

OPENING STATEMENT FOR T2P1 ON BEHALF OF  
SHARON GRANT OBE  
REPRESENTED BY BHATT MURPHY SOLICITORS

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1. Sharon Grant is the widow of Bernie Grant, MP.
2. Bernie Grant made an important and pioneering contribution to British society and politics. Having arrived in the United Kingdom as a teenager, he went to University in Scotland and went on to become involved in the trade union movement. Having been elected as a councillor in Haringey, he went on to lead the council, the first black person in Europe to do so. In 1987, he was elected to Parliament and he retained his seat until his death in 2000 [UCPI000036638]. On his death, the Prime Minister described him as inspirational, and his portrait hangs in the Houses of Parliament.
3. The revelation that he was reported on by undercover police officers is a shocking affront to democracy. Sharon Grant's feeling and concerns about this behaviour are set out in her witness statement [UCPI000036642]. Her statement was based upon a limited set of reports that named Bernie Grant directly, as well as snippets from a few of the witness statements prepared by undercover officers. Now that there has been further disclosure, including the evidence of reporting on other Members of Parliament, the picture that emerges is even more concerning.
4. There are 28 reports disclosed that directly mention Bernie Grant. One of the officers – HN25 – who filed 9 of those reports, has estimated that approximately three quarters of his reporting is missing. There is clearly far more information that has not been disclosed by the Metropolitan Police and Sharon Grant is uncomfortable making this statement without full disclosure of any further available reports.

5. The position taken by the undercover officers about their role in reporting on Members of Parliament appears to be an attempt to minimise it and to deny its significance.

HN78 states that: *"I was simply providing the intelligence. It was for others to decide on relevance. I was never told not to include information on MPs."*  
[UCPI000035076-167, para 222a]

HN25 who filed many reports on Bernie Grant fails to mention him in his explanation for reporting on MPs. He states that:  
*"It was justifiable and proportionate to record this fact [MPs being present at public events] along with who else of significance was in attendance and gauging the mood of the crowd. That allowed for an appreciation of what alliances existed between groups and potentially who could be expected to attend future events"* [MPS-0746375-40 para 126]

HN88 gives the following explanation for this type of reporting:  
*"I am asked what the purpose was of reporting this [speech by Ernie Roberts MP] and to what policing use did I expect this information to be put. I reported it because it was relevant to the community's views of the police in the context of campaigning against police-related legislation."* [MPS-0748356-79, para 217]

6. While these explanations are unsatisfactory, it is even more disturbing to read that HN85, who was first an undercover officer but later went on to run the SDS as its Commander makes the frankly unbelievable claim that:

*"to my knowledge, none of my contemporary UCOs while deployed, reported on the activities of any elected politicians."* (MPS-0747965-137, para 297)

7. Every undercover officer justifies their reporting on MPs by claiming it was only done for incidental purposes. A report would be filed if the MP came into contact with a group that was the subject of infiltration. There are a number of reasons why this explanation is not tenable:

- (1) In Bernie Grant's case, he had a registry file number meaning that Special Branch had opened a file on him and that he was already the subject of monitoring and possibly surveillance.
  - (2) There are numerous references to reports being passed to the Security Services, both in respect of Bernie Grant and other MPs, for example:  
UCPI0000028022 (24/06/94)  
MPS-074706 (14/10/1998)  
MPS-0747326 (11/10/98)
  - (3) The reports filed upon Bernie Grant go beyond reporting his mere presence at events, but purport to analyse the content of his speeches and his sincerity. In one report he is described as embarking "*on a tour of conspiracy theories*" and calls him "*cynical*" [MPS-0722241]. Another report describes him as being "*inflammatory*" [MPS-0245197].
  - (4) No undercover officer has claimed responsibility for these reports. HN78 denies being the author despite the very clear links to him. Either HN78's denial is false, or another undercover officer was reporting on Bernie Grant.
8. In her witness statement, Sharon Grant rather charitably describes these references as "*impertinent*". They go beyond that. They are expressions of political opinion which underline that the reporting was wholly divorced from any proper policing purpose. They must reflect an understanding on the part of the undercover officers that opinions expressed by persons such as Bernie Grant were (a) of interest, and, likely, (b) that opinions of which it was thought that criticism could be made were particularly of interest. It is also telling that these comments arise in the context of views being expressed about the Metropolitan Police and the function of policing. That reflects the institutional defensiveness further to which criticism of the Metropolitan Police is of interest to the undercover officers and worthy of reporting.
9. The concerns do not end there. Despite the repeated statements that reports on MPs were no more than a record of their presence, the evidence suggests that the

reports served a different purpose. HN25 has made reference to reporting on “*alliances*”. What are we to understand about the need to know about MP’s purported alliances? When HN78 was debriefed [by Special Branch and Security Services – check?] in 1995, he reported that the SWP would have more leverage under a prospective Labour Government due to their contacts with Bernie Grant and other MPs [UCPI000026334]. This suggests that reporting on MPs served a purpose that went beyond simply recording their presence at events.

10. In her witness statement, Sharon Grant has quite properly asked the Inquiry to investigate:

- (a) What was done with the information?
- (b) Was any of this information given to the media?
- (c) Was it passed to the Government of the day?
- (d) What effect did it have on Bernie’s reputation in Parliament and specifically within the his Party’s leadership?
- (e) Did it have any impact on the many serious issues that Bernie sought to raise, whether on behalf of his individual constituents or of wider significance?

11. Sharon Grant has highlighted her longstanding concerns that the police passed misinformation to the media to seek to discredit her husband and the wider black community, the most glaring example being the misreporting of his actions and statements in relation the events at Broadwater Farm. The language of the reports and the details of who they were shared with has only heightened those concerns.

12. She has also noted that many of the reports refer to Bernie Grant’s participation at events where his constituents had experienced injustice at the hands of the Metropolitan Police. These included the killing of Joy Gardner by police officers and the wrongful conviction of Winston Silcott. Disturbingly, HN78 even reports having spoken at one of the demonstrations concerning Joy Gardner, although no report has been filed. Given that this campaign was run from his office, she would like to know whether undercover officers infiltrated the premises of an elected politician. The question of the interest that the police had in these campaigns needs to be explored.

13. Sharon Grant expects the Inquiry to fulfil its remit by exploring all of these issues and to reach an understanding of the extent to which this undercover reporting not only went beyond any proper policing purpose but served the political motivations of the MPS and/or the Security Services, and may even have served to interfere with democratic processes.

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