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THE STURGESS POST-MORTEM RECORDS REVEAL NO RUSSIAN NOVICHOK WAS FOUND UNTIL THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ORDERED IT

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by John Helmer, Moscow

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The single most important witness in six years of investigations into the cause of Dawn Sturges's death, the pathologist appointed by the government to conduct her post-mortem, has testified that he failed to discover Novichok in his eleven-hour long autopsy. Instead, his official reports from 2018 reveal that he was told to find Novichok by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), the UK chemical warfare centre at Porton Down. But he didn't sign his name to that for more than four months after the autopsy, until November 29, 2018.

The witness is Guy Ruty (*lead images*). He appeared in a state-censored format at the Sturges Inquiry hearing on November 5, chaired by retired Appeal Court judge, Anthony Hughes (titled Lord Hughes of Ombersley).

In the official document releasing Sturges's body to her family, Ruty wrote [3]: "The provisional cause of death following the autopsy examination is: 1a Awaiting further tests."

Ruty signed that two days after the autopsy on July 19, 2018. Sturges's body was then kept at Porton Down for another eleven days; evidence from the undertaker, Chris White Funeral Directors, reveals it was collected for the funeral ceremony and cremation on July 30 [4].

In Ruty's report dated November 29, 2018, he revealed that blood testing of Sturges on July 2, 2018, identified that she had taken a combination of illicit, potentially lethal drugs before her collapse. Ruty says [5] these included cocaine and fentanyl. Ruty avoided disclosing the precise reports of the toxicology testing so that the dosage Sturges had consumed of cocaine and fentanyl has been concealed.

In his official reporting Rutty used circumlocutions to conclude he couldn't tell what drugs may have been the cause of her death. The toxicology, he said ^[6], "identified a number of therapeutic and non-therapeutic drugs to be present. Although I have not been provided [*sic*] with the levels of the drugs identified, I am not aware [*sic*] that there is any indication [*sic*] to suggest that the deceased's collapse was a direct [*sic*] result of the action of either a therapeutic or illicit drug." .

Sic marks the evasions. In the Anglo-American law and court practice for suspicious death cases, this is the point at which evidence is either inadmissible for the prosecution's case or short of the required standard of beyond reasonable doubt for the judge and jury.

Rutty also qualified his conclusion on the cause of Sturgess's death by saying: "I am of the opinion that these observations, although reported organophosphate toxicity, are not necessarily specific in their own right to organophosphate toxicity." — line 901 ^[5].

In his testimony this week Rutty referred to what he had been told by the DSTL Porton Down, claiming it was "independent". Independent of Hughes's proceeding, Porton Down is. Independent of the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD), it is not.

"I understand," testified Rutty, "that there is independent [*sic*] laboratory evidence that the deceased was exposed to Novichok and that it is considered [*sic*] that this was through a dermal route. Thus, I am of the opinion that the clinical presentation in terms of the signs and symptoms, as well as the in-lift laboratory tests and the tests and reports received following the autopsy examination all support that Dawn Sturgess did not collapse or die from a natural medical event, an assault or the result of a therapeutic or illicit drug overdose but rather due to the complications resulting from a cardiac arrest caused by Novichok toxicity. Having been exposed to the nerve agent Novichok...appears from the information I have been provided [*sic*] to have occurred through a dermal exposure..."

Apart from this hearsay, the only evidence made public of what Rutty was told by the DSTL Porton Down is a 2-page, partly censored summary report from Porton Down attached as an appendix to Rutty's report. According to Porton Down, its testing of blood samples taken from Sturgess on July 2, 2018, found no specific Novichok evidence. Instead, the summary claims the finding was of "a characteristic marker for exposure to a particular nerve agent of the Novichok class".

The state laboratory kept repeating the blood testing for two days until on July 4, 2018, when the report claims ^[5] "these analytical results confirmed that Dawn STURGESS was poisoned with a specific Novichok agent". The specificity of the identification – that's to say, reliable biochemical evidence — has been omitted from the report.

The Porton Down laboratory then tested samples of blood and tissues Rutty had taken from Sturgess at the autopsy. The blood test results turned out in the Porton Down report to have been negative and contradictory. The conclusion was inconclusive: "In addition, the Novichok-acid metabolite was also detected in a sub-sample of PTN/18/1379, this is characteristic [*sic*] for the Novichok in question."

Porton Down kept trying to deliver the government's order for Novichok, and so liver, kidney and brain tissues were then tested. The outcome was inconclusive. The Porton Down agents admitted in small print at the bottom of their report ^[5]: "Note – Dstl has not undertaken analysis of human tissue samples previously. Therefore, while some method optimisation [*sic*] has taken place, these methods should be treated as developmental [*sic*]."

In British state speak, "method optimisation" means assumption; "developmental" means uncertain, ambiguous, inconclusive. As evidence in the British courts, it is inadmissible.

