

Witness Name:
Statement No.: 1
Exhibits:
Dated:

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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Witness Statement of [Paul HOLMES]

I, [Paul HOLMES], will say as follows:-

1. The events that I have been asked to recall, and which are set out below, took place some 40 years ago. It should be noted that this statement reflects my memory of those events to the best of my ability in recalling them, but that I cannot be absolutely sure of their complete accuracy after the passage of so many years.
2. I served for 33 years in the Metropolitan Police Service from 16 August 1971 until 2 April 2002. Up until 1980, I served in the rank of uniform Constable based on 'C' Division covering London's West End, working initially at West End Central Police Station (until late 1974) and then (until 1980) at Vine Street Police Station, situated close to Piccadilly Circus.
3. Between 1975 and 1980, I was attached to the Clubs Office, based at West End Central Police Station. At the time, selected 'C' Division uniform officers were attached annually to the Clubs Office for tours of approximately 90 days, after which they would return to their home stations and resume standard uniform patrolling duties.
4. When I was not assigned to the Clubs Office, I returned to Vine Street Police Station where I was mainly engaged in uniform patrolling in the Piccadilly Circus and wider Soho area. A significant part of my duties included patrolling that part of Piccadilly Circus known as the 'meat rack', the area of footway and railings immediately outside the old London County Fire Office and adjacent to the Regent Palace Hotel. The term 'meat rack' reflected the fact that the area was renowned as the principal - but by no means the only - location at which young male prostitutes, commonly known as 'rent boys', solicited for business from homosexual adult males.
5. At that time, the operational remit of Clubs Office covered a number of responsibilities. These included the licensing and supervision of nightclubs and casinos, the investigation of pornography-related offences and the investigation of vice-related offences, all within the borders of 'C' Division (roughly the area bordered by Oxford Street in the north, Charing Cross Road in the east, Park Lane in the west and Pall Mall in the south).

6. I worked solely within the area of vice-related offences. Essentially, this meant the investigation of both male and female 'pimps' (more commonly referred to as 'ponces' in that era) living on the earnings of female prostitution, together with related offences such as controlling prostitution and brothel-keeping. Officers worked in pairs on vice-related offences (known under the term of 'ponce teams') and their work was supervised on a daily basis by the 'ponce' inspector. It was this type of work that occupied the majority of my time in Clubs Office during the period 1975 to 1980.
7. The first occasion on which I was deployed on the investigation of similar offences within the context of homosexual 'vice' was, as far as I can recall, in 1978 in respect of an investigation into the alleged criminal activities of Roddam Quinton TWISS.
8. At that time no specific investigation unit existed for the investigation of child sexual abuse and exploitation offences as far as I remember and such offences were investigated on an ad-hoc basis by officers covering the geographical area within which they were alleged to have occurred. Certainly, no such unit existed for the investigation of specific offences of sexual exploitation of boys. As far as I was concerned, the TWISS investigation came under the auspices of the Clubs Office because the allegation involved vice-related crime in as much as the intelligence indicated that offences similar to 'pimping' were being committed against male prostitutes, including both adult and under-age males – and that these offences were being committed within the West End of London.
9. The deployment of Clubs Office personnel on male vice-related investigations was not unprecedented. During 1975, Clubs Office colleagues of mine had conducted the second 'Playland Arcade' investigation, the modus operandi of which was very similar to the alleged activities of TWISS and which resulted in the conviction of a number of men for a range of offences against adult and under-age males. (The first 'Playland Arcade' investigation took place in 1972 but I do not know if this case was dealt with by Clubs Office or some other unit).
10. Before dealing with those specific details of the TWISS investigation that I am able to recall, it may be helpful to set out the general background to the case as I saw it at that time and which I also highlighted in my conversation of 30 November 2017 with DC Sarah CEARNS of Wiltshire Police's Operation 'Conifer'.
11. Based on my own personal knowledge as a uniformed officer patrolling Piccadilly Circus on an almost daily basis, combined with my knowledge of the modus operandi disclosed by the second 'Playland Arcade' case, the modus operandi of homosexual vice-related offences as understood at that time comprised a range of common factors:
 - The West End in general and the 'meat rack' in particular formed the centre of homosexual prostitution at that time.
 - 'Rent boys' of various ages congregated and solicited in that area in order to attract the custom of clients.
 - The client base included men from the higher echelons of society who were believed to operate in some form of network.
 - That these higher echelon clients could not afford to risk being seen in the company of 'rent boys' in Piccadilly Circus, especially following the 1975 conviction of Charles Hornby as a result of the second 'Playland Arcade' prosecution.

