meetings were held.¹² As Security Service Witness Z states in the witness statement dated 22 March 2021, the interests of the Security Service and the SDS did not always coincide, but they did overlap sufficiently to justify close cooperation between them.¹³

6. The contemporaneous documents suggest that the Home Office took little, if any, interest in the activities of the SDS during this period and received little information about them. The letters seeking annual renewal of funding for the SDS were sent by the Assistant Commissioner (Crime) to the Deputy Under Secretary as follows: from HN1166 John Wilson to Robert Armstrong in 1976¹⁴ and 1977;¹⁵ and from Gilbert Kelland to Robert Andrew or Hayden Phillips from 1978 to 1983 (apart from 1982 when somebody wrote on Gilbert Kelland's behalf).¹⁶ All of these letters stated that the primary focus of the SDS was the gathering of intelligence on left-wing and anarchist groups to give advance warning of events that might disrupt the public order. A valuable by-product was the security intelligence provided to the Security Service. In his letter dated 4 April 1978, Gilbert Kelland made specific reference to Grunwick and the left-/right-wing confrontations culminating in Lewisham;¹⁷ and, in his letter dated 7 March 1980, he stated that the SDS "was able to provide useful information which was invaluable, enabling uniformed officers to be effectively deployed" in Southall on the occasion of the death of Blair Peach.¹⁸
7. Events in 1984 establish that it is very unlikely that the SDS annual reports were provided to the Home Office in this period. On 29 May 1984, Michael Partridge, then Deputy Under Secretary responsible for police affairs, stated to Assistant Commissioner (Crime) John Dellow when approving expenditure for the SDS for 1984/1985 that it would be helpful for "us" to know which groups and activities were the current focus of the SDS.¹⁹ The Head of the F4 Division in the Home Office Police Department, Roy Harrington, then visited HN587 Commander Peter Phelan and was shown by him the 1983 annual report.²⁰ On 16 July 1984, Roy Harrington wrote to Peter Phelan that he had reported on his reading of the annual report to Michael Partridge and Sir Brian Cubbon, the Permanent Under Secretary, and that both were entirely content with the way that the squad's role had been adapted to changing circumstances, and with the arrangements for liaison with the Security Service.²¹ On 7 June 1984, HN2185

Deputy Assistant Commissioner (Crime) Colin Hewett stated to the Assistant Commissioner (Crime) Gilbert Kelland: “[W]e should include in the annual letter for renewal some comment on the targeting of the squad and the results being achieved.”²² None of this would have been necessary if the annual report had been routinely sent to the Home Office.

Grunwick and the “Battle of Lewisham”

8. The annual report for 1977 was prepared by Kenneth Pryde.²³ The main focus of the report was on the contribution made by SDS reporting to the policing of two serious events of public disorder: the mass picketing of Grunwick Film Processing Laboratories in June and July 1977, and the “Battle of Lewisham” on 13 August 1977. All SDS reporting on both events was by undercover officers who had infiltrated Trotskyist and Maoist groups.
9. HN354 joined the SDS in early 1976. His deployment began in late 1976.²⁴ He approached the International Socialists (IS) (renamed the SWP on 1 January 1977) by buying its newspaper, the *Socialist Worker*, and began to attend meetings of the Walthamstow branch in January 1977.²⁵ He became a member of the branch and reported on its affairs until 9 October 1979.²⁶ He was elected branch treasurer in or soon after June 1977,²⁷ treasurer of the Outer East London district in late July 1977²⁸ and to the branch committee on 26 April 1978.²⁹ He had access to the financial and membership records of both branch and district and reported on both throughout his deployment, in the belief that his intelligence contributed to the knowledge which Special Branch and the Security Service wished to gather about a subversive group. He also reported on the branch’s somewhat half-hearted attempts to intervene in industrial disputes³⁰ and on more energetic attempts to contest paper sales in Brick Lane with the National Front (NF).³¹
10. On 31 May 1977, HN354 reported that it was the intention of the APEX (Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff) trade union and Brent trades council to mount a seven-day mass picket outside Grunwick with effect from 13 June 1977.³² He remembers attending the picket line once, possibly during that week. Uniformed police succeeded in creating a gap through which coaches carrying employees who continued to work at the factory could pass. He did not take part in the pushing and shoving that occurred.³³
11. Two closed undercover officers remember reporting on plans for participation in the picketing.³⁴ No written reports by either to that effect have been retrieved, but I have no reason to doubt that both did report on what they had learnt. One of them was the source of the “invaluable information” supplied by the SDS about last-minute tactics, to which reference is made in the 1977 annual report.³⁵ The report makes no reference to the well-attended and well-publicised

mass picket on 22 June 1977, and it is likely that SDS reporting added nothing to it.

12. HN296 (“Geoff Wallace”) joined the SDS in the summer of 1975.³⁶ It is likely that his deployment began at the end of 1975 in what had become a familiar manner: first by attending public meetings of IS in West London. By January 1976, he had begun to attend the regular weekly meetings of the Hammersmith branch of IS.³⁷ He provided regular reports on the affairs of the branch. Several referred to the participation of its members, identified by him, in local protests about hospital affairs.³⁸ Others dealt with participation in the “Right to Work” campaign.³⁹ In May, June and July 1977, he reported on branch discussions about the Grunwick pickets, including the curious assertion made at a meeting on 14 July 1977 that national publicity about the forthcoming event on 22 July 1977 was a hoax to distract the police.⁴⁰
13. Like many other undercover officers, HN296 was elected to branch offices, which gave him access to details of branch members and those with whom they were in contact: by May 1976, he had become treasurer;⁴¹ by July 1976, he had become the *Socialist Worker* organiser;⁴² and in January 1977, he was elected “Flame” organiser.⁴³ On 2 April 1978, he agreed to become one of a three-member committee to manage logistical arrangements for an Anti-Nazi League (ANL) carnival on 30 April 1978.⁴⁴ No reports after this date have been retrieved, and it is likely that his deployment ended soon afterwards.
14. A foretaste of what was to happen in Lewisham on 13 August 1977 occurred at Ducketts Common in Haringey on 23 April 1977, when left-wing demonstrators planned to attack a well-advertised NF rally. Two SDS officers, one of whom was HN353 (“Gary Roberts”), reported on left-wing plans before the event. In his opinion, uniformed officers did not handle the confrontation well, with the consequence that they came under sustained attack, which they resisted with difficulty.
15. In July 1977, the NF made a plan to hold a march from New Cross to Lewisham on the afternoon of 13 August 1977. They notified the police of their intention to do so and agreed a route. There was considerable local opposition to the planned march and attempts were made to persuade David McNee to exercise his power under section 3 of the Public Order Act 1936 to prohibit it. He declined to do so and successfully resisted a legal challenge to his decision.⁴⁵ A local organisation, the All Lewisham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism (ALCARAF), headed by the Mayor of Lewisham, Roger Godsiff, planned to stage a counter-march on the same day, terminating at the point at which the NF march would start. The timing and route of the counter-march were also agreed with the police.⁴⁶ In his affidavit, sworn on 10 August 1977 for the purpose of the legal proceedings, David McNee expressed his confidence, justified by events, that both would adhere to the routes agreed with the police.⁴⁷

16. The SWP also planned to oppose the NF march. On 2 July 1977, members of the Lea Valley district, who had been present at a demonstration in support of the "Lewisham 24 Defence Committee" (a group which supported young Black people arrested in Lewisham for muggings on 30 May 1977), bemoaned the failure of SWP members to take part. When confrontations with the NF were envisaged, they considered, plans should be made in advance to attract enough supporters to crush the NF by weight of numbers. A report of this meeting, dated 6 July 1977, was made by HN80 ("Colin Clark").⁴⁸ On 22 July 1977, HN354 reported on a meeting of the Outer East London district held on 18 July 1977, at which a leading member of the group said that a former NF member who had been recruited into the SWP had suggested that the NF would be armed with missiles at every demonstration.⁴⁹ Force, the leading member said, should be met with even greater force. All London SWP members should go to Lewisham on 13 August 1977.
17. HN3093 Roy Creamer, by then responsible for collating intelligence on left-wing groups for Special Branch, must have read these reports. They informed the view he expressed at a meeting held on 27 July 1977, under the chairmanship of acting Assistant Commissioner Wilford Gibson, to determine the police response to the threats posed by the NF march: that the SWP were determined to stop it by throwing a cordon across Clifton Rise.⁵⁰ They did not inform his correct assessment that there was considerable local opposition to the march and that the ALCARAF march would be a sincere attempt to express that opposition. Nor did they inform the assessment expressed by the detective inspector responsible for monitoring the extreme right wing that the NF would not accept a ban of the march without causing trouble elsewhere in London and possibly in Lewisham as well.
18. On 1 August 1977, HN80 reported that, at a meeting on 23 July 1977 at Lewisham Concert Hall, attended by about 100 people, it was resolved that on 13 August 1977 "all like-minded anti-fascist groups should meet at Clifton Rise at 1pm and smash the NF off the streets".⁵¹ This report, too, must have informed police plans.
19. Intelligence gathered about SWP tactics to counter the NF march was summarised in a report dated 11 August 1977. It was sent to Commander Operations (Special Branch) and Commander A8 (Uniformed Branch).⁵² As HN1742 Anthony Speed, who was Chief Inspector in A8 at the time, has explained, it would have been the last distillation of intelligence before police plans were settled.⁵³ It must have been based substantially or wholly on the reporting of SDS undercover officers. It stated that: (i) the SWP had acquired a squat in Clifton Rise; (ii) some members of the Lea Valley, Central London, South East London and South West London districts of SWP intended to support the ALCARAF demonstration in the morning and then continue to Clifton Rise; (iii) each branch was asked to provide six "heavies" to act as protection squads; (iv) the main contingent of demonstrators would attempt

to block Clifton Rise at 1pm; and (v) the rest would go to New Cross Road, to force the NF to assemble elsewhere.⁵⁴

20. The report concluded that the main objective of the SWP was to prevent the NF march from taking place. A specially selected squad would attack supporters to split police ranks. If it failed, the SWP would “attack, harass and intimidate the NF”, with the intention of creating a riot and isolating the rear of the NF column.⁵⁵ They would then go to the railway station and attack the NF in Lewisham High Street.
21. It is likely that this report or its contents informed David McNee, when he stated in his affidavit that arrangements had been made for a sufficient number of police to be on duty to control any activity “resulting from the unauthorised meeting of the SWP”.⁵⁶
22. Intelligence was gathered by HN80, who attended a meeting of the Seven Sisters and Tottenham branches of the SWP on 10 August 1977, chaired by the convenor of the Seven Sisters branch. The steward for the Lea Valley district contingent of anti-fascist demonstrators explained the tactics to be used: the principal objective was to “attack, harass and intimidate the NF, in order to create a riot situation” and to “drive them from the streets under the cover of the resultant chaos”.⁵⁷ The cited words are taken from his typed intelligence report which post-dates both events, but I accept that HN80 made an oral report to like effect soon after the meeting. It is at least possible that it was the source of the same words cited in the conclusion of the report dated 11 August 1977 sent to Commanders Operations and A8, referred to in paragraphs 19 and 20 above. HN354 attended a meeting of SWP stewards on 12 August 1977 (after the 11 August report was sent to the relevant branches) to plan the counter-demonstration.⁵⁸ He was appointed a steward at the meeting. Afterwards, he visited the anticipated route of the march and saw people he did not know place piles of half-bricks gathered from a nearby building site along the route of the march.⁵⁹ There is no written report of these events, but I accept that his account is truthful and that he reported on them orally before the march took place.
23. The 1977 annual report refers to information “obtained from penetrated extremist groups” that an empty house opposite Clifton Rise would be occupied on 12 August 1977 by members of the SWP, armed with missiles.⁶⁰ As a result, the house was searched on the morning of 13 August 1977 by uniformed police. No intelligence report has been retrieved or evidence provided or given by an open or closed undercover officer in precisely these terms; but it is likely that a warning to that effect was given by a closed officer, which caused the search to be made.
24. This intelligence contributed substantially to the briefing note prepared by the operational commander, Deputy Assistant Commissioner David Helm, for the commanders of the uniformed officers who would police the event.⁶¹ It made clear the intention of the left-wing groups, notably the SWP, to occupy Clifton

Rise and deny its use to the NF. It is likely that it contributed to the decision of the Commissioner to divert both the NF march and ALCARAF counter-march, a direction with which both complied. It must also have contributed to the decision to deploy large numbers of police – some of them equipped, for the first time on the UK mainland, with riot shields.

