

Corruption in the Metropolitan Police

-The neverending story that gives, and keeps on giving

The Murder of Daniel Morgan

I 'Negation of the rule of law'

- The case against Sir John Mitting

Priti Patel, on May 18 delayed the publication of an independent Home Office panel review of the murder of a Croydon private investigator Daniel Morgan. 34 years ago in 1987. Like the Pitchford/Mitting inquiry the panel inquiry had been ordered by Teresa May when she was Home Secretary, and it is hard not to think that, like that and other enquiries she ordered, it reflected the significant exasperation from the home secretary the Metropolitan Police not only could get it is own corrupt and incompetent house in order and that after thirty years of trying MPS didn't seem to know what the problem was, and even if did know it certainly was not going to tell the home secretary.

On Friday May 28 the panel announced that after negotiation they had been given a provisional publication date of June 15. The delay was so that Priti Patel and small team a from the Home Office can review the supposedly independent review that has been reviewing the case since 2013.

There must be many in the Metropolitan Police, and elsewhere who are hoping that Priti Patel is sufficiently shameless to simply bury this old piece of bad news. And Sir John Mitting is one of those who would be more than happy to see that happen.

When I first heard about the delay, in a tweet from veteran Investigative reporter Michael Gillard, I realized that this was a story that I had not been following closely but I thought

that it might be of interest because it involved allegations of corruption in the Met from, a period smack bang in the middle of the period of Interest to the Mitting Inquiry into spycops. I thought there may be Police involved who were part of the story of the special demonstration squad, which there are. But I hadn't realised the role the Sir John Mitting played in the story, was central to the story, and that that role draws attention to a breathing bias in favour of the Metropolitan Police's secrecy and dishonesty in the way it goes about its business that it calls into question whether he is a fit and proper person to lead the Inquiry that bears his name,

To get to that point there is more than there is thirty years of conspiracy, deception evasion and corruption by the net to deal with first. Yes it is about corruption in the Met, but it is not just about backhanders, disrespect and cover ups, it is about cops participating being accessories to serious organised crime, and murder. It is also about the hopelessness of the Met's handling of Covert Human Intelligence Sources, and at the heart of the story was a bereaved and dissatisfied family challenging the Met to take the killing seriously.

And if that does not ring enough bells, this was a private detective agency hand in glove with the detectives in the Met, at a time when another surrey based private detective, Garry Murray, was putting the finishing touches to a book about how the MI5, Special Branch and the Economic League used Private Investigators to do their dirty work for them. And the dead man's office

was just a short walk from the Economic League's national research centre.

Eventually more than twenty years after the hideous and brutal murder police charged five men including a former Detective Sergeant from Catford with responsibility for the killing. When the only trial of the dead man's alleged killers collapsed because of the police's coaching of un-reliable super grasses', it left the future leader of the Labour Party, and then Director of Public Prosecutions, with egg on his face. No sooner had the trial collapsed than two of the accused, the business partner of the dead man and his mate, a retired Detective Sergeant from the Metropolitan Police, were recruited again by Andy Coulson to continue to work for News International and Rebekah Brookes.

This is a story we don't have to spell out in any detail to Sir John Mitting. He knows it only too well. The for of the accused in that collapsed trial, claimed damages against the Metropolitan Police Commissioner for malicious prosecution and misfeasance in public office. The claim was eventually heard by Mr Justice Mitting, who found in favour of the former detective and against the three other men.

To summarise Justice Mitting's reasoning for this it couldn't have been malicious prosecution by the Metropolitan Police because the decision to prosecute was Kier Starner's, even though the police withheld information about their coaching of the witness from him. It wasn't misfeasance in public office because the officer responsible genuinely believed the accused civilians were guilty which is why he coached the witness.

Mitting's judgement did not stand indeed could not stand. The three appealed and Mitting's disturbing judgement was thrown out. One of the Appeal Court Judges, Lady Justice King wrote in the judgement:

"To say that Det Ch Supt Cook, a prosecutor guilty of perverting the course of justice by creating false evidence against the appellants was, on account of his belief in their guilt, not acting maliciously, is rather like saying that Robin Hood was not guilty of theft.

One understands the motivation in each case, but any seeming endorsement of such dishonest behaviour, particularly within the police force, leads... to a serious and unacceptable 'negation of the rule of law'."

By the time that withering appraisal of Mitting's understanding of the legal concept of corruption by police officers had been issued, he was shockingly already in charge of the inquiry into police corruption that bears his name.