- As was shown to be the case in the 'Playland Arcade' investigation and was confirmed by my own observations as a patrolling officer, a number of men not drawn from the higher echelons of society played the role of procurers (known to me colloquially as 'hooks') whose job was to identify, procure and then supply the 'rent boys' to these better-connected clients away from the 'meat rack' and its environs.
 - As a consequence of the conviction of Hornby and his proven criminal relationships with the his co-defendants that had acted as the 'hooks', it was a reasonable hypothesis to assume that the modus operandi would likely evolve to incorporate the role of some form of a 'go-between', that would act as the conduit between the procurement taking place on the 'meat rack' and its environs and the allegedly upper class clientele - thus reducing the risk to the latter of identification and subsequent investigation by police officers.
12. Before detailing the TWISS case, it may be helpful to consider the term 'rent boys', as in my experience it was and still is somewhat misleading. The world of prostitution has always generated generic nicknames to describe the roles of the protagonists and in the case of male prostitution, the prostitutes have always been known as 'rent boys'. But the use of the word 'boys' should not be taken to mean that they were all actually under-age. In my experience, the ages of the 'rent boys' that I dealt with typically ranged from mid to late teenage to adult males in their early twenties. Undoubtedly, a number of younger boys did become trapped in prostitution during this period but, in the context of cases where evidence existed to establish that this was the case, the figure was relatively low in comparison with the overall number of rent boys operating at this time.
 13. That being said, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the West End has always been a magnet for young 'runaway' boys (and girls). Many younger, homeless boys did appear in the Piccadilly Circus area and, the longer they were present, the greater the risk that they would be recruited and exploited by the 'hooks'. For this reason, a critical part of the duties of patrolling officers was to look out for potential 'runaway' children at risk and to promptly utilise child protection powers to remove them from potential harm. As a consequence, the statistics relating to the number of boys coming to the notice of police in high-risk areas of the West End were significant, but it does not follow that all of them had already become 'rent boys'.
 14. Turning specifically to the case of Roddam TWISS, as far as I can recall the investigation took place during the summer months of 1978. At this time, I was a Constable working in partnership with Sergeant Malcolm Sinclair. We were directed to investigate TWISS, based on an intelligence profile that had been developed by the Intelligence Unit of Clubs Office.
 15. I cannot recall the extent or detail of all of the specific intelligence provided to us at the start of the investigation. I do recall the intelligence profile included a physical description of him and alleged the following:
 - TWISS was an active homosexual and was well known within London's homosexual community.
 - He originated from a well-established family and that his father, a retired admiral, was at that time the Black Rod at the Palace of Westminster.

- He was an active and convicted fraudster and had recently been under investigation concerning a major fraud concerning the purchase and trade of bulk quantities of raw coffee from Brazil.
 - Notwithstanding the intelligence stating that he was a convicted fraudster, there was no record relating to him within the national Criminal Records Office (CRO).
 - He was in a relationship with a young male named Name Redacted
 - He resided in a flat above a shop premises located on Cricklewood Broadway.
 - The intelligence indicated that TWISS was acting in the role of a go-between in the area of the 'meat rack' and providing the link between the 'rent boys', the 'hooks' and the upper-class clientele.
16. I have no specific recall, but Sgt Sinclair and I would have been allocated to the task by the 'Ponce Inspector' referred to at paragraph 6 above.
17. The first issue that Sgt Sinclair and I addressed was the anomaly that he was alleged to be a convicted fraudster but that no Criminal Records Office (CRO) record existed for him. This made no sense and I was suspicious about it. The national CRO was located at New Scotland Yard in those days and was not computerised, but comprised a paper record system. Nevertheless, irrespective of where within the UK TWISS had been convicted, the record and his fingerprints should have been lodged with CRO. I had the CRO indices re-checked for traces of TWISS but again there was no trace of him.
18. I next decided to check the relevant 'Collator's Cards' indices. In those days, each police station included the post of a Collator. This official was a police officer and his or her responsibility was to record, maintain, develop and share intelligence relating to crime and suspected criminals within the station's geographic boundaries. The records were kept in card indices and were a fundamental reference tool in respect of all investigative work. Having found no trace in the CRO, I searched the Collator's Cards system for West End Central and Vine Street Police Stations to see if TWISS had come to notice before in the West End and drew a blank. The same records were checked at Harlesden Police Station that covered Cricklewood Broadway, his alleged home address - with the same result.
19. In a final effort to explore why there was, seemingly, no CRO record of TWISS, I decided to check the Collator's Card system at the police station that covered the Palace of Westminster (PoW). It was a long shot because there was no obvious reason why he should have a card located there, other than the fact that his father was the Black Rod. I cannot specifically recall now if the Collator's index was located at Rochester Row Station or Gerald Road Station but I went to one or the other and found a card relating to Roddam TWISS. The card had a red margin around its edge (something that I had never seen before) and stated, in capital letters across the top of it, that Roddam TWISS was prohibited from entering the precincts of the PoW on the direct instructions of his father and that if he was found therein, he was to be removed forthwith. Significantly, to the best of my recall, there was no reason given on the card for this prohibition, although in view of the intelligence, it was not difficult to surmise why the ban was in place.
20. Breaking away from the overall chronology of my statement in order to conclude what I wish to say on this specific point, I was contacted in 2017 by a journalist named Paul Cahalan. He informed me that he was investigating Roddam TWISS and, during our