25. Despite these precautions, and as predicted by undercover officers, serious disorder occurred, including the throwing of bricks and other missiles by counter-demonstrators at the NF marchers and the police. HN354 provided truthful, first-hand evidence about what occurred in his immediate vicinity. His group was not throwing bricks, but they were thrown at the police and at the NF marchers by others situated behind his group.⁶² It is not within my Terms of Reference to make a judgement about police tactics on 13 August 1977. I do, however, conclude that, without the intelligence provided by undercover officers, uniformed officers would have been less well prepared than they were to meet a serious and determined challenge to public order.
26. At 14:55 on the day of the march, HN1668 Detective Inspector Leslie Willingale, then in temporary operational charge of the SDS, sent a telephone message to the Head of Special Branch, likely to have been based on a telephone report of an undercover officer, stating that SWP “heavies” were being moved to Church Street, Deptford, “ready to attack the National Front marchers”, which was, in fact, just about to set off.⁶³ HN354 was not the source of this report.
27. What then occurred is illustrated by the television footage of the event, about which no further comment is required.⁶⁴
28. Undercover officers also reported on the reaction of some Trotskyist and Maoist groups to the event. On 23 August 1977, HN80, reporting on a debriefing meeting which had taken place at the usual meeting place of the SWP Finsbury Park branch, concluded that the events had been a success: comrades had been able to attack the rear of the NF march and the police had been incapable of separating or controlling the two conflicting factions.⁶⁵ Lessons were to be learnt from the willingness of local Black youths to throw missiles at police. “Genuine force” had the effect of making police reluctant to enter the crowd to detain individuals.⁶⁶ HN354 reported on a discussion at the SWP Walthamstow branch on 31 August 1977 about ways in which the SWP should exploit its newfound “fame”.⁶⁷
29. By early 1977, HN13 (“Barry Loader”) had succeeded in infiltrating the East London branch of the Communist Party of England (Marxist–Leninist) (CPE (M–L)), a Maoist group. On 23 August 1977, he reported retrospectively on the participation of its members in the events of 13 August 1977.⁶⁸ They were notified at the last minute of plans to split into three groups, one of which was to ambush the NF march. These plans were, in the event, frustrated because two of the groups became entrapped and were unable to communicate with the

third. The lesson to be drawn was to acquire walkie-talkie radios and to counter police riot shields with more sophisticated “weaponry”.⁶⁹

30. Neither the events at Grunwick in June and July 1977 nor the “Battle of Lewisham” featured in the retrieved notes of discussions between the Security Service and the SDS in 1977.

Other reporting on Trotskyist groups

31. Nothing more of intelligence interest occurred within the SWP Walthamstow branch or Outer East London district infiltrated by HN354. The affairs of the district, renamed Waltham Forest district in January 1979, languished. The district committee, including HN354, resigned.⁷⁰ His deployment ended in October or November 1979. When it did, the Security Service provided a detailed set of questions for him to answer about the membership and activities of the district.⁷¹
32. The deployment of HN21, a closed officer, into the SWP occurred in the late 1970s. Like many others, the officer accepted local office, which facilitated the obtaining of details of members of the group, as well as its activities.⁷²
33. HN80 joined the SDS in December 1976 and was deployed on 15 March 1977.⁷³ He was instructed to, and did, research the identity of a deceased child, but claims not to have used the full name and date of birth on the death certificate, because of his distaste for the practice.⁷⁴ He was tasked to gather intelligence on extreme left-wing activists in the Haringey area, for three purposes: to protect the public in London; to assist the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to deal with demonstrations; and to assist the Security Service in its counter-subversion role.⁷⁵ He chose to infiltrate the SWP and began to attend meetings of the Seven Sisters branch in May 1977.⁷⁶ He produced numerous reports about the regular business meetings of the branch from June to September 1977 and about its members. He became treasurer of the branch in November 1977⁷⁷ and then of the Lea Valley district.⁷⁸ He attended the national delegate conference in 1978 and produced a report on it, for which he received a Deputy Assistant Commissioner’s Commendation.⁷⁹ There is an unexplained eight-month gap in retrieved reports attributable to him. By 6 July 1979, the name of the branch he infiltrated had changed to the Haringey branch.⁸⁰ He continued to report on its routine affairs, including his own election as treasurer on 5 September 1979.⁸¹ On 28 November 1979, he was elected as part of a “slate” to the district committee.⁸² In January 1980, the Haringey branch was renamed the Tottenham branch,⁸³ and on 12 March 1980, HN80 was appointed its treasurer.⁸⁴ He continued to produce reports about routine business.

34. Meanwhile, HN80 began to play a part in the affairs of the SWP at central level. He took part in the organisation of the “Right to Work” march in 1980 and 1981 and became its treasurer.⁸⁵ On 9 August 1980, he attended a conference of branch secretaries and leading cadres in London to discuss the organisation of the 1980 march: it was intended that it should culminate in a picket of the Conservative Party conference in Brighton on 10 October 1980, in sufficient numbers to give the police “more than they could handle”.⁸⁶ On 15 September 1980, he produced a detailed and thoughtful report on the plans of the organisers for the march, which annexed its “official” timetable.⁸⁷ No disorder was anticipated before 10 October 1980. The march organisers then intended to disrupt the final day of the conference. To that end, they arranged for a train to carry supporters from Victoria Station to Brighton and for coaches to arrive from around the country. HN80 attended and reported on the meeting on 5 October 1980 at which detailed plans were finalised.⁸⁸ Both he and HN155 (“Phil Cooper”) drove support vehicles during the march and took part in the demonstration by about 8,000 people outside the conference hall. Serious disorder was averted by a large police presence, but HN80 did sustain injuries during it when assaulted about the head and shoulders. He and HN155 received a Commissioner’s Commendation for their part in these events.⁸⁹
35. HN80 attended the SWP national delegate conference on 13–16 December 1980 as a steward and produced a detailed report on it, together with a full set of accompanying conference documents.⁹⁰ His access to the national office enabled him to report on discussions of the national committee⁹¹ and to produce copies of internal documents considered or produced by it, in particular weekly bulletins circulated to district and branch secretaries.⁹² He also attended and reported on meetings to discuss the 1981 “Right to Work” march from Liverpool on 8 October to the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool on 16 October 1981. He predicted that the march would be peaceful, but that on arrival in Blackpool, the campaign was determined to exploit every opportunity to express “their anti-Conservative feelings”.⁹³ Lindsey German remembers positively that HN80 was on the 1981 march and that she worked closely with him for three weeks. Both did their best to ensure that no one on the march would be arrested. I am satisfied that her evidence on this point is correct. HN80’s last significant report was about the 1981 national delegate conference on 7–10 November 1981, which he attended, with HN155, as a member of the conference administrative staff.⁹⁴ His deployment ended in March 1982.
36. HN356 (“Bill Biggs”) (who had made the note of the telephone report referred to in paragraph 26 above) joined the SDS at the end of 1977 or early 1978. He was deployed into the SWP in South East London. He attended and reported on meetings of the Plumstead branch, of which he was elected treasurer in April 1978.⁹⁵ On 29 November 1978, at a meeting of the branch, chaired by him, it was agreed that he would be replaced by another member as treasurer and would instead become the *Socialist Worker* organiser.⁹⁶ He reported regularly on the organisation, membership and activities of the

SWP in South East London and played an active part in its affairs. On 12 December 1979, he addressed a meeting of the Greenwich branch about his experiences of apartheid in South Africa;⁹⁷ and on 25 June 1980,⁹⁸ he chaired a meeting of the same branch at which an Indian Workers' Association member spoke about attacks on Asians, and the district organiser for the "Right to Work" march stated that he had hired a coach to take protesters to disrupt the Henley Regatta. It is possible, but unlikely, that he attended the SWP party council meeting held on 19 April 1980 and reported on its proceedings.⁹⁹

37. By May 1981, HN356 had moved to Brixton, to achieve greater coverage of SWP activity there, following the Brixton riots on 10–13 April 1981. He attended the inaugural meeting of the Brixton branch and was elected its treasurer on 25 June 1981.¹⁰⁰ It is likely that his deployment ended in late 1981, because the last retrieved report that may be attributable to him is dated 20 November 1981.¹⁰¹
38. HN126 ("Paul Gray") joined the SDS on 17 December 1977.¹⁰² His target group was the SWP in North West London, a district chosen because of continued picketing at Grunwick. He was a regular attender at the pickets and reported on them by telephone.¹⁰³ He began to submit written reports on the Cricklewood branch in March 1978.¹⁰⁴ He became the *Socialist Worker* organiser for the branch on 26 July 1978,¹⁰⁵ because he had the use of a van and so could collect copies of the newspaper from the printers for onward distribution.¹⁰⁶ When the Cricklewood branch subdivided itself into smaller branches in the second half of 1978, he became a member of the Kilburn branch and often chaired its meetings.¹⁰⁷ He produced a lengthy and careful analysis of the structure and organisation of the SWP in London on 10 November 1978.¹⁰⁸ He also joined the West Hampstead branch of its sister organisation, the ANL. On 22 October 1978, he was elected to the committee of the newly formed combined Camden Against Racism/ANL West Hampstead and Hampstead group, as delegate to the Camden Against Racism committee.¹⁰⁹ He attended meetings of the North West London district of the SWP and, on 11¹¹⁰ and 22 January 1979¹¹¹ respectively, was elected to the district committee and appointed the district *Socialist Worker* organiser. He kept on in this role until November 1980.¹¹²
39. At some time during 1981, HN126 may have been the subject of a possible compromise. In consequence, he moved to Paddington and joined the newly formed Paddington branch of the SWP. The last retrieved report of which he is undoubtedly the author concerned a branch discussion on 21 April 1982 about the Falkland Islands crisis.¹¹³
40. The bulk of HN126's reporting is about the organisation and activities of the SWP at branch and district level and about local members. The great majority of the branch meetings he attended produced, as he acknowledged in a report dated 3 February 1981,¹¹⁴ nothing of interest to Special Branch. When future

activities involved demonstrations that might have an impact on public order, he identified them by time, place and, where possible, the numbers likely to participate. Most were unremarkable, such as the proposed bicycle ride to Henley on 6 July 1980 to protest at the ban on the wearing of trousers by women at the Regatta.¹¹⁵

41. In the light of what occurred, one event was not. On 19 April 1979, HN126 reported on decisions taken by the North West London district on 17 April 1979.¹¹⁶ They included a decision to encourage members to participate in a demonstration at Southall Town Hall on 23 April 1979, in opposition to an election meeting to be held there by the NF, provided that it did not interfere with paper sales. HN126 did not attend the demonstration.¹¹⁷ The North West London district held a public meeting on 24 April 1979, which was addressed by Tony Cliff.¹¹⁸ He contrasted the careful planning for an event in Leicester on 21 April 1979, which had resulted in a successful attack on the police, with the lack of planning for the confrontation on 23 April 1979, which had resulted in many injuries of demonstrators. It was the occasion on which Blair Peach sustained fatal injuries. It is not within my Terms of Reference to enquire into how or by whom they were inflicted, nor into the manner in which the MPS handled the subsequent investigation by Commander John Cass.
42. HN41 attended and reported on the demonstration in Southall. He left Southall before the events which gave rise to the death of Blair Peach.¹¹⁹
43. The Southall demonstration on 23 April 1979, the march and rally on 27 April 1980 to mark the anniversary of the death of Blair Peach, and a non-event on 30 August 1981 provide examples of the value of SDS reporting to the policing of events that might give rise to a risk of public disorder.
44. Meetings between local police and community leaders in Southall revealed the depth of anger felt by Asian residents about the decision by the London Borough of Ealing (which it was obliged to make) to allow the NF to hold the election meeting, and the residents' determination to stage a peaceful sit-down protest outside the venue on the day of the meeting. A careful assessment of the risks of disorder was made on 20 April 1979 by a detective inspector in Special Branch who was not part of the SDS.¹²⁰ He accepted that that was the intention of the local community, but stated that "white" left and extreme left organisations, such as the SWP, ANL and Socialist Unity group, wished to stop the meeting taking place and were likely to use violent means to do so.¹²¹ He cited two articles to that effect in the latest edition of the *Socialist Worker*, with quotations: "We will not be intimidated by police. We will use any means necessary to stop the meeting" and "The Nazis must not be allowed to get anywhere near Southall Town Hall."¹²² SDS reporting provided a marginal contribution only to his assessment.