In the absence of the panel report commissioned by Theresa May, the only published written official account of that failed case and misfeasance by the Met Commissioner is Sir John Mitting's approved judgement in that claim. You can read it in full here:

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/rees-ors-v-met-police-approved-final-jment.pdf>

II The Killing Of Daniel Morgan - A Chronology of Corruption, Evasion and the Failure of Covert Human Intelligence

This is not a murder story that has been ignored by either the police, reporters, or investigative journalists, nor has it been sidelined by their editors and it has never been out of the public view for very long.

But it is fair to say it hasn't caught and stayed in the public's attention either. Although it is not a difficult story, it is not straightforward, and it has played out episodically over thirty-four years. The number and complexity of the characters is Shakespearean, and as with Shakespeare most people hearing about it probably think it isn't that sort of story that could have happened to anyone like them. But most of all it is unresolved, and unlike Shakespeare it starts with a brutal and horrific murder and there is no ending, just a bunch of unsavoury characters shuffling off into the Croydon sunset.

For someone like me coming to the story fairly fresh it has been a solid piece of work trying to piece it together. For those of us interested in in the spycops, blacklisting, covert human intelligence sources and from the different sources of variable. All the work has been done by other what I have tried to put it together in a way that is up to date and relevant to those following the Mitting Inquiry.

This isn't a straightforward timeline, the lengthy cast list of the police officers will include officers who had a role to play in the story of the Special Demonstration Squad and National Public Order Intelligence Unit, whether Sir John Mitting, who now has a serious conflict of interest in this inquiry, will reveal this. I have tried to put some of that detail into an otherwise brief largely summarised chronological account.

One of the most useful sources in doing this has been Sir John Mitting's judgement referenced above. Although the judgement was wrong in law and in principle and wrong constitutionally, the premises on which he based it were factually accurate. The other was a three part, partly dramatised or reconstructed, Channel Four documentary "Murder in the Car Park". This is a extremely well-researched piece commissioned in anticipation of the recently delayed report, and it was broadcast last year and is available on All 4. It seems to have been made with the co-operation of the accused defendants who were all acquitted, the Met police officers responsible for the inquiries and the collapsed trial, and the victim's family. That is some feat, and one wonders how much negotiation was involved to achieve it,

The Guardian, *By-line Times* and even, heaven preserve us, *The Daily Mail* have reported the story regularly, and in detail. At one point a South London local newspaper called *Shopping Times* was helpful, If you want more information about the episodes in this story than I am laying out here, go and look for it. You might find it in unexpected places.

1987 Murder in Sydenham

On March 10, 1987, the body of a man in his late thirties was found next to his own car in the car Park of the Golden Lion pub in Sydenham in Southeast London. He had been stuck four or five times by an axe to his head, and the last blow, struck after he had hit the ground, left the axe embedded in his face. Although his watch missing, his wallet was not, and there was more than a grand in cash in his jacket, untouched.

On the other hand his trouser pocket had been torn open and there was no sign of notes he had been writing in the pub.

The dead man was Danny Morgan, 37, the son of an army officer who had grown up in Monmouthshire and gone on to study agriculture before getting married in his late twenties and moving to London. The family and their two children lived in Norwood in Croydon.

Three years before this he had set up a private investigation company, Southern Investigations, with a younger business partner Jonathan Rees, aged 32 at the time of Morgan's death. Before that they had been working together in a bailiff, legal services and private investigation agency run by Bryan Madagan. Madagan is now 82 and a Sydenham resident and is still a director of Madagan Associates. The firm is based in Brockley still in that area of Southeast London. Rees' work for Madagan included the private investigation and legal service areas, and Rees was a regular visitor to Catford police station for local solicitors. The Golden Lion in Sydenham was a regular drinking haunt for Rees and for Catford's detectives, Morgan was more involved in the landlord and bailiff side of the business.

This division of work was carried over to the two men's own company, which was based in Thornton Heath, the area of Croydon next door to Norwood and not very far from Sydenham and Catford. Although Thornton Heath would not have been in Catford's patch, Rees maintained a close friendship with some of the police from Catford and often employed them for one-off cash-in-hand jobs and presumably used them to get confidential information when he needed it.

As it happens it their new office in Thornton Heath was not far from 90 London Road where in 1980, The Economic League had centralized its research department including its notorious blacklist with perhaps as many as 30,000 alleged "subversives" on it.