conversation, he told me that TWISS had been convicted in 1967 in Hampshire for offences relating to the sexual abuse of under-age boys, for which he had received a significant custodial sentence. This was the first time that I became aware of this fact and, frankly, it amazed me. I am completely sure in my recall that Sgt Sinclair and I could find no records relating to him when we researched the matter in 1978, and yet his fingerprints and record file should have been lodged within the CRO in 1967 and therefore available to officers throughout the UK – and they were not, which I found inexplicable and disturbing.

21. Returning to our investigation, Sgt Sinclair and I conducted surveillance on TWISS for a period of two to three weeks as far as I can recall. It is important to note that 'surveillance' in this context bears no resemblance to current practice involving teams of 10 to 15 officers and multiple vehicles. In 1978, this surveillance comprised Sgt Sinclair and I monitoring TWISS using Sgt Sinclair's private vehicle. Nonetheless, during this period, our observations did confirm the following points, although I cannot recall all the precise details:
 - He was utilising a flat above a shop premises in Cricklewood Broadway and we saw him enter and leave the address on a number of occasions.
 - [Name Redacted] was also seen in his company at that address.
 - On a number of occasions, during the late afternoon and evenings, he visited the West End and walked around the area of the 'meat rack' and its environs.
 - He had conversations with a number of other males of varied ages in the area while doing so.
 - He went to Dolphin Square on at least one occasion. This address was significant to us, as it had previously appeared in a number of vice-related operations and intelligence reports.
 - On one evening, when I was not on duty, Sgt Sinclair had followed him to an address in the vicinity of Esher where he saw him enter a large house that enquiries suggested was occupied by a well-connected individual. My recall of this point is both hazy and based upon hearsay, but I definitely recall that the address was somewhere not far from the [DPA] in Esher. There was a suggestion that the address was associated either with a minor member of the royal family, or by a person that was connected to the royal family, but I cannot remember which at this time.
22. I do clearly recall that Sgt Sinclair and I subsequently discussed whether we should report this fact to our supervisors during our regular updates of progress. I was of the view that we should make no mention of it until our operation had developed stronger evidence.
23. As far as I was concerned, our surveillance had sufficiently corroborated the initial intelligence to justify, not only continuing the investigation, but to enlarging it with extra resources. I was concerned that if we reported the events in Esher at such an early stage of the investigation, without rock-solid evidence to support it, we ran the risk of the operation being terminated by our supervisors because of their concerns of the potential ramifications of developing the case further.

24. Sgt Sinclair was my immediate supervisor and he decided – as was his right – to report what had happened. Shortly thereafter (i.e. no more than two to three days), Sgt Sinclair and I were instructed to close down our investigation and we were re-assigned to another vice-related investigation in respect of female prostitution.
25. If my memory is correct, the Clubs Office senior management team at that time consisted of Chief Superintendent Brian Sparks and Superintendent Eddie Jones. I am sure that Brian Sparks was there at that time because I specifically recall that shortly after we were re-assigned to the female vice-related enquiry, he paid a supervisory visit to Sgt Sinclair and I while we were conducting surveillance on our new target from an observation point.
26. I have been asked to identify which senior officer issued the order to desist on the TWISS enquiry and I believe it was Brian Sparks, but I cannot say so with absolute certainty. In all probability, the decision would have been issued to us by the 'Ponce Inspector' as he was responsible for our day-to-day work rather than at a face-to-face meeting with the senior officer that issued the order. I recall that I confronted the senior management team about the decision but I cannot remember whether this was with Brian Sparks or Eddie Jones, or both of them. I was angered by the decision and demanded an explanation for it but none was offered.
27. I have been asked to express my view as to why the enquiry was halted. In my opinion it was stopped in order to eliminate the possibility that the investigation would uncover tangible evidence of connections between 'rent boys' and upper-class establishment figures.
28. Whether the motive for this was to cover-up and protect these figures, or because police and other officials were themselves criminally involved in the activity, or whether it was driven by the desire of certain ambitious senior officers to obstruct such hyper-sensitive work so as not to jeopardise their career prospects – or a combination of all three - I have no way of knowing.
29. I have also been asked to state whether Chief Superintendent Neil Diver was part of the Clubs Office Senior Management Team and whether or not he could have been the officer who terminated the TWISS enquiry. I knew Neil Diver and he was certainly at some stage the officer in charge of Clubs Office.
30. I am not sure, but I feel that his reign would have come after that of Brian Sparks. I recall that Neil Diver was subsequently removed from 'C' Division, allegedly as a result of inappropriate conduct within the Regent Palace Hotel at Piccadilly Circus, but I do not know the details.
31. I have also been asked to mention any other matters that I would like to draw to the attention of the Inquiry. At the end of my Clubs Office tour in 1978, I returned to uniform duties at Vine Street Police Station, as was normal practice.