45. The Friends of Blair Peach, in a letter dated 4 February 1980 written by a well-known SWP figure, applied to the Department of the Environment for permission to hold a rally in Trafalgar Square on the afternoon of 27 April 1980.¹²³ The Department of the Environment sought the advice of the Home Office, which in turn asked for an assessment from HN819 Chief Superintendent Derek Kneale.¹²⁴ It was provided on 27 March and updated on 24 April 1980.¹²⁵ The conclusion was that there would be between 2,500 and 3,000 marchers, that the organisers did not intend a violent confrontation with the police, but the possibility of trouble could not be wholly ruled out.¹²⁶ The sources of intelligence referred to did not include undercover reporting, but were mainly Security Service reporting of Communist Party of Great Britain arrangements,¹²⁷ ANL/SWP leaflets and newspapers¹²⁸ and reporting of bussing arrangements from provincial forces.¹²⁹ It is unsurprising that no express reference was made to undercover reporting, but the earlier assessment did refer to one topic on which SDS reports had been made: the poor turn-out at prior events in October 1979 and January 1980.¹³⁰ It did not refer to the other protests intended, which were the subject of SDS advance reports: pickets on 23 April 1980 at 14 London police stations.¹³¹ No advance reports about the march and rally on 27 April 1980 have been retrieved. It is very unlikely that they were made and have been discarded. The clear conclusion I draw is that there were none and that SDS reporting contributed little of value to the overall assessment of the likelihood of disorder at the rally. In the event, it passed off without significant disorder. There was only one arrest in Trafalgar Square.¹³²
46. On 10 August 1981, NF leaders provided details to senior police officers about a demonstration they intended to hold in Fulham during the Notting Hill Carnival on 30 August 1981.¹³³ Their plans did not include a rally at Eel Brook Common at 2pm. HN126 attended a secret meeting of an ANL organising committee on 17 August 1981, on which he reported two days later, at which it was planned to stage a rally on the Common at 11am to forestall the NF and then to prevent them from rallying elsewhere.¹³⁴ An undated Special Branch threat assessment correctly discounted the risk of disorder created by the ANL because their strategy was based on the misconception identified by HN126.¹³⁵
47. HN155 joined the SDS in the autumn of 1979, at the suggestion of Michael Ferguson.¹³⁶ Although HN155 received no formal training, he spent a significant time in the back office and, before he was deployed, was interrogated shrewdly on at least one occasion by Michael Ferguson and HN68.¹³⁷ He was tasked to infiltrate the SWP. His recollection of the early part of his deployment is imperfect, but it can be pieced together by reference to intelligence reports in which he is named in his cover name. The first such report is about the inaugural meeting of the Waltham Forest Anti-Nuclear Campaign (ANC) on 19 February 1980,¹³⁸ at which he was elected branch treasurer. Subsequent reports record that the group intended to and did participate in the “occupation” of the site of the Torness nuclear power station on 3 May 1980,¹³⁹ which he recalls attending.¹⁴⁰ Thereafter, he attended the first annual general meeting of

the ANC on 14 June 1980¹⁴¹ and a conference of the London region Anti-Nuclear Alliance on 12 July 1980, as a member of the Waltham Forest ANC.¹⁴² By this time, he was attending local SWP meetings, including those held by Waltham Forest district.¹⁴³ He also took part in the “Right to Work” march, which took place from Port Talbot to Brighton between 23 September and 10 October 1980, which HN80 had helped organise.¹⁴⁴ He attended an SWP/ANL demonstration on 4 April 1981 at West Ham, when fighting between them and their targets was forestalled by prompt police action.¹⁴⁵

48. HN155 then began to participate in the affairs of the SWP at national level. By November 1981, he and HN80 were 2 of the 12 members of the administrative staff of the national delegate conference held 7–10 November 1981.¹⁴⁶ By 6 January 1982, he had joined the central planning committee for an SWP “Right to Work” demonstration in London on 21 February 1982, as treasurer.¹⁴⁷ This gave him control over the “Right to Work” campaign bank account¹⁴⁸ and to correspondence with the honorary national treasurer of the campaign, Ernie Roberts MP.¹⁴⁹ It also permitted him to obtain the central committee weekly bulletin, along with details of plans for a peaceful march of 700 people.¹⁵⁰
49. His role as treasurer of the campaign gave him access to the headquarters of the SWP, where he had a desk, and to members of the central committee.¹⁵¹ According to Lindsey German, whose evidence I again accept, he kept a low profile but was able to rub shoulders with those at the very top of the SWP. From 12 January 1982 onwards, he obtained copies of the weekly bulletins of the central committee for distribution to district and branch organisers and secretaries. He regularly produced lists of names and addresses of district and branch offices,¹⁵² of persons registered to take part in SWP events,¹⁵³ of SWP speakers¹⁵⁴ and details of forthcoming events organised by the SWP.¹⁵⁵ He helped organise the picket of delegates attending the Conservative Party conference in Brighton on 8 October 1982.¹⁵⁶ His estimate of the numbers likely to attend (500–600), and of the plan to obtain entry to the conference by means of forged tickets, may have assisted local police to ensure, as happened, that it passed off without serious disorder.
50. He attended the SWP national delegate conference on 13–15 November 1982 as a member of the conference administration staff, and produced a lengthy report on its proceedings.¹⁵⁷ Registration slips of those attending permitted him to obtain a statistical table, giving the total membership of the SWP (4,200 in 1982) and its breakdown, by sex, class and union position.¹⁵⁸ He also attended the closed national committee meeting on 15 January 1983,¹⁵⁹ at which it was decided that the SWP should support demonstrations at Greenham Common and Faslane during Easter week 1983. When the SWP acquired a computer for use in its national office in May 1981, he was able to produce computer lists of all SWP organisers on 20 January 1983,¹⁶⁰ and of current and former subscribers to the *Socialist Worker* on 11 April¹⁶¹ and 5 August 1983.¹⁶²

51. For just under two years, HN155 produced, on a regular basis, and in the central committee's own words, what it wanted its district and branch officers and, through them, its members, to know about its views and plans. He was the author of, or a significant contributor to, a detailed and thoughtful analysis of the organisation, intentions and leadership of the SWP, dated 29 September 1982,¹⁶³ produced in response to a Security Service request.¹⁶⁴ He also reported on the SWP national delegate conference held on 22–24 October 1983.¹⁶⁵ His reporting was, like that of other officers, forwarded to the Security Service, who expressed their appreciation of it.¹⁶⁶

Other deployments

52. As already noted in paragraph 29, HN13 had, by early 1977, managed to infiltrate the CPE (M–L). It took him over a year to do so. His route in was via diligent attendance at study groups and party-building sessions conducted by the Communist Unity Association¹⁶⁷ and the Progressive Cultural Association,¹⁶⁸ Maoist talking shops. After the “Battle of Lewisham”, he was one of two SDS undercover officers selected to express their view to Deputy Assistant Commissioner David Helm, the commander of the uniformed branch responsible for public order, on 4 November 1977.¹⁶⁹ The East London branch of the CPE (M–L) had, by then, become involved in frequent clashes with the NF and the police, in some of which HN13 had been involved. He was arrested on two occasions for public order offences and prosecuted in his cover name.
53. The first prosecution (for insulting behaviour) arose out of an incident or incidents occurring on an anti-fascist march from Ilford to Barking on 17 September 1977. HN13 and seven others appeared at Barking Magistrates' Court on 21 September 1977. They were remanded for trial at the same court on 3 January 1978. A note to that effect was signed by Geoffrey Craft on the same day.¹⁷⁰ Geoffrey Craft recalled in his oral evidence that he attended the court on one day and told the court clerk and female magistrate (singular) – who may have been a stipendiary magistrate – that HN13 was an undercover police officer.¹⁷¹ I accept his evidence. Although he was not able to remember whether he provided that information on 21 September, it is likely that he did. HN13 and his co-defendants were tried by a bench of three lay magistrates on 3–5 January and 10–12 April 1978.¹⁷² HN13 and two others were acquitted. Four were convicted. The eighth did not answer to his bail. A note signed by acting Chief Superintendent Kenneth Pryde, dated 6 January 1978, reported that a court official had been told that one of the defendants was an informant.¹⁷³ It is an inadequate description of what Geoffrey Craft had done and it is unlikely to have referred to that. The likelihood is that the information recorded in the note was given to a court official on 3 January 1978 by someone other than Geoffrey Craft. If so, the court would have been misled.

54. The second prosecution arose out of a clash between extreme left and right during the Brixton by-election on 15 April 1978. On 29 June 1978, HN13 was convicted, fined and bound over for 12 months.¹⁷⁴ According to a note dated 28 April 1978, acting Chief Superintendent Kenneth Pryde told a “court official” that HN13 was “a valuable informant in the public order field” on HN13’s first appearance on 26 April 1978.¹⁷⁵ There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the note. It establishes that the court was misled. The identity of the other three defendants and the outcome of the proceedings in their cases are known.
55. Four of the defendants convicted in one or other of the two cases have been traced and letters delivered to them by the Inquiry. The conviction of any of the four who wish it to be will be referred to the miscarriage of justice panel. HN13 remained deployed after each case was concluded.
56. In early 1977, HN304 (“Graham Coates”), who had been deployed in the second half of 1976 into the Hackney branch of IS, sought, and was given, the approval of his managers to transfer into anarchist groups.¹⁷⁶ He began by becoming involved with the Zero Collective and then the Anarchy Collective. The first retrieved report, dated 4 January 1977,¹⁷⁷ is of a meeting convened by the Federation of London Anarchists Group (FLAG), addressed by Dave Morris of the Anarchy Collective. HN304 was an occasional contributor to the magazine produced by the Anarchy Collective.¹⁷⁸ He also reported on other anarchist groups, such as the Freedom Collective¹⁷⁹ and Persons Unknown.¹⁸⁰ He describes, as being typical of the anarchist groups on which he reported, a meeting of the East London Libertarians on 16 February 1977 which decided nothing.¹⁸¹ He understood that the purpose of his deployment was to achieve advance warning of any anarchist group that might pose a threat to public order comparable to that posed in 1970–1971 by the Angry Brigade.¹⁸² Nothing in his reporting suggested that there was any such risk, a fact which he confirmed in his oral evidence: by way of example, the Freedom Collective, which he got to know reasonably well, was “an organisation of wishful thinkers”.¹⁸³ All six of the anarchist groups on which he reported featured in the 1977 and 1978 SDS annual reports.¹⁸⁴ He produced a valedictory report on 14 May 1979, which described the low state of morale and activity in the groups he had infiltrated.¹⁸⁵ He believes that he was then redirected towards Croydon SWP,¹⁸⁶ but no reporting about it attributable to him has been retrieved.
57. The deployment of HN304 had a major impact on his family, his wife and two young children. His own view is that he was divorced because of the stresses and strains caused by it.¹⁸⁷
58. HN96 (“Michael James”) joined the SDS in late 1978.¹⁸⁸ He spoke extensively to HN296, who was then about to leave.¹⁸⁹ At the suggestion of HN96, Michael Ferguson and Angus McIntosh introduced themselves to his then wife and reassured her that they would look after the security of her husband.¹⁹⁰ This is the first evidenced instance of a visit by SDS managers to the spouse of an

undercover officer about to be deployed. HN96's cover accommodation eventually included a flat shared with HN106 ("Barry Tompkins").¹⁹¹ He obtained details of the identity of a deceased child from St Catherine's House, visited the city where the child's parents lived and, with the aid of a local Special Branch officer, established that they had left the city.¹⁹² He was initially tasked to infiltrate the SWP in East London and did so for about two years.¹⁹³ On 5 September 1979, he was elected by the Clapton branch to the Hackney district committee,¹⁹⁴ whose task was to implement decisions taken centrally. He reported on plans for events that might have an impact on public order. An early example is a report of plans made at a meeting of the Clapton branch of SWP on 21 March 1979 for a demonstration against the NF in Brick Lane.¹⁹⁵