Morgan and Rees continued to regularly drink socially in the Golden Lion. The night Morgan
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was killed was a Tuesday night and they were there simply to talk business and it was all done before 9 O'clock when Rees left first to go home. The night before however they had been there drinking with some of Catford's detectives.

Rees took his leave of Morgan at around 9pm, and returned home in his car which he had parked in front of the pub. Before, or during, this relatively short journey he made some calls on his car phone.

Morgan stayed a little longer, completing notes he had made of the conversation. His body was discovered at 9.40. when customer driving into the car park saw it, stopped his car, and dashed in to tell the landlord. The first police, from Catford, were on the scene at 9.52.

1987 Operation Morgan

Operation Morgan, led By **Detective Superintendent Douglas "Dougie" Campbell**, started at this point. Although Campbell, presumably based at New Scotland Yard and on call, did not appear on the scene until eleven o'clock. Later there was evidence from some of the officers already there that Campbell had clearly been drinking, and the Daily Mail later carried allegations that the first thing he did on his arrival was to get the landlord to open a bottle of Scotch.

Second in Charge was **Detective Alan Jones** and third in the line of command was **Detective Sergeant Malcolm Davidson**.

The following day 41-year-old **Detective Sergeant Sidney Fillery**, a member of the flying squad based at Catford Police station, joined the investigation. He was a vey close friend and regular drinking companion of Rees, knew Morgan and occasionally did work for their agency presumably cash in hand. Campbell was aware that he knew Rees, but not that they were close friends and none of the senior officers knew at this initial stage

about the work he undertook for Southern Investigations, or that, as it later turned out, Fillery had been drinking with Morgan and Rees in the Golden Lion on the very night before the murder.

Fillery was to become part of the story very quickly and therefore his involvement in the investigation was extraordinarily problematic. As a detective sergeant, Fillery was an experienced officer and he would have known that, whether or not he had played any part in the events that led to Morgan's death, it was his duty to make clear his connections to the firm and the dead man's business partner.

Not only did he not do this, he also took the first witness statement off Rees the day after the murder but after that he remained an investigating officer only for another 5 days. As Fillery's closeness to Rees and the firm became clearer Campbell removed him from the team. With Fillery out of the way, Campbell's team started to explore the motive for the murder and identify possible suspects.

Southern Investigations was more like an unincorporated association than a limited company, a partnership, in which the partners – Rees and Morgan, were liable for all debts. The firm's business was mainly private investigations, bailiff's work and security. But although it was only a few years old it was already profitable, and its turnover was growing. However, they had two outstanding debts at the time of Morgan's murder the first was about £24,000 unpaid tax, which was not perhaps unusual for a recently established and growing business. The other though slightly smaller was a claim being brought by one of their security customers, Belmont Cars Auctions.

Belmont were claiming £18,280.62 which was the takings from one of their car twice weekly car auctions that Rees had, in March the previous year, been in the process of

banking for the company when he was attacked and robbed.

This debt was making its way through the court and Rees and Morgan had just been given leave by the court to defend Belmont's claim of debt, but as a condition they had to lodge £10,000 with the court within 21 days. Their meeting in the Golden Lion had therefore been to discuss how to raise this and they had hoped to meet there a friend or relation of Rees to discuss it. But he didn't turn up.

This would not have a sufficient motive for murder, but Campbell was working on the hypothesis, for which he found some evidence, that that Morgan believed that the robbery was a put up job and that it in fact been carried out by the two Catford Police Officers. These were different officer Fillery. Within a month of the killing Campbell had arrested Fillery, and the two other Met Police officers from Catford Police Station whose names seem never to have been disclosed. Rees and his two brothers in law, Glenn and Garry Vian, had also been arrested and questioned under caution about the murder. His brothers were local hard men certainly good with their fists and happy to put them to use; but they had no significant criminal records.

If Campbell's hypothesis was right this suggested that the working relationship between the two partners must have been difficult to say the least, and in reality probably pretty impossible. But this was exactly the picture that emerged from the small number of regular staff employed at Southern Investigations. Its office manager was Peter Newby, there was an employed investigator called Yvonne Bartlett and a self-employed bookkeeper Kevin Lennon.

The employees all testified at the time, and continued to testify for the next twenty odd years that the relationship between their two bosses was acrimonious and quarrelsome

They also confirmed that the main reason for this disagreement was the Belmont Robbery and resultant debt, and Morgan's belief was that it was a put-up job by Rees and police from Catford. Newby and Lennon also knew that Fillery, who had been at the Belmont Auction with Rees on the day he was robbed, was also aware of the difficulties the two men had about the job.