32. Part of the duties of officers patrolling the Piccadilly Circus area was to clamp down on the extent of open soliciting for male prostitution that many 'rent boys' habitually engaged in, as this conduct was the source of numerous complaints from members of the public.
33. Consequently, officers (myself included) made arrests of male prostitutes under Section 32 of the Sexual Offences Act of 1956 for offences of importuning and this was a specific part of our allotted tasks.
34. The year following the TWISS enquiry, I was seen by Commander Edward STOW who was in charge of all policing operations on 'C' Division. Also present was Chief Superintendent Brian Sparks, who by this time was no longer attached to Clubs Office but was acting as the Commander's Divisional Chief Superintendent.
35. I was ordered to stop arresting 'rent boys' for the offence of importuning but was not provided with any explanation as to why. In fairness, rather than any sinister reason related to cover-ups or such-like, it may have just as easily been as a result of the fact that the Metropolitan Police was being criticised in some sections of the media where these arrests were being portrayed at that time as a symbol of police repression of the homosexual community - and that very senior officers were sensitive to this criticism and wished to avoid it.
36. I have also been asked to explain a comment of mine made in the report of my telephone call with DC Sarah Cearns of Operation Conifer where I state that *'Everything was going on in the West End. There were too many people saying the same thing. It was a cover up of the boys being abused. There was information but no evidence'*.
37. Before specifically explaining the comment, it may be helpful to set the background as it existed then. Whereas now the Metropolitan Police has recently come under severe criticism for adopting a policy of always believing victims, in the period covered by this statement, very nearly the complete reverse was the case.
38. Almost as a default setting, and as has been repeatedly established in public record, police officers were extremely sceptical in response to most allegations of sexual abuse, whether they came from female or male complainants. This was especially true in respect of any cases involving sex workers of any age, either within a heterosexual or homosexual context.
39. In such cases, the typical response was that such complainants were either fantasists, opportunist thieves or alcohol and substance abusers, or a combination of all of these, and therefore so unreliable as to be unworthy of belief. Even in cases where there may have been a degree of *prima facie* truth in their claims, the prevalent view was that these were not worth pursuing because their lack of credibility and instability as witnesses of truth would render them so vulnerable in court as to make the prospect of a successful prosecution negligible.

40. Of course, the countervailing possibility that if the alleged abuse had actually occurred, the consequential damage to their physical and psychological health would likely result in just such evident emotional instability, dishonesty and substance abuse, was rarely considered.
41. My comment that *'Everything was going on in the West End'* was a summary of the fact that the West End was the magnet for all forms of vice and that heterosexual and homosexual sexual exploitation of adults and children was taking place alongside each other.
42. Notwithstanding deeply ingrained scepticism, I, together with many colleagues working in this field, came to hold the view that *'too many people were saying the same thing'* for there not to be at least some truth in the assertion that establishment figures were engaged in the sexual abuse of young males and that this activity was being covered up.
43. Similar viewpoints emerged in both the 1972 and 1975 'Playland Arcade' investigations and comparable issues arose in the 1975 *'Johnny Go Home'* documentary made by Granada Television. Reliable police intelligence sources from within the homosexual community had been consistently reporting similar allegations over a number of years and on arrested 'rent boys' made reference to it.
44. Moreover, these trends continued into the 1980s, as was seen with the 'Operation Circus' investigation that focused on similar allegations of exploitation of Piccadilly Circus 'rent boys' by well-connected clients.
45. As far as I can recall, the issue for colleagues working in the West End (as I did almost constantly from 1971 to 2002), the question was not whether it was occurring, but why it was not being exposed. The simplistic and convenient answer to that question was the fact that the allegations were rarely supported by tangible and probative evidence provided by credible victims.
46. In my view, there were two main reasons for this absence of probative evidence: the victims of the abuse were either too fearful and distrustful to make formal complaints concerning their abuse and/or the capacity of independent police operations to fully expose the criminality was thwarted by some senior police officers in order to cover it up.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true to the best of my ability to recall them.

DPA

Signed: _____

Dated: 24 January 2019 _____

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