59. By December 1980, HN96 had begun to attend social events and meetings of the Troops Out Movement (TOM) in East London. At the suggestion of his managers, he then focused on TOM.¹⁹⁶ By November 1981, he had joined the national steering committee of TOM as membership and affiliation secretary, a position he held until March 1983, when his deployment was about to end.¹⁹⁷ He also became treasurer of the May 8th Movement (a planned demonstration to commemorate hunger strikers on 8 May 1982), until he resigned in January 1983.¹⁹⁸ He reported on the plans for the annual Bloody Sunday marches, in Coventry on 31 January 1982¹⁹⁹ and in Leeds on 30 January 1983.²⁰⁰ He attended and reported on TOM national delegate conferences on 3–4 April 1982,²⁰¹ 11 September 1982²⁰² and 19–20 March 1983,²⁰³ on plans for a TOM delegation to Belfast in August 1982, and on periodic discussions and differences between TOM and (Provisional) Sinn Fein.
60. HN96 understood, correctly, that Special Branch and the Security Service were interested in intelligence relevant to their counter-subversion tasks and, so, reported extensively on individual members of both the SWP and TOM. The most surprising thing about his deployment into TOM is how it started: as a result of a sideways move initiated by him, rather than tasking by his managers. He also reported on, but did not infiltrate, Red Action²⁰⁴ and the Irish Republican Socialist Party.²⁰⁵
61. HN106 joined the SDS in the second half of 1978.²⁰⁶ He was not tasked to infiltrate a particular group, but was told to focus on the extreme left.²⁰⁷ He infiltrated a series of Trotskyist groups, beginning with the Spartacus League from mid-1979 until May 1980.²⁰⁸ The next was the group that began as the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT)²⁰⁹ and ended up as the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) in 1981,²¹⁰ after a number of "mergers" with other Trotskyist splinter groups and changes of name.²¹¹ HN106 participated in RCT/RCP front groups, of which the most active was the East London Workers Against Racism (ELWAR).²¹² With the exception of ELWAR, all of these groups spent most of their time holding sparsely attended public meetings on issues of revolutionary interest.²¹³ The membership of each was small. Their potential for inciting or participating in public disorder was minimal.

62. ELWAR was different. It was formed to attract Black and Asian people to the Trotskyist cause by supporting them. This required practical steps to be taken – to promote demonstrations on issues such as discrimination in housing, and to form vigilante groups to patrol the areas in which they lived. On 16 April 1981, HN106 reported that the RCT would form a South London Workers Against Racism group, following the riots in Brixton on 11 and 12 April 1981.²¹⁴ He reported on arrangements made by ELWAR for pickets and demonstrations to support the Roach family support committee on 7 February 1983.²¹⁵ He did not attend the private meeting of the committee at which the arrangements were made, but did attend and report on the demonstration staged by ELWAR at a public meeting of the Hackney police committee at Hackney Town Hall on 7 February 1983.²¹⁶
63. In keeping with Special Branch practice, HN106 reported extensively on individual members or associates of the groups he had infiltrated²¹⁷ and on their private, working and political life.²¹⁸
64. No undercover officer was deployed into an extreme right-wing group during this period, for two reasons: first, as stated by Geoffrey Craft in the 1976 annual report, Special Branch already had excellent sources within the extreme right; second, as Barry Moss stated in his oral evidence, infiltration carried with it an unacceptable risk of violence – either to the officer or in which he might be required to participate to prove his credentials.

The annual reports 1978 to 1981

65. Michael Ferguson's 1978 annual report was the first to be produced by a detective chief inspector who had served as an undercover officer.²¹⁹ It is of interest for a number of reasons. First, it provides an insight into the views of an officer, who had joined the SDS soon after the event that had caused it to be founded, about that event. It is likely that his perspective was widely shared within the MPS. It was that extremists had viewed the demonstration of 27 October 1968 as a vehicle for causing serious disorder by direct confrontation with the police, and that the organisers of the demonstration had little or no interest in avoiding that, whatever their declared intentions. Second, since then, numerous left-wing political groups had been penetrated by extremists set upon creating disorder. Third, events in 1979 were likely to provide them with ample opportunity to do so. One of the four elements required for successful policing of public order problems across a broad spectrum was knowledge of the intentions of those involved. He considered that the SDS was formed to provide that knowledge and its continued activity would prove to be of immense value in doing so.
66. The annual reports for 1979, 1980 and 1981 were signed by Trevor Butler.²²⁰ With one exception, they are factual and uncontroversial descriptions of the main events covered by the squad. The exception is to be found in the 1979

report, which sets out a view of the events in Southall on 23 April 1979 and its aftermath that – in light of the publication in April 2010 of the report by the police officer who investigated the death of Blair Peach, Commander Cass – must now be seen as partial and inadequate.²²¹ More typical is the accurate summary, in the 1980 report, of the reporting by HN80 and HN155 about the 1980 “Right to Work” march, culminating in Brighton on 10 October 1980, and its use in enabling Sussex police to cope with the march.²²² The 1981 report is significant because of what it reveals about the limitations of SDS reporting. It correctly states that the most significant event in the public order field that year was the rioting in Brixton between 10 and 13 April 1981.²²³ It also, correctly, summarised reporting (some of which will be dealt with in Tranche 2) that “known members of subversive organisations” and anarchists had not instigated the disorder.²²⁴ This was the first, but not the last, occasion on which SDS reporting had given no forewarning of serious public disorder, because the groups infiltrated by undercover officers were not responsible for causing it. It also did not fit the long-held view that the principal threat to public order arose from the exploitation by left-wing extremists of political and industrial issues for their own revolutionary purposes.

Sexual relationships

67. In his written witness statement, HN354 admitted that he had had, as he put it, four “one night stands”, two with female activists, during his deployment, conducted in his cover identity.²²⁵ It is to his credit that he provided identifying details of the two activists, which has permitted the Inquiry to trace both of them. One of them, “Madeleine”, has provided a written witness statement and given oral evidence. She was, and remains, an idealist. At the time of HN354’s deployment, she was a member of the same SWP branch and district as him and believed him to be a fellow activist.²²⁶ She, and those with whom she associated, abhorred violence and posed no real threat to public order. Although I believe that she has underestimated the threat posed by others, I am satisfied that her evidence about her immediate associates and her relationship with HN354 is true and, where it conflicts with his, is to be preferred.
68. Her own marriage had come to an end in 1977. She said that during the three years of their acquaintanceship, she had come to know and like HN354. She thought of him as an ordinary working guy and a lovely and engaging person, with a sad personal history. There was an element of truth in his history: his own long-term relationship had come to an end in 1977, but the remainder was a fiction, created by him to deter inquisitiveness. At a noisy party attended by both of them and other SWP members in the late summer of 1979, he pulled her onto his lap and told her how hard it had been for him to get to know her. She enjoyed chatting and flirting with him. When the party ended, he took her back to the house that she and others occupied in his van and went inside.

They then went upstairs to her room. Both knew what was going to happen and wanted it to happen. He stayed the night and left after breakfast.

69. Their sexual relationship continued for up to two months. During that time, they would have sexual intercourse in her room approximately once a week. Unlike the first night, he would always leave before dawn. She had a kindly manager at her place of work, in whom she confided. She told him about her relationship with HN354, "Vince", and his nocturnal habit. He made a jokey entry in his diary on 9 January 1980, which spoke of it.²²⁷ I have no doubt that the document is genuine. It is a true record of what "Madeleine" told her manager soon after HN354 disappeared from her life. There was no reason for her to have invented a story about him. It confirms the truth of what she said in evidence. Her evidence was also confirmed after she had given it by written evidence provided by Julia Poynter, then a fellow activist and friend of hers.
70. The manner in which HN354 gave oral evidence about this issue showed that he was deeply uncomfortable about it. It is to his credit that, before he gave oral evidence, he freely accepted that what he had admitted he had done was wrong and regretted the injury he had caused "Madeleine".²²⁸ It is possible that the difference between his evidence and hers arises from a wish on his part to bury an aspect of his past that he knows to be discreditable; but it cannot alter it.
71. Both "Madeleine" and HN354 gave a similar account of a further fleeting sexual relationship with another female activist, which occurred as his deployment was about to end.²²⁹ It can have served no purpose relevant to his deployment. Nothing in the evidence of "Madeleine" about the two relationships suggests that he used either as a cynical tactic to further his deployment, not least because he gained nothing that might have done so from them.
72. HN155 was interviewed by David Reid, in the presence of Brian Lockie, both employed by the MPS as independent risk assessors, on 14 November 2017.²³⁰ Their purpose was to make an assessment of the risk to HN155 of the disclosure of his real and/or cover name during the Inquiry. David Reid was the lead assessor and interviewer. He had a form on which the topics to be covered were typed in numbered paragraphs. Paragraph 4.12 dealt with "Relationships entered into". On it, he made the following handwritten notes:

"Lived a full alternative life in all aspects but cannot recall specifics. No long or medium-term relationships + there were groupies who'd want to spend the night with a central committee member. Not a member but close to it. But not going to disclose further. Would only give 1st name. Cannot recall their names. 2 or 3 +? women. Dalliances not all ended in full sex. Probably drinking. Never purposefully gave surname but not volunteered."²³¹

73. He produced a typed report soon after the interview, probably on the next day,²³² which, with minor alterations, reproduced the text of his note. The final sentence reads: "He initially stated there may have been 2 or 3 women but then said there may possibly have been a few more, and that the encounters would have followed drink."²³³
74. In accordance with his usual practice, David Reid met HN155 again, on 18 November 2017, to permit him to read and check the accuracy of the typed report. He did read it, including paragraph 4.12 and asked for the last eight words of the last sentence to be deleted ("and that the encounters would have followed drink"). The copy retained by David Reid contains an asterisk (*) and a line through the deleted words.²³⁴ The final assessment, dated 23 November 2017, omits the deleted words and adds the following: "N155 clarified during the 'fact check' that these were purely social encounters, and not done to enhance his deployment."²³⁵
75. In his impact statement dated 29 January 2019, HN155 maintained that the risk assessors had misinterpreted his comments. In paragraph 10, he states:

"I recall being quite clear that I did not engage in any sexual activity while I was undercover. To the best of my recollection, the risk assessors responded that it would have been quite possible and not surprising if my deployment had taken such a turn, given its length and depth. I accepted this and went on to discuss the SWP social scene, the status or cachet enjoyed by those within its inner circle, meetings in pubs, flirtatious chats and the fact that sexual activity could have been an option."²³⁶

He acknowledged that he had been given the opportunity to "fact check" the draft risk assessment, but did not read it in depth. In his witness statement prepared for the hearing, he stated that he did not engage in any sexual activity while in his cover identity.²³⁷

76. David Reid and Brian Lockie gave oral evidence during the hearing. They were plainly truthful witnesses. I am sure that David Reid would not have made a handwritten note that would have seriously distorted what HN155 had said. The possibility of misunderstanding was catered for by the "fact check". The handwritten deletion provides strong support for the conclusion that HN155 did read paragraph 4.12 and require the deletion to be made. I reject, as manifestly unfounded, the suggestion that David Reid put forward a proposition to HN155 during the original interview, which he mistakenly purported to accept.
77. HN155 has not been required to give oral evidence, for medical reasons. One of the reports submitted in support of his application that he should not be required to do so was that of Dr Noreen Tehrani dated 18 November 2020.²³⁸ In it, she expressed the opinion that one of the reasons why he should not be required to give oral evidence was that he would not be a reliable witness. I did not understand that opinion to be based upon Dr Noreen Tehrani's professional

expertise. I have, however, considered whether or not what HN155 did say to David Reid about sexual relationships might itself have been so unreliable as to be worthless. I am satisfied that it was not, both because it was against his interest and because he had the opportunity to, and did, check and alter the text four days later.