Newby told Campbell's team that when Fillery had visited the office, the day after Morgan's murder, he left with the Belmont file which had not appeared in the evidence that Campbell had before him.

Kevin Lennon, at this time, was on bail awaiting trial for serious offences of tax fraud involving some of his other clients. In July a friend of his, former **Detective Chief Inspector** called **Bucknole**, covertly recorded a conversation with Lennon in which he claimed that Rees had asked him to find someone to kill Morgan. As a result, Lennon was formally interviewed by Campbell's team on July 21 when he confirmed that Rees had expressed his desire to kill Morgan at least a year before he was in fact killed and that Rees had at least asked him to find someone to carry out the act. This was confirmed in a written witness statement on September 4. In a second statement given on September 15 he said that Rees had also discussed the proposed murder of Morgan as early as in May 1986.

In the end Campbell concluded that although he thought Rees may have commissioned Morgan's killing, by his brother-in-law that there was insufficient evidence to support a criminal prosecution. All six suspects were released from their bail conditions. He told the Coroner of his thoughts but they were not put to the inquest jury.

1988 The Inquest

On April 25, 1988, a year after the killing, the inquest jury returned a verdict of unlawful
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killing as you might expect of a man found dead in a pub carpark with an axe sticking out of his face. The only finger of suspicion pointed at Rees or Fillery at the at the inquest was that of Kevin Lennon, and with his impending serious court case he would not be a reliable witness.

Although there was no immediate prosecution of anyone in relation to Morgan's death, his mother and brother and sister were not prepared to let it go. Nor it seemed were the press who continued to scratch away at the unsatisfactorily outcome of the investigation.

Rees had not been the only partner with a friend in the Metropolitan Police and in Morgan's case they weren't Catford based. **Detective Constable Alan "Taffy" Holmes** aged 44 was a Croydon resident and although he was only a Detective Constable, low down in the Met's quasi military pecking order, but working in the force's **Serious Crimes Squad** he had friends in high places. including **Commander Ray Adams** a rising star within the met but who by 1987 was under investigation particularly with Gangland criminal Kenneth Noyes who had been jailed for the Brinks Mat robbery. Holmes was a golfing buddy of Adams and fellow freemason of both Adams and Noyes.

Morgan had been talking to Holmes about his concerns about his business partner's corrupt dealing with detectives in Catford, which went beyond the one incident with Belmont Auctions. We can only speculate what their plans were, or whether Morgan knew that his friend was himself being investigated for corruption.

Holmes was not exactly the best or safest person to confide in, and four months after Daniel's murder. Alan Holmes who was being drawn into the investigation of Adams and Noye, shot and killed himself in his own back garden. He left a suicide note blaming that

corruption investigation and named a fellow officer, **DC Derek Haslam** from Croydon CID for naming him to the anti-corruption investigation.

It transpired later that as many as four or five people in Morgan's immediate circle knew about his plans to expose knew about his proposed expose. What we do not know is how big that expose was, how close to the truth it was and how dangerous it was to Serious Organised Criminal Organisations. And critically we do not know how far DC Holmes might have spread the word about it and how far it spread in the Met or into the criminal community.

1988 Operations Drake and Plymouth

Just after the first anniversary of Daniel Morgan's murder and the inquest, his family made a formal complaint to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) about their handling of the investigation and its outcome. The MPS passed it to the Police Complaints Authority who arranged for the Hampshire Police to undertake a review. The Hampshire police had been involved in Operation Countryman, the investigation into Met Corruption were then asked to reopen the investigation.

Operation Drake commenced in July 1988, under the lead of **DCS Alan Wheeler** and **DCI Paul Blaker** of the Hampshire force. This operation was specifically the reinvestigation of the murder. The parallel review of the allegation of corruption was named Operation Plymouth, and remained under the auspices of the PCA,

As a result of Operation Drake, Rees and another man Paul Goodridge who had been supposed to meet them at the Golden Lion to talk about a loan to cover the £10k deposit a court were charged with Morgan's murder. But the DPP, then Sir Thomas Heatherington, felt the evidence was not strong enough for a prosecution and the family were told that a hearing was booked
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for the end of April but that the crown would offer no evidence.