Rutty was accompanied by an academic colleague, also a Home Office-registered pathologist for suspicious death cases, Dr Philip Lumb. According to Rutty's summary report, Lumb "was instructed by HM Senior Coroner to be present throughout the autopsy examination and to provide a second independent report concerning the autopsy findings and death of Dawn Sturgess. I can confirm that Dr Lumb and I undertook the examination together, and that I have not had sight of his independent report." — line 149 ^[7].

Lumb has been excluded by the judge, Lord Hughes, from the Inquiry investigations. Lumb's "independent report ^[5]", along with what Rutty has identified as Lumb's "autopsy contemporaneous notes", have been kept secret.

It is also unclear whether Lumb had been engaged by the Wiltshire coroner to investigate Sturgess's death days earlier than the post-mortem which Rutty says took place on July 17 ^[8].

Also accompanying Rutty and Lumb at the July 17 ^[3] autopsy were police, Porton Down officials, British Army officers, and "by a team of independent international scientific observers from the Netherlands." In another document, Rutty reported there was no team – just one individual, code named ^[7]"QM73 from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons [OPCW]."

Read the Rutty archive here ^[9]: Rutty is reluctant to be photographed in his public and medical convention appearances, and he was screened from view during his appearance at the Inquiry hearing on November 5. The lead images are from his home town press ^[10].

Rutty's reports reveal that the autopsy he conducted was at a "designated mortuary", the identification of which has been kept secret ^[3]. This indicates that Sturgess's body had been removed from Salisbury District Hospital to a location guarded by the state. Lord Hughes has considered this location to be so sensitive, he has ordered it blacked out for his public inquiry. This indicates the location was Porton Down; there Defence Ministry agents had access to the body for more than a week after Sturgess's death had been recorded at the hospital and before the official autopsy began.

118	EXAMINATION DETAILS	
119	Under the authority of:	Mr D Ridley,
120		HM Senior Coroner for Wiltshire and Swindon
121	Location:	Designated mortuary
122	Name of deceased:	Dawn STURGESS
123	Date of birth:	18 th June 1974 Age: 44 years
124	Address:	John Baker House, 16-18 Rolleston Street, Salisbury
125	Scene of incident:	9 Muggleton Road, Amesbury
126	Date of death:	8 th July 2018 at 20:26 hours
127	Examination date:	17 th July 2018
128	Start:	13.20 hours Finish 00.10 hours (18 th July 2018)

[11]

Source: <https://dsiweb-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/INQ005526.pdf> [7]

The appendices attached to Rutty's full report include blood test results, tissue sample slides, and autopsy notes. The toxicology reports identifying the drugs found in Sturgess's blood and urine testing are missing.

No trace of the conclusions Lumb (*right*) reached in parallel with Rutty has been reported by Hughes's inquiry or the British press. In several emails to Lumb at his university and private practice addresses in 2021, he refused to say on what date the autopsy had occurred, and whether he had reported at the time that cause of death was cardiac arrest leading to brain death — without mention of Novichok.



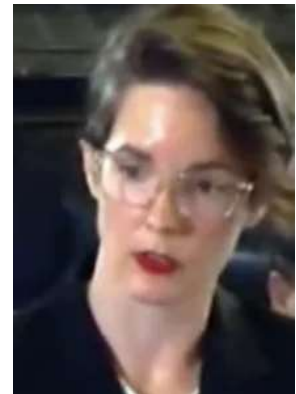
[12]

When Rutty was questioned in the open hearing this week by Andrew O'Connor KC, counsel assisting the judge, Rutty was asked to explain why Lumb was present to prepare his own autopsy findings [13]. "So he provides a second report which I've never seen," Rutty said. "It will be — so if it was me doing it, I would write a report, I would give my own opinion and views and I would seal it and I would provide it. It's likely that that was provided to the Coroner but would not be opened by the Coroner, it would remain sealed and therefore if there was ever a criminal prosecution, then those defending the individual or whoever would be able to open that and have an independent pathologist from the time who saw everything, who was present, and came to their own conclusions and wrote their own report."

"Q [O'Connor]. It's fair to say, from what you have said, is it, that Dr Lumb's role in this case was connected to the possibility of a future prosecution in Dawn Sturgess' case? A [Rutty]. Correct, sir. Q. In that regard, is it fair to say it was a routine procedure, it wasn't special to her case, it's the sort of thing that happens where there is a possible — possibility of a future prosecution? A. It was routine at that time to have a second autopsy examination. It was unusual to have them done at the same time, but it has occurred during my career. It just depends on the circumstances [13]."

If O'Connor and Ruddy were telling the truth this week, they will have known that prosecution of three Russians for the Novichok attacks was already well under way; that charges had been announced by the Crown Prosecution Service and the Prime Minister in September 2018; and that three arrest warrants had been issued in November 2021 ^[14].

Representation of the three accused Russians had been announced by Hughes on March 25, 2022, when he said that Emilie Pottle (*right*) "is designated to make it her particular responsibility to put on the hat serving the interests of those who have been publicly accused." Pottle, however, has asked no questions of Ruddy or any of the preceding witnesses in the hearings to date on behalf of the Russians. Instead, acting as one of Hughes's prosecutors, she has put leading questions to police and medics to reinforce the official narrative ^[16].