78. For the reasons given, I am satisfied that HN155 did admit to David Reid and Brian Lockie that he had had casual sexual relationships with female activists in his cover identity during his deployment. I have no reason to believe that he did so to enhance his cover and further his deployment.
79. Two closed officers gave evidence about sexual relationships. HN302 was a single man when deployed. Early on in his deployment a friendship developed between him in his cover identity and a female activist whom he described as peripheral to his group. He said that after an evening in a public house both went to his cover flat, where they had protected sexual intercourse by “joint agreement”.²³⁹ He did not see her again. He believed that his friendship with her may have bolstered his cover, but he did not seek it to do so. He did not tell his managers about the encounter.²⁴⁰ Although, as HN302 did not recall her name, I have not heard from the female activist, I believe that HN302 was telling me the truth, about an incident that he volunteered, as he remembered it.
80. HN21 was married when deployed. While attending a course in his cover identity undertaken with a view to fulfilling his deployment, he became friendly with a woman attending the same course. He said that he had protected sexual intercourse with her on two occasions. The relationship ended when she formed a relationship with another man.²⁴¹ His account in oral evidence differed from his witness statement in which he admitted to kissing and fondling another woman on the course as well. HN21 has long-term health problems, which may have contributed to confusion or inefficiency in checking the witness statement before it was signed. The evidence that he gave about his deployment was clear and detailed and, I believe, truthful. The Inquiry has made efforts to trace the woman concerned, without success. Subject to the possibility that she may be traced and may contradict his account, I believe that the evidence he gave to me was the truth as he remembers it. He expressed proper shame about the betrayal of his wife and the breach of his duties as a police officer. I am satisfied that the relationship was not undertaken with a view to bolstering his cover. He did not tell his managers about it.

Endnotes

- [1](#) [MPS-0730700](#)
- [2](#) [UCPI0000030058](#)
- [3](#) [UCPI0000030060](#)
- [4](#) [UCPI0000030893](#) p1
- [5](#) [UCPI0000028790](#)
- [6](#) [UCPI0000029198](#)
- [7](#) [Ibid.](#)
- [8](#) [UCPI0000028799](#)
- [9](#) [UCPI0000028794](#), [UCPI0000029212](#)
- [10](#) [UCPI0000029199](#)
- [11](#) [UCPI0000028821](#)
- [12](#) [UCPI0000030761](#)
- [13](#) [First Witness Statement of Witness Z](#)
- [14](#) [MPS-0728980](#)
- [15](#) [MPS-0730719](#)
- [16](#) [MPS-0730689](#), [MPS-0728964](#), [MPS-0728963](#), [MPS-0728962](#), [MPS-0728985](#) and [MPS-0730904](#)
- [17](#) [MPS-0730689](#)
- [18](#) [MPS-0728963](#) p2
- [19](#) [MPS-0730903](#)
- [20](#) [MPS-0737347](#) p9
- [21](#) [MPS-0734164](#)
- [22](#) [MPS-0737347](#) p10
- [23](#) [MPS-0728981](#)
- [24](#) [First Witness Statement of HN354](#) para 61
- [25](#) [HN354 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) pp42–3
- [26](#) [UCPI0000013462](#)
- [27](#) [UCPI0000017456](#)
- [28](#) [UCPI0000011144](#)
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- [30](#) [UCPI0000017345](#), [UCPI0000012994](#), [UCPI0000013040](#)
- [31](#) [First Witness Statement of HN354](#) para 156
- [32](#) [UCPI0000017438](#)
- [33](#) [First Witness Statement of HN354](#) para 99
- [34](#) [Unattributed Excerpts from Closed Officer Evidence](#)
- [35](#) [MPS-0728981](#) para 21
- [36](#) [MPS-0730673](#)
- [37](#) [UCPI0000009576](#)
- [38](#) [UCPI0000012227](#)
- [39](#) [UCPI0000012265](#)
- [40](#) [UCPI0000011055](#)
- [41](#) [UCPI0000009695](#)
- [42](#) [UCPI0000017921](#), [UCPI0000017922](#) and [UCPI0000017917](#)

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- [43 UCPI0000017698](#)
- [44 UCPI0000011981](#)
- [45 DOC064 and First Witness Statement of Anthony Speed para 59](#)
- [46 MPS-0748286](#)
- [47 MPS-0748487](#)
- [48 UCPI0000017537](#)
- [49 UCPI0000011059](#)
- [50 MPS-0748210](#)
- [51 UCPI0000011111 p2](#)
- [52 MPS-0733365](#)
- [53 First Witness Statement of Anthony Speed](#)
- [54 MPS-0733365 p3](#)
- [55 MPS-0733365 p3 para 6](#)
- [56 MPS-0748487 p4](#)
- [57 UCPI0000011188 p1](#)
- [58 HN354 Transcript of Oral Evidence p159 line 12, First Witness Statement of HN354 para 105](#)
- [59 HN354 Transcript of Oral Evidence p160 line 15](#)
- [60 MPS-0728981 p14 para 26](#)
- [61 MPS-0748334](#)
- [62 HN354 Transcript of Oral Evidence p164 line 23, First Witness Statement of HN354 paras 106–109](#)
- [63 MPS-0733366](#)
- [64 DOC042, DOC043](#)
- [65 UCPI0000011182](#)
- [66 Ibid. p2](#)
- [67 UCPI0000010957 p1](#)
- [68 UCPI0000011180](#)
- [69 Ibid. p2](#)
- [70 UCPI0000013240](#)
- [71 UCPI0000029198](#)
- [72 HN21 Transcript of Oral Evidence p20](#)
- [73 First Witness Statement of HN80 para 11, MPS-0732916](#)
- [74 First Witness Statement of HN80 para 21](#)
- [75 Ibid. para 36](#)
- [76 Ibid. para 30](#)
- [77 UCPI0000011543](#)
- [78 UCPI0000013658](#)
- [79 UCPI0000013228](#)
- [80 UCPI0000021030](#)
- [81 UCPI0000013559](#)
- [82 UCPI0000013692 p2](#)
- [83 UCPI0000013876](#)
- [84 UCPI0000013958](#)
- [85 First Witness Statement of HN80 paras 88–93, MPS-0729027](#)

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[86](#) [MPS-0729029](#) p10
[87](#) [UCPI0000014264](#)
[88](#) [UCPI0000014569](#)
[89](#) [First Witness Statement of HN80](#) paras 95–7, [UCPI0000014610](#) p7
[90](#) [UCPI0000016148](#)
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[101](#) [UCPI0000016753](#)
[102](#) [MPS-0740410](#)
[103](#) [First Witness Statement of HN126](#) para 240
[104](#) [UCPI0000011859](#)
[105](#) [UCPI0000011354](#)
[106](#) [First Witness Statement of HN126](#) para 140
[107](#) [UCPI0000013001](#)
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[112](#) [First Witness Statement of HN126](#) para 174
[113](#) [UCPI0000018035](#)
[114](#) [UCPI0000016199](#)
[115](#) [UCPI0000014046](#)
[116](#) [UCPI0000021193](#)
[117](#) [HN126 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p192 line 3
[118](#) [UCPI0000021207](#)
[119](#) [Closed Officer Gist](#) para 35, [HN41 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#)
[120](#) [MPS-0748293](#)
[121](#) [Ibid.](#) p2
[122](#) [Ibid.](#) pp3–4
[123](#) [MPS-0733126](#) p4
[124](#) [Ibid.](#) p5
[125](#) [Ibid.](#) p13, p32
[126](#) [Ibid.](#) p30
[127](#) [Ibid.](#) p17
[128](#) [Ibid.](#) p10–12, p28
[129](#) [Ibid.](#) p21

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- 130 [UCPI0000020068](#), [UCPI0000013500](#), [UCPI0000013753](#)
- 131 [UCPI0000013891](#)
- 132 *The Times*, 28 April 1980, [DOC087](#)
- 133 [UCPI0000035302](#)
- 134 [UCPI0000015541](#)
- 135 [UCPI0000035302](#)
- 136 [Supplemented Witness Statement of HN155](#) para 10
- 137 *Ibid.* para 17
- 138 [UCPI0000013893](#)
- 139 [UCPI0000013918](#)
- 140 [Supplemented Witness Statement of HN155](#) para 58
- 141 [UCPI0000014199](#)
- 142 [UCPI0000014213](#)
- 143 [UCPI0000014201](#)
- 144 [Supplemented Witness Statement of HN155](#) para 76
- 145 [UCPI0000016599](#)
- 146 [UCPI0000016752](#) p12
- 147 [UCPI0000017060](#)
- 148 [UCPI0000018091](#)
- 149 [UCPI0000017202](#), [UCPI0000017152](#) p10
- 150 [UCPI0000017184](#)
- 151 [UCPI0000018482](#)
- 152 [UCPI0000016946](#)
- 153 [UCPI0000018180](#)
- 154 [UCPI0000017997](#)
- 155 [UCPI0000018426](#)
- 156 [UCPI0000018663](#)
- 157 [UCPI0000015994](#)
- 158 *Ibid.* p90
- 159 [UCPI0000016977](#)
- 160 [UCPI0000016946](#)
- 161 [UCPI0000019044](#)
- 162 [UCPI0000019386](#)
- 163 [UCPI0000015751](#)
- 164 [UCPI0000028782](#)
- 165 [MPS-0735900](#)
- 166 [UCPI0000028728](#), [MPS-0730009](#) and [MPS-0735901](#)
- 167 [UCPI0000009611](#)
- 168 [UCPI0000017425](#)
- 169 [MPS-0732885](#)
- 170 [MPS-0526784](#) p12
- 171 [HN34 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p88
- 172 [UCPI0000011984](#)
- 173 [MPS-0526784](#) p10

- 174 [Ibid. p6, UCPI0000011356](#)
- 175 [MPS-0526784 p7](#)
- 176 [First Witness Statement of HN304 para 34](#)
- 177 [UCPI0000017641](#)
- 178 [First Witness Statement of HN304 para 89](#)
- 179 [UCPI0000017806](#)
- 180 [UCPI0000021764](#)
- 181 [UCPI0000017761](#) and [First Witness Statement of HN304 para 94](#)
- 182 [First Witness Statement of HN304 para 87](#)
- 183 [HN304 Transcript of Oral Evidence p112 line 17](#)
- 184 [MPS-0728981](#) and [MPS-0728964](#)
- 185 [UCPI0000010632](#)
- 186 [First Witness Statement of HN304 para 47](#)
- 187 [Ibid. para 154c](#)
- 188 [First Witness Statement of HN96 para 8](#)
- 189 [Ibid. para 24](#)
- 190 [Ibid. para 21](#)
- 191 [Ibid. para 62](#)
- 192 [Ibid. para 46](#)
- 193 [Ibid. para 72](#)
- 194 [UCPI0000013376](#)
- 195 [UCPI0000013238](#)
- 196 [First Witness Statement of HN96 para 75](#)
- 197 [Ibid. paras 199–206, UCPI0000016816, UCPI0000018793](#)
- 198 [UCPI0000017973, UCPI0000016904](#)
- 199 [UCPI0000017075](#)
- 200 [UCPI0000016878](#)
- 201 [UCPI0000018324](#)
- 202 [UCPI0000015779](#)
- 203 [UCPI0000018793](#)
- 204 [UCPI0000018238, UCPI0000017224](#)
- 205 [UCPI0000017973](#)
- 206 [First Witness Statement of HN106 para 9](#)
- 207 [Ibid. para 31](#)
- 208 [UCPI0000013345, UCPI0000013999](#)
- 209 [UCPI0000015575](#)
- 210 [UCPI0000016727](#)
- 211 [UCPI0000014148](#)
- 212 [UCPI0000016552](#)
- 213 [UCPI0000017225](#)
- 214 [UCPI0000016611](#)
- 215 [UCPI0000016951, UCPI0000016959](#)
- 216 [UCPI0000018731](#)
- 217 [UCPI0000018782, UCPI0000018522](#)