The Morgan family's only hope of justice was the PCA and operation Plymouth. That did not report its conclusion to the family until early 1990. The letter was blunt. The first inquiry was satisfactory and there was "no evidence whatsoever" of police involvement in Morgan's murder. The only crumb of comfort was that they had in the process recognised the high level of incompetence in the handling of the crime scene and gathering of forensic evidence, which was an irredeemable mistake that would continue to hamper and limit future inquiries,

After this Fillery retired from the police on medical grounds and became, as planned, Rees's new partner in Southern Investigations. And the good times were about to roll for him.

1990s

The new Southern Investigations, led by Rees and now Fillery, with their lack of scruples about gaining access to privileged information was just the sort of outfit that the tabloid press were looking for to help them fill their papers with salacious stories, and thus win the ratings wars and the advertising that went with it.

At some stage early in the nineties Rees had developed a good working relationship with Journalists on Rupert Murdoch's "News of the World". By the end of the decade the News of the World alone was paying them more than £150,000 a year for leads on stories.

The decade from the mid 1990s saw an explosion in mobile phone use. In 1996 just 16% of households had a mobile phone, within five years it was 50% and in the next five year it rose to 80%. Starting a little earlier, while people were using land lines as their main contact number most households

would have an answering machine. There was nothing technically sophisticated about phone hacking. It involved listening to voice messages and to do this all you needed was the personal mobile phone number and a few tricks on how to listen to messages remotely. The same applied to landline with answering machines, Southern Investigations which had a well-developed network providing personal telephone numbers, well now very well placed to take advantage of the new and very leaky technology. It would come as no surprise they would be deeply implicated in the phone hacking scandal.

1993 Stephen Lawrence's Murder

Just after 10.30pm on Thursday 22nd of April 18 year old black young man, Stephen Lawrence, was stabbed to death in a racially motivated attack by 5 or 6 white youths. He was with another young black friend Duwayne Brooks travelling home to Plumstead. They were just south of Lewisham and north-east of Catford.

The circumstances of the two brutal killings of Morgan and Lawrence, and the motives of their killers were different, but the incompetence of the investigations by essentially the same division of the Metropolitan Police was similar. It was a level of incompetence that seemed to many observers to look like there was a deliberate, internal attempt to frustrate their own investigation.

If it was deliberate, at the most fundamental level the motivation for that disguised incompetence was very different. In the case of the killing of Daniel Morgan it would have been driven by the fear of exposure of police corruption. In the case of Stephen Lawrence's killing the Macpherson report would find that it was the result of the Met's institutional racism, not corruption. But that finding had been reached because evidence was deliberately withheld from them of the

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involvement of Clifford Norris with the local division of the Met Police. Norris ran a serious organised criminal group involved drug dealing. His son was one of the leading suspects for the killing of Stephen Lawrence.

1998 MacPherson Inquiry

Home Secretary, Jack Straw, ordered an inquiry into the failure of the Lawrence murder inquiry it was carried out by Sir William Macpherson and officially titled "The Inquiry Into The Matters Arising From The Death of Stephen Lawrence". It was completed in two years despite seeing over 100,00 documents.

It concluded that the Metropolitan Police Service investigation had been incompetent, that officers made serious errors, including not giving first aid failing to follow obvious leads during their investigation; and failing to arrest suspects, failure. It concluded there had been a failure of leadership by senior MPS officers in a force that was institutionally racist. In all there were 70 recommendations.

1998 Operations Nigeria and Two Bridges

Morgan's unsolved murder was a severe embarrassment for a police service, the led by **Commissioner John Stevens** remained keen to solve the Morgan Murder to demonstrate that it had changed dramatically from the endemically corrupt force of the sixties and seventies and eighties.

In 1998 more than ten years after Morgan's death Metropolitan Police **Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Roy Clark**, who were responsible for CIB3, known as the "Ghost Squad" was given the go ahead to re-opened the investigation covertly, this included including bugging the office of Southern Investigation, which was still trading and making a handsome living from its work News International.

Southern Investigations became Law and Commercial at around this time and the surveillance operation became Operation Two Bridges. Interestingly it certainly then also seemed to have been looking at Rees' current activities with the News of the World. One intelligence report from September 26th reported on a meeting between Rees and Mazher (Maz) Mahmood of the News of the World. Rees and Fillery had set the Journalist up as the "Fake Sheik", his most famous coup. It took place in a pub in Gillet street in Thornton Heath and describes Maz meeting "a plain clothes officer aged about 45 – officer was selling a story to Maz about inter-race marriage and the payment in dowry in the form of livestock".