[15]

An independent British toxicologist who specializes in organophosphates was asked to review Ruddy's testimony and the accompanying reports and evidence exhibits.

217 On 2nd July 2018 at 18.45 the acetylcholinesterase (AChE) results are entered into the notes
 218 (Appendix A). This showed very marked AChE inhibition. A toxicology result was also
 219 entered which showed the presence of clopidogrel, rocuronium, atropine, cocaine and its
 220 metabolite, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, fentanyl, midazolam, ethyl sulphate, mirtazapine
 221 and its metabolite, zopiclone and its metabolite as well as nicotine and its metabolite. An EEG
 222 (a test to look at brain activity) was performed which showed very low amplitude with little, if
 223 any cerebral activity which was considered to represent diffuse cerebral dysfunction which
 224 could be due to severe hypoxic brain injury (brain injury due to a lack of oxygen).
 225 Initially the notes refer to possible organophosphate poisoning. The possible diagnosis of
 226 Novichok toxicity was considered. On 3rd July 2018 at 00.10 hrs a blood sample was sent to
 227 Dstl Porton Down to further consider the diagnosis.

[17]

Source: <https://dsiweb-prod.s3> ^[5]

In the records of Sturgess's local general practitioner, mirtazapine and zopiclone were identified as prescribed for her daily consumption. Mirtazapine is used to treat depression and anxiety, but in combination with other drugs medical experts warn that it may be dangerous for the heart ^[18]. Zopiclone was prescribed ^[19] to help Sturgess sleep. UK medical warnings identify the risk that combining this medication "if used with alcohol, opiates or other sedative / depressant substances [may cause] risk of coma and death." Reviewing Ruddy's list, an independent British toxicologist says that "clopidogrel is an antiplatelet to prevent blood clots, rocuronium is a muscle relaxant - both may have been administered by the paramedics during their resuscitation efforts."

The source comments: "I see there is a mention of both cocaine and its metabolite benzoylecgonine. However, this brief section has no quantification; for that there is a reference to Appendix A, but in that appendix only AChE tests [Acetylcholinesterase ^[20]] are listed; the drugs are not mentioned. Why would the drug concentrations not be included in Ruddy's report, especially if for a day or so, this was assumed to be a drug overdose? Fentanyl gets one word of

mention, but no follow up. What did the tox show, or rather not show? The drugs mentioned must be quantified. If not, this is just terrible science, sloppy at worst."

"Prof Rutty told the inquiry that he was as confident as he could be that Ms Sturgess's death had been caused by exposure to Novichok, adding that she had suffered a 'death of the brain' after her heart stopped. 'I am not aware,'" Rutty reported, 'that there is any indication to suggest that the deceased's collapse was a direct result of the action of either a therapeutic or illicit drug.' This would imply that Rutty knows the drug concentrations in order to come to that conclusion."

"If he knows the concentration of fentanyl, cocaine, and the other illicit, then why are they not in his report? If he doesn't know, how can he draw his conclusion, especially as poly drug use is uncharted grounds for a pathologist, never mind a toxicologist."

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- [4] July 30: <https://johnhelmer.net/the-british-government-has-trapped-itself-between-two-coroners-two-pathologists-as-cremation-form-number-6-exposes-the-novichok-lie/>
- [5] says: <https://dsiweb-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/INQ005227.pdf>
- [6] said: <https://dsiweb-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/INQ005526.pdf> - line 273
- [7] line 149: <https://dsiweb-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/INQ005526.pdf>
- [8] July 17: <https://johnhelmer.net/the-lie-that-killed-dawn-sturgess-and-why-it-took-the-british-government-four-months-to-persuade-two-doctors-philip-lumb-and-hugh-rutty-to-sign-their-names-to-novichok/>
- [9] here: <https://johnhelmer.net/?s=rutty>
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- [13] findings: <https://dsiweb-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/Day-11-5-November-2024.pdf>
- [14] November 2021: <https://johnhelmer.net/no-handcuffs-no-novichok-eu-confirms-there-are-no-european-arrest-warrants-british-prosecutors-caught-lying/>
- [15] Image: <https://johnhelmer.net/wp-content/webpc-passthru.php?src=https://johnhelmer.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Emilie-pottle.png&nocache=1>

[16] official narrative: <https://johnhelmer.net/the-million-pound-ransom-how-the-british-governments-investigation-of-novichok-is-poisoning-itself/>

[17] Image: <https://johnhelmer.net/wp-content/webpc-passthru.php?src=https://johnhelmer.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/general-practitioner.png&nocache=1>

[18] heart:

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4434967/#:~:text=In%20general%2C%20these%20agents%20show,can%20affect%20patients%27%20heart%20rate>

[19] prescribed:

<https://dan247.org.uk/type/zopiclone/#:~:text=Effects%20of%20Zopiclone&text=Relaxation%2C%20euphoria%2C%20sleepiness%20and%20a,for%20abuse%2C%20dependence%20and%20tolerance>

[20] Acetylcholinesterase: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acetylcholinesterase_inhibitor