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- [218 UCPI0000019130](#)
- [219 MPS-0728964](#)
- [220 MPS-0728963, MPS-0728962 and MPS-0728985](#)
- [221 MPS-0728963 p10, para 9](#)
- [222 MPS-0728962 p9, para 19](#)
- [223 MPS-0728985 p9, para 16](#)
- [224 Ibid.](#)
- [225 First Witness Statement of HN354 paras 165–9](#)
- [226 First Witness Statement of “Madeleine” para 17](#)
- [227 UCPI0000034310](#)
- [228 Supplemented Witness Statement of HN354 para 247](#)
- [229 Supplemented Witness Statement of HN354 para 167, First Witness Statement of “Madeleine” para 81](#)
- [230 First Witness Statement of David Reid para 4](#)
- [231 Ibid. paras 7–8, MPS-0746346](#)
- [232 David Reid Transcript of Oral Evidence p198 line 14](#)
- [233 MPS-0746710](#)
- [234 Ibid.](#)
- [235 UCPI0000034398](#)
- [236 Supplemented Witness Statement of HN155 para 115](#)
- [237 Ibid. para 114–15](#)
- [238 UCPI0000034360](#)
- [239 Transcript of HN302’s evidence to the Inquiry p5](#)
- [240 Closed Officer Gist para 20a and Transcript of HN302’s evidence to the Inquiry](#)
- [241 Closed Officer Gist para 20b and Transcript of HN21’s evidence to the Inquiry](#)

Chapter 6:

Analysis and conclusions

1. As set out in Chapters 1 to 5, the SDS was formed to gather intelligence about a demonstration of particular concern to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the Home Secretary. When that operation succeeded, its then head, HN325 Detective Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon, proposed that it should be continued along the lines proposed in his study paper of 26 November 1968.¹ It was continued, but along the lines, and for the purposes, proposed by HN2857 Chief Superintendent Arthur Cunningham in his memorandum dated 20 May 1969.² From then on, it served two principal purposes: gathering intelligence which would assist uniformed police to handle events at which there was a risk of public disorder; and gathering intelligence about numerous individuals and the groups to which many belonged.
2. The first purpose was a constant throughout. The annual reports invariably contained summary descriptions of the contribution made to public order policing by intelligence gathered by the SDS, typically in relation to the major events of the year. All of the surviving operational managers of the SDS have provided or given evidence about the contribution made by the SDS to such policing. HN218 (“Barry Morris”) Barry Moss explained how this was done from the point of view of both the providing and receiving units.³ Written SDS reports would be collated with information gathered from other sources by an officer within Special Branch into a threat assessment, which would be given to the uniformed unit responsible for public order policing. In cases of emergency, intelligence could be communicated by other means, including, exceptionally, by telephone. Until the headquarters of the SDS was moved to Vincent Square in 1980, communication was easy between senior officers working in nearby rooms in New Scotland Yard.
3. John Cracknell and HN1742 Anthony Speed, both of whom went on to have full and distinguished careers as senior police officers, explained how operational plans were made for forthcoming demonstrations during the 1970s, when they served in A8, the small MPS unit responsible for them.⁴ The plans were usually based in significant part on assessments provided to the unit by Special Branch. There can be no doubt, as both stated,⁵ that such assessments were of great value in enabling operational plans to be made. Neither John Cracknell nor Anthony Speed, however, was aware of the existence of the SDS and so cannot assist in estimating the value of reporting by its officers in the preparation of the plans or to the maintenance of public order in London during their time in A8.⁶
4. Contemporaneous documents would have provided a reliable base on which to found an estimate of the value of its reporting for that purpose. However, the retrieved contemporaneous documentation is sparse. Only a handful of Special

Branch threat assessments have been found: those produced before the “Battle of Lewisham” on 13 August 1977,⁷ before the picketing outside the Grunwick Film Processing Laboratories in November 1977⁸ and Southall Town Hall in April 1979,⁹ before the first anniversary of the death of Blair Peach on 27 April 1980¹⁰ and the non-event on 30 August 1981;¹¹ as well as one dated 14 April 1982 to the effect that the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) had booked a hall at Friends House, Euston, to express their support for Argentina in the Falkland Islands (the product of the reporting of HN106 (“Barry Tompkins”));¹² and reporting about an event at Upper Heyford, which will be dealt with in Tranche 2. The only other contemporaneous documented analysis of the contribution made by SDS reporting to a major public order event is that set out briefly in the SDS and Special Branch annual reports.

5. SDS reporting undoubtedly assisted uniformed police to prepare for events which might disturb public order; but the few documented examples considered show that its contribution should not be overstated. Some of the events referred to in the previous paragraph provide instructive examples. Before the “Battle of Lewisham”, the National Front (NF) made their plan to march through the streets of Lewisham known to the police well in advance.¹³ The attitude of Trotskyist and Maoist groups to NF marches was well known: they would do their best to stop them.¹⁴ Lindsey German, then a member of the SWP national executive committee, readily conceded that this was the intention of the International Socialists (IS)/Socialist Workers Party (SWP).¹⁵ The march was to be through an area in which there had already been racial tension in 1977 following the arrest of a number of young Black men for robbery. The tension was exacerbated by NF activity on 2 July 1977 at New Cross. Film footage shows that local shopkeepers and residents took steps to protect their property on 12 August 1977.¹⁶ What the police were confronted with at Lewisham was the near certainty of serious disorder if right- and left-wing factions were not separated by police. A large police presence would have been deployed in any event. SDS reporting confirmed what was already obvious; but it did assist the tactical deployment of uniformed officers. The contribution of SDS reporting to the policing of Southall on 23 April 1979 and to the anniversary march on 27 April 1980 was minimal, both at the strategic and tactical level. Reporting by HN126 (“Paul Gray”) about Anti-Nazi League (ANL) plans for 30 August 1981 gave uniformed police advance notice of what would in any event have occurred: a non-event.¹⁷ A report by HN106 (“Barry Tompkins”) of April 1982 gave advance notice of an event which could not have given rise to disorder.¹⁸
6. In the years 1975 to 1980, 13 incidents have been identified which were successfully policed because of the provision of reliable advance intelligence.¹⁹ In three instances (25 March 1975,²⁰ 11 October 1975²¹ and 23 June 1979²²), the intelligence comprised or included one report by an SDS undercover officer, and in two (2 March 1980²³ and 23 November 1980²⁴), three such reports. In one further instance, there is an express reference to oral reports made 24 hours before the event in the SDS annual report for 1978.²⁵ All but one of

these six events are noted in the SDS annual reports.²⁶ In the remaining seven cases, there is no surviving evidence of any reporting by an SDS undercover officer and, with the possible exception of the incident in April 1980, no reference to them in the annual reports. This is consistent with one or both of two possibilities: there was advance SDS reporting which has not survived; or there were other sources of intelligence, both overt and covert, which informed arrangements for the policing of the events. The latter must have been the case at New Cross on 2 July 1977, when NF supporters were arrested at an event at which left-wing attendance was modest.²⁷ It is likely that any significant event in this era involving the NF was the subject of non-SDS intelligence.

7. SDS reporting assisted senior officers to avoid the deployment of large numbers of police officers when they were not required, as on 30 August 1981. Both accurate warning of impending disorder and its likely absence assisted the MPS to cope with the management of public order within existing resources of finance and personnel and without a dedicated riot squad.
8. It is a striking feature of the reporting of almost all SDS undercover officers that it contained extensive details about individuals – their political views, personality, working life, relationships with others, and family and private life. HN307 former Detective Chief Inspector Trevor Butler explained why: comprehensive reporting on the lives of individuals was standard practice in Special Branch.²⁸ All who were asked about this issue said that it was for the recipients of the intelligence – or “customers” – to decide whether or not it was useful and, if so, what to do with it. This was not an accidental by-product of reporting on public order issues. Dated between 1 April 1975 and 31 May 1978, in rounded figures, 2,600 reports have been retrieved, of which 1,400 concerned the identity and lives of individuals. Of the remainder, 1,200 dealt with the meetings and activities of infiltrated groups. Of that number, 200 contained reports on plans for forthcoming events which might have had an impact on public order in London and elsewhere.
9. In the case of two undercover officers deployed in this period, HN297 (“Rick Gibson”) Richard Clark and a closed officer, reports attributable to them have been retrieved from MPS records as well as those held by the Security Service. HN297 was deployed between November 1974 and September 1976. From the time of his deployment, 115 intelligence reports attributable to him were published, of which 65 were contained in MPS files. Of those, 11 relate to events which might have had an impact on public order, of which only two – reporting on preparations for the “Bloody Sunday” rally on 1 February 1976 – concern an event which could have required significant police attendance. The figures for the closed officer, whose deployment lasted three and a half years, are broadly comparable. Among his reports, 211 have been retrieved, 49 of them from MPS records. Of those, 25 concern forthcoming events, of which 16 relate to events which might have required a significant police presence. Of these, 14 relate to events which featured in the SDS annual

reports for the period. This comparison, together with that referred to in paragraph 5 of Chapter 3, suggests that the reports retrieved from the Security Service modestly understate the extent of written reporting on public order issues.

10. By contrast, a remarkable quantity of reports have survived concerning the political activities of groups with no bearing on the threat, if any, which they posed to public order, and on the identity, personal lives and views of individuals. Given the long-settled practice of Special Branch record-keepers opening a Registry File (RF) on persons named more than a few times in Special Branch reports,²⁹ one of the consequences has been that most of those named in SDS reporting more than a handful of times who were not already the subject of an RF ended up with one. An unknown proportion of them appear to have been kept until the present day.
11. The principal explanation for the reporting and retention of this information cannot be that it provided material assistance to those responsible for maintaining public order in London. It has to be sought elsewhere.
12. The “Terms of Reference for a Special Branch”, dated 8 April 1970, agreed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and circulated on 15 June 1970, with Home Office approval, to all chief constables, set out the functions of a Special Branch.³⁰ The second function was: “acquiring security intelligence, both secret and overt ... to assist the Security Service in its task of defending the realm ... from actions of persons and organisations which may be judged to be subversive of the security of the State”.³¹ They were defined in the following terms: “Broadly speaking these are any organisation or individual whose purpose is the undermining or overthrow of the established democratic order.”³² One of the tasks of a Special Branch was: “In consultation with the Security Service to collect, process and record information about subversive or potentially subversive organisations and individuals.”³³
13. Not all of the SDS operational managers who have provided or given evidence about this issue were aware of this guidance. Barry Moss’s oral evidence is representative of them: if the Security Service said something was subversive, you took their word for it.³⁴ All rightly regarded it as part of the task of the SDS to gather intelligence on individuals and groups thought to be “subversive”.
14. One of the principal tasks of the Security Service was to monitor and, when appropriate, counter subversive activity. It produced assessments of the threat of subversion in the UK for central government in 1972,³⁵ 1976³⁶ and 1979.³⁷ The first and third were read and annotated by the Prime Minister of the day, Edward Heath and Margaret Thatcher. Each contains a summary of the views and activities of the groups identified as subversive. In each, the principal subversive group, backed by the Soviet Union, was identified as the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). Of the groups infiltrated by the SDS, Trotskyists,

Maoists and anarchists were considered. The principal topics were subversion in industry, the communications media and education.

15. In the 1972 threat assessment, members of Trotskyist groups were thought to number about 4,000.³⁸ They believed that a decaying capitalist system would lead to a pre-revolutionary situation in which the working class would be induced to accept Trotskyist leadership to confront the forces of authority. They hoped to use groups alienated from society to hasten the spread of disillusionment with capitalism. Maoists numbered fewer than 500 and were fragmented into splinter groups.³⁹ Traditional anarchists avoided organisation. Their press suggested that there were about 100 small groups, often numbering fewer than 10, few of which were prepared to carry their beliefs beyond the bounds of lawful protest. It was also assessed that there might still be violent activity by neo-anarchists, following the arrests of members of the Angry Brigade.
16. The Trotskyist focus in the 1976 threat assessment was on entryism into the Labour Party by the Revolutionary Socialist League (later Militant Tendency), which was not infiltrated by the SDS until 1993–1994.⁴⁰
17. In the 1979 assessment, the combined membership of Trotskyist and Maoist groups was stated to be rather more than half of that of the CPGB and to be roughly static.⁴¹ The largest group, the SWP, had 4,500 members and was the only group capable of influencing the conduct of industrial disputes at a local level, and was more successful than its rivals in mobilising support on the streets.⁴² The International Marxist Group (IMG) had 700 members, but had never captured the prominence it enjoyed in the late 1960s under the leadership of Tariq Ali. (The remaining Trotskyist groups considered, the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) and Militant Tendency, were not then infiltrated by the SDS.) Anarchist groups were ill-defined and temporary in nature and lacked the numbers or organisation to take important initiatives of their own.
18. As *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorised History of MI5* makes clear, the principal interest of the Heath Government in subversion was industrial unrest;⁴³ and of the Callaghan Government, the infiltration of trade union bodies by the CPGB and of the Labour Party by Militant Tendency.⁴⁴
19. The long-term view of the Security Service, which continued to hold good in the 1970s, was accurately summarised by the Cabinet Secretary in 1972, Sir Burke Trend: “[I]t comes once again to the conclusion that, troublesome though these groups are, they do not constitute anything in the nature of an organised conspiracy against the State.”⁴⁵
20. Against this background, a high-level review of the “Terms of Reference for a Special Branch” was conducted in 1980. It reached no conclusion. One of the participants, David Heaton, was the signatory of the Home Office letters authorising the continued existence of the SDS in 1979,⁴⁶ 1980⁴⁷ and 1981.⁴⁸

He raised an interesting question: “[H]ow can the work of police officers (which all members of Special Branches are) in investigating subversion, as currently defined, be justified given that the definition covers some activities which are not, as such, unlawful?”⁴⁹ His question was not answered until 19 December 1984, when a confidential letter was sent to chief constables by the Home Office.⁵⁰ It referred to “subversive or potentially subversive organisations or individuals”⁵¹ and included organisations operating within the law because their long-term aims satisfied the definition. Even if that questionable answer had been given unequivocally before the end of 1984, a further question would still have had to have been addressed: was the gathering of intelligence about subversive organisations or individuals so defined, by the means adopted by the SDS, a legitimate exercise of police functions? This would have required a number of questions about the manner in which the SDS conducted its activities to have been addressed.

21. The first was that long-term deployments into political groups inevitably required the undercover officer, male or female, to befriend members of the target groups and to enter into their personal and political lives. Putting to one side the risk that sexual relationships might develop, this intrusion into the lives of many hundreds of people in this era required cogent justification before it should have been contemplated as a police tactic.
22. The second was the fact that most deployments would require the undercover officer to gain entry to the homes of members of infiltrated groups by deceiving them as to his or her identity and purpose. This would generally vitiate the consent which the officer had been given and so might make him or her a trespasser, following Smith, Hogan and Ormerod’s *Criminal Law*, 14th edition.⁵² At the very least, the particular defences open to a police officer on public interest grounds would have had to have been considered.
23. The third was that many undercover officers accepted positions of responsibility within an infiltrated group. As Trevor Butler stated, they were encouraged to take positions, such as branch treasurer or membership secretary, that improved the quality of the information they could obtain, but not those which involved “direction setting and incitement”.⁵³ Even the former routinely involved the gathering and distribution of intelligence about facts, such as bank details, protected by the law relating to confidential information. When undercover officers achieved positions in the central office of the SWP and “direction setting” positions, in its Right to Work marches or equivalent roles at branch level, they were helping to organise political activity which was either lawful or was unlawful because it posed a threat to public order.
24. The fourth was the use of deceased children’s identities. Public revelation of the use by police officers of the technique would have been bound to have given rise to legitimate public concern and to embarrassment to the Commissioner and to his police authority – the Home Secretary. If only for that reason, the use

of this operational procedure should have been referred to senior officers within the MPS and to Home Office officials. The belief held by those responsible for its use that it would never be disclosed was at best debatable. It was, in any event, to the knowledge of those responsible for the unit, belied by what occurred to HN297.

25. None of these issues appears to have been addressed by senior officers within the MPS or by Home Office officials during this period.
26. At the suggestion of HN585 Commander Matthew Rodger, a working party was set up to consider the current situation of the SDS in early 1976. Its members were Chief Superintendents HN1254 Rollo Watts, HN318 Raymond Wilson and HN332 Cameron Sinclair, and HN819 Detective Chief Inspector Derek Kneale and HN34 Detective Inspector Geoffrey Craft.⁵⁴ They reported that Deputy Assistant Commissioner Wilford Gibson and Commander Fleming, operational commander of “A” department (responsible for public order policing), described Special Branch information and assessments to be of “extreme importance” to the uniformed branch in the discharge of its public order functions.⁵⁵ The chief superintendents of all operational squads in Special Branch spoke highly of the assistance rendered by the SDS. The conclusion of the working party, expressed on 15 March 1976, was that violence associated with demonstrations had declined, but that a minimum of 12 undercover officers was required to cope with extreme left-wing manipulation of emotive issues and with splinter groups that did not liaise with the police. They also concluded that the contribution made by the SDS to the Security Service was great. Their overall conclusion was that there was every justification for continuing the SDS with a complement of 12 field officers. Their report did not address the issues raised above at paragraphs 21 to 24, which fell outside their terms of reference.
27. They should have been addressed at the highest level within the MPS and within the Home Office. The SDS required annual authorisation and funding by the Home Office. It was, at the least, a potential source of embarrassment to both, as was recognised in letters approving the continued funding of the unit on 6 June 1969,⁵⁶ 23 January 1970,⁵⁷ 21 December 1970⁵⁸ and 21 December 1971⁵⁹ and in the 1975,⁶⁰ 1977,⁶¹ 1980⁶² and 1981⁶³ SDS annual reports. If these issues had been addressed, it is hard to see how any conclusion could legitimately have been reached which would not have resulted in the closure of the SDS. The long-term infiltration of political or single-issue groups by a unit of a police force could readily have been justified if its purpose was to prevent or investigate serious crime, including terrorism and activities akin to it. In the era of the Cold War and the “Troubles”, applying the standards of the time, the infiltration of groups which in fact threatened the safety or well-being of the state (or in the 1952 formulation, gave rise to an internal danger to it) could also have been justified. In the period covered by Tranche 1, only three groups penetrated by the SDS satisfied either of these criteria – (Provisional) Sinn Fein and two

groups identified in the closed interim report. The great majority of deployments by the SDS in this period did not satisfy either criterion.

28. The principal, stated purpose of the SDS was to assist uniformed police to control public order in London. Long-term deployments into left-wing and anarchist groups did make a real contribution to achieving this end, even though this was or could have been achieved to a significant extent by other, less intrusive, means. The question is whether or not the end justified the means set out above. I have come to the firm conclusion that, for a unit of a police force, it did not; and that had the use of these means been publicly known at the time, the SDS would have been brought to a rapid end.
29. This part of the report should not be concluded without two further observations. First, the great majority of deployed undercover officers and their operational managers performed their duties conscientiously and in the belief that what they were doing was lawful and in the interests of the public. A handful of them undertook tasks which required great skill and courage, inevitably covered mostly in closed evidence. Second, the fact that in this period no decision was made to infiltrate right-wing groups did not result from political bias on the part of those responsible for targeting, but from the belief that existing coverage sufficed and through concern about the risk of violence which such a deployment might pose.

Endnotes

- 1 [MPS-0724119](#)
- 2 [MPS-0728973](#)
- 3 [HN218 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) pp41–9
- 4 [Witness Statement of John Cracknell](#) pp7–12, [Witness Statement of Anthony Speed](#) pp12–26
- 5 [Witness Statement of John Cracknell](#) para 30, [Witness Statement of Anthony Speed](#) para 42
- 6 [Witness Statement of John Cracknell](#) paras 44–5, [Witness Statement of Anthony Speed](#) paras 77–8
- 7 [MPS-0748279](#), [MPS-0748286](#), [MPS-0748277](#)
- 8 [UCPI0000035336](#), [UCPI0000035337](#)
- 9 [MPS-0748288](#), [MPS-0748293](#), [MPS-0748289](#)
- 10 [MPS-0733126](#)
- 11 [UCPI0000035302](#)
- 12 [MPS-0731468](#)
- 13 [MPS-0748487](#)
- 14 [MPS-0748210](#)
- 15 [Lindsey German Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p70
- 16 [DOC042](#), [DOC043](#)
- 17 [UCPI0000015541](#)
- 18 [MPS-0731468](#)
- 19 Islington on 25 March 1975, Chelsea Town Hall on 11 October 1975, New Cross on 2 July 1977, Ilford on 25 February 1978, Brixton on 15 April 1978, Great Eastern Street on 24 September 1978, Whitehall on 12 November 1978, East Ham on 25 April 1979, various marches on 23 June 1979, Whitehall on 11 November 1979, Southwark on 2 March 1980, Lewisham on 20 April 1980 and Paddington on 23 November 1980. See para 2.3.10 (p48) of the written [Closing statement on behalf of the Designated Lawyer Core Participant Group](#), dated 10 February 2023
- 20 [UCPI0000006931](#)
- 21 [UCPI0000007643](#)
- 22 [UCPI0000020984](#)
- 23 [UCPI0000013786](#), [UCPI0000013798](#) and a further (unpublished) report
- 24 [UCPI0000015146](#), [UCPI0000015166](#), [UCPI0000015187](#)
- 25 Concerning Whitehall on 12 November 1978 ([MPS-0728964](#) p8)
- 26 There is no reference to events on 23 June 1979 in the relevant annual report
- 27 See [UCPI0000017537](#) and [MPS-0748282](#)
- 28 [HN307 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) pp72–3
- 29 [Witness Statement of Alastair Pocock](#), [Witness Statement of HN350](#) p7, [Witness Statement of HN126](#) p20, [Witness Statement of HN2152](#) pp13–14
- 30 [UCPI0000004459](#)
- 31 *Ibid.* p2
- 32 *Ibid.* p4
- 33 *Ibid.* p2
- 34 [HN218 Transcript of Oral Evidence](#) p98
- 35 [UCPI0000035255](#)
- 36 [UCPI0000035247](#)

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- [37](#) [UCPI0000035314](#)
- [38](#) [UCPI0000035255](#) pp7–8
- [39](#) *Ibid.* pp8–9
- [40](#) [UCPI0000035247](#) pp9–10
- [41](#) [UCPI0000035314](#) pp16–17
- [42](#) *Ibid.* pp10–13
- [43](#) Andrew, Christopher M., *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorised History of MI5* (London: Penguin, 2012), pp587–99
- [44](#) *Ibid.* pp656–82
- [45](#) [UCPI0000035255](#) p1
- [46](#) [MPS-0728964](#)
- [47](#) [MPS-0728963](#)
- [48](#) [MPS-0731871](#)
- [49](#) [UCPI0000004715](#) p4
- [50](#) [UCPI0000004584](#)
- [51](#) *Ibid.* p1
- [52](#) Smith, Hogan and Ormerod, *Criminal Law*, 14th edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p1050. This reiterates in modern terms the statement made about constructive breaking under the Larceny Act 1916 in the first edition (1965, p398).
- [53](#) [Witness Statement of HN307](#) p26
- [54](#) [MPS-0730658](#)
- [55](#) [MPS-0730745](#)
- [56](#) [MPS-0724109](#)
- [57](#) [MPS-0724100](#)
- [58](#) [MPS-0724130](#)
- [59](#) [MPS-0724177](#)
- [60](#) [MPS-0730099](#) p3
- [61](#) [MPS-0728981](#) p7
- [62](#) [MPS-0728962](#) p6
- [63](#) [MPS-0728985](#) p7

Appendix 1:

List of witnesses and evidence

Metropolitan Police Service witnesses

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN13 (dec'd) ¹	“Barry Loader”	restricted	UCO ² only	Yes	No	n/a
HN13 widow	n/a ³	restricted	n/a	No	MPS-0740967	n/a
HN21	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	Gist UCPI0000034307	MPS-0748062
HN34	n/a	Geoffrey Theodore Michael Craft	M2a & M2b manager ⁴	Yes	MPS-0747446 MPS-0748041	18-May-22
HN41	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	Gist UCPI0000034307	MPS-0748063
HN45	“David Robertson”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0741095	27-Apr-21
HN68 (dec'd)	“Sean Lynch”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN80 (dec'd)	“Colin Clark”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	UCPI0000033626	n/a

-
- 1 Deceased
 - 2 Undercover officer
 - 3 Not available
 - 4 Module 2a and Module 2b manager

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN86	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	No	n/a
HN96	“Michael James”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0745772	13-May-21
HN103	n/a	David Smith	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747443 MPS-0748143	16-May-22
HN106 (dec’d)	“Barry Tompkins”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0745735	n/a
HN109	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	Gist UCPI0000034307	MPS-0748064
HN125	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	No	n/a
HN126	“Paul Gray”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0740761 MPS-0748266	12-May-21
HN135 (dec’d)	restricted	Michael Ferguson	UCO and M2a & M2b manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN155	“Phil Cooper”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0747546	n/a
n/a	n/a	Brian Lockie (HN155’s risk assessor #1)	n/a	Yes	MPS-0747533	13-May-21
n/a	n/a	David Glen Reid (HN155’s risk assessor #2)	n/a	Yes	MPS-0746378	13-May-21
HN200	“Roger Harris”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0740968	05-May-21

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN218	“Barry Morris”	Barry Moss	UCO and M2a & M2b manager	Yes	MPS-0740354 MPS-0747797	13-May-22
HN241	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	Gist UCPI0000034307	n/a
HN244	n/a	Angus Bryan McIntosh	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747578	19-May-22
HN294 (dec’d)	n/k ⁵	restricted	M2a manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN296	“Geoff Wallace”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN297 (dec’d)	“Rick Gibson”	Richard Clark	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN298	“Michael Scott”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0746258	04-May-21
n/a	n/a	Karen Progl (HN298 and the PNC #1) ⁶	n/a	No	MPS-0747684	n/a
n/a	n/a	Katie McAleer (HN298 and the PNC #2) ⁷	n/a	No	MPS-0747688	n/a
HN300 (dec’d)	“Jim Pickford”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a

5 Not known

6 Karen Progl and Katie McAleer both gave evidence as to whether HN298’s conviction was recorded on the Police National Computer

7 Karen Progl and Katie McAleer both gave evidence as to whether HN298’s conviction was recorded on the Police National Computer

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN300 second wife	n/a	restricted	n/a	No	MPS-0747525	n/a
HN301	“Bob Stubbs”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0742600	n/a
HN302	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	Gist UCPI0000034307	MPS-0748065
HN303 (dec’d)	“Peter Collins”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN304	“Graham Coates”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0742282	07-May-21
HN307	n/a	Trevor Charles Butler	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747658	20-May-22
HN308	n/a	Christopher Skey	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747528 MPS-0747952	n/a
HN318 (dec’d)	n/k	Raymond Wilson	UCO and M2b manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN321	“William Paul Lewis”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0747158	n/a
HN322	n/a	restricted	n/a	Yes	MPS-0740351	n/a
HN323 (dec’d)	n/a	Helen Crampton	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN325 (dec’d)	n/k	Conrad Hepworth Dixon	M2a manager	Yes	No	n/a

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN326	“Douglas Edwards”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0738584 MPS-0741138	13-Nov-20
HN327 (dec'd)	n/k	David Fisher	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN328	n/a	Joan Hillier	UCO and M2a administrator	Yes	MPS-0740760 MPS-0746302	13-Nov-20
HN329	“John Graham”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0738576 MPS-0741140	12-Nov-20
HN330	“Don de Freitas”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0740328 MPS-0746304	n/a
HN331 (dec'd)	n/k	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN332 (dec'd)	n/k	Cameron Sinclair	M2a & M2b manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN333	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	MPS-0740329	n/a
HN334	“Margaret White”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0746257	n/a
HN335 (dec'd)	n/k	Michael Tyrrell	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN336	“Dick Epps”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0739316	16-Nov-20
HN337	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	No	n/a

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN338 (dec'd)	n/k	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN339	“Stewart Goodman”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0736910	n/a
HN340	“Andy Bailey” or “Alan Nixon”	restricted	UCO and M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0740414	16-Nov-20
HN341	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	Gist UCPI0000034307	MPS-0748066
HN342 aka HN299	“David Hughes”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0745773	n/a
HN343	“John Clinton”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0739804	n/a
HN344	“Ian Cameron”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN345	“Peter Fredericks”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0741109	19-Nov-20
HN346 (dec'd)	n/k	Jill Mosdell	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN347	“Alex Sloan”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0741697	27-Apr-21
HN348	“Sandra”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0741698	18-Nov-20
HN349	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	MPS-0740356	n/a
HN350	n/a	Paul Andrew Croyden	M2a manager	No	MPS-0747192	n/a
HN351	“Jeff Slater”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0740332	n/a
HN353	“Gary Roberts”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0740413	n/a

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN354	“Vince Miller”	Vincent Harvey	UCO only	Yes	MPS-0747657	11-May-21
HN355	restricted	restricted	UCO only	No	Gist UCPI0000034307	n/a
HN356 (dec’d)	“Bill Biggs”	restricted	UCO only	Yes	No	n/a
HN357	n/a	David Richard Edward Bicknell	M2b manager	Yes	MPS-0726608	n/a
HN368	n/a	Richard James Walker	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747527	n/a
HN474	n/a	Wilf Knight	n/a	Yes	n/a	n/a
HN608 (dec’d)	n/a	Kenneth Donald Bremmer Pryde	M2a & M2b manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN691	n/a	Charles Pollard	n/a	Yes	MPS-0748347	n/a
HN819 (dec’d)	n/a	Derek John Kneale	M2a & M2b manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN1251 (dec’d)	n/k	Philip Anthony Saunders	M2a manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN1668 (dec’d)	n/a	Leslie Herbert Willingale	M2a manager	Yes	No	n/a
HN1742	n/a	Anthony James Speed	n/a	Yes	MPS-0748205	n/a
HN2152	n/a	Richard Reeves Scully	M2a manager	No	MPS-0747155	n/a

Herne	Cover name	Real name	SDS role (in Tranche 1 only)	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
HN2401	n/a	Anthony John Greenslade	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747760	n/a
HN3093	n/a	Roy Creamer	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747215 MPS-0748287	16-May-22
HN3095	n/a	William Arthur Furner	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0741665 MPS-0747104	n/a
HN3378	n/a	Derek William Fred Brice	M2a manager	Yes	MPS-0747802	17-May-22
HN4229 aka PN1748 (dec'd)	n/a	Riby Wilson	M2a manager	Yes	No	n/a
n/a	n/a	Stephen Proctor	n/a	No	MPS-0748130	n/a
n/a	n/a	John Hamilton Cracknell	n/a	Yes	MPS-0748338	n/a

Home Office witnesses

Name	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
Frederick John Warne	Yes	UCPI0000035280	n/a
Gerald Hayden Phillips	Yes	UCPI0000035282	n/a
Michael Hugh Rumble	Yes	UCPI0000035281	n/a
Roy Alastair Harrington	Yes	UCPI0000035341	n/a

Security Service witnesses

Name	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
Security Service Witness Z	Yes	UCPI0000034350	n/a

Civilian witnesses

Name	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
Celia Veronica Stubbs	Yes	UCPI0000034309	06-May-21
Christabel Barbara Gurney	Yes	UCPI0000034326	29-Apr-21
Dave Morris	No	UCPI0000034349	n/a
		UCPI0000034348	
Diane Langford	Yes	UCPI0000035065	26-Apr-21
Elizabeth Amanda Tate Leicester	Yes	UCPI0000034740	13-May-22
Ernest Armstrong Tate	Yes	UCPI0000034086	n/a
Ernest Rodker	Yes	UCPI0000033630	n/a
Joan Frances Kathryn Rudder	No	UCPI0000034746	n/a
John William Rees	Yes	UCPI0000034747	n/a
Jonathan Vivian Rosenhead	Yes	UCPI0000034074	29-Apr-21
Julia Poynter	Yes	UCPI0000034801	n/a
Lindsey Ann German	Yes	UCPI0000034739	12-May-22

Name	Documents published?	Witness statement	Oral evidence
'Madeleine'	Yes	UCPI0000034313	10-May-21
		UCPI0000034818	
'Mary'	Yes	UCPI0000034306	n/a
		UCPI0000034181	
Neil Hardie	No	UCPI0000035163	n/a
Norman Joseph Temple	Yes	UCPI0000034061	26-Apr-21
Peter Gerald Hain	Yes	UCPI0000034091	30-Apr-21
Piers Richard Corbyn	Yes	UCPI0000034186	28-Apr-21
Richard Thomas Chessum	Yes	UCPI0000034182	05-May-21
Roy John Battersby	Yes	UCPI0000034741	n/a
Tariq Ali	Yes	UCPI0000034187	11-Nov-20

Appendix 2:

List of abbreviations

ACAN	Action Committee Against NATO
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AIL	Anti-Internment League
ALCARAF	All Lewisham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism
ANC	Anti-Nuclear Campaign
ANL	Anti-Nazi League
APEX	Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff union
AWA	Anarchist Workers Association
BNP	British National Party
BRAG	Battersea Redevelopment Action Group
BTO	British Tri-continental Organisation
BVSF	Britain–Vietnam Solidarity Front
CPE (M–L)	Communist Party of England (Marxist–Leninist)
CPGB	Communist Party of Great Britain
DMC	Dambusters Mobilising Committee
ELWAR	East London Workers Against Racism
FLAG	Federation of London Anarchists Groups
GLC	Greater London Council
HMIC	Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (until July 2017)
ICRSC	Irish Civils Rights Solidarity Campaign
ILP	Independent Labour Party
IMG	International Marxist Group
INLSF	Irish National Liberation Solidarity Front
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IS	International Socialists
ISC	Irish Solidarity Campaign
LSE	London School of Economics
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
MPSB	Metropolitan Police Special Branch
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NF	National Front
NICRA	Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association
NMDF	Northern Minority Defence Force
NPOIU	National Public Order Intelligence Unit

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NVDA	non-violent direct action
PD	People's Democracy
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
RCP	Revolutionary Communist Party
RCT	Revolutionary Communist Tendency
RF	Registry File
RMLL	Revolutionary Marxist–Leninist League
RWU	Revolutionary Women's Union
SDS	Special Demonstration Squad
SL	Spartacus League
SOS	Special Operations Squad
SPL	Subversion in Public Life committee
STST	Stop the Seventy Tour
SWP	Socialist Workers Party
TOM	Troops Out Movement
VSC	Vietnam Solidarity Campaign
WLF	Women's Liberation Front
WLM	Women's Liberation Movement
WRP	Workers Revolutionary Party

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