There is obviously a unpleasant and racist undertone in this story and has a police officer passing information on to media in the expectation of financial reward, But in the greater scheme of the corruption in the Met Police around Southern Investigations it is fairly minor. But this was information that would later be interesting to the Levenson Inquiry, even though it had been generated incidentally by the reopening of the inquiry into Morgan's murder.

Bob Quick who by the time of Levenson was **Assistant Commissioner** at the MPS had given evidence about this to the inquiry without it seems revealing the real nature of Operation Two Bridges which had in 2000 become Operation Nigeria:

"Following these events and as a result of Operation Nigeria, in around 2000, I wrote a short report highlighting the role of journalists in promoting corrupt relationships with, and making corrupt payments to officers for stories about famous people and high-profile investigations in the MPS... I recommended the commencement of an investigation into such activities. I believe my report also names some newspapers but I cannot recall which ones. I proposed an investigation of these newspapers/officers on the basis that I believed

that the journalists were not paying bribes out of their own pockets but were either falsely accounting for their expenses and therefore defrauding their employers or, that the newspaper organisations were aware of the reasons for the payments and were themselves complicit in making corrupt payments to police officers."

During these investigations into Rees and Southern Investigations at least 30 of these corrupt payments were identified. Bob Quick had joined the force in 1978 at the age of 18 and served in a number of roles in uniform and CID. At the time of Daniel Morgan's murder in 1987 **Bob Quick was a sergeant, based at Catford Police Station.**

However in terms of the murder of Daniel Morgan, Operation Nigeria did not go anywhere. Rees was still the only person they had in the frame for commissioning he killing and in December 2000, Jonathan Rees was found guilty, with a serving police officer, **Detective Constable Austin Warnes**, aged 47 of planting cocaine on a woman in to win a child custody battle for the father, Simon James, who was his client.

Rees got a seven-year sentence for this despicable piece of skullduggery, leaving Sid Fillery in charge of Southern Investigations. Warnes, who had pleaded guilty got four years, and two other alleged accomplices Dave Courtney and builder and associate of Rees, James Cook were acquitted,

Clark had only told the Morgan Family that the Daniel's murder had been reopened just as it was about to be closed again. They were unhappy because they been lobbying for this for a decade, that even at that time they were not allowed any information about the previous re-investigations.

What many commentators fail to recognise is that that the Jailing of Rees which ended the secretly reopened inquiry into Morgan's

death was a direct consequence of the covert surveillance of Rees for Morgan's murder.

In 2004 Clark retired from the force to become the Independent Police Complaints Commission's (IPCC) first director of investigations. The Morgan family complained in the strongest terms to the IPCC. In July 2015 news emerged that The IPCC was investigating its own director of investigations about whether he and his former boss Lord Stevens had deliberately withheld information about corruption from the Macpherson Inquiry. Macpherson had concluded that while the Met had been intuitively racist corruption had not played a part in the mishandling of the murder inquiry. How this investigation ends is not clear but Clark is now the Head of Criminal Investigations at HMRC.

2000 The Rebekah Brooks and Andy Coulson Years

Southern Investigations role with the tabloid press, and especially that owned by Murdoch, was lucrative in the nineties but it stepped up a gear as two of Murdoch's editors made it a lynchpin in their strategies for the papers.

At the millennium and at the age of 32 Rebekah Wade became editor of the hugely popular and salacious Sunday newspaper the News of the World. It made her the youngest ever editor of a national newspaper and her energy and single-mindedness in finding the salacious stories that sold the paper revitalised the News of the World. In 2002 she bagged a trophy husband in the form of actor Ross Kemp and in 2003 was editor of the Sun. In 2009 she divorced Kemp and married racehorse trainer Charlie Brooks and became Rebekah Brooks and CEO of Rupert Murdoch's News International the company that owned the News of The World and the Sun.

Brooks and the News of the World didn't invent the use of private detectives to string
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stories or do some of the secretive and grubby investigations around newspaper stories, especially those that involved celebrities and sleaze. She and they industrialised it, through using illegal phone hacking especially the relatively straightforward trick of playing voicemails.

When she moved to the Sun her place as editor of the News of the World was taken by Andy Coulson who held the post from 2003 to 2007 when he resigned following the conviction of one of the paper's reporters for illegal phone hacking, at which point he became the Conservative Party's director of communications until in May 2010 he briefly became the Director of Communications for the Government at Downing Street. It was a post he really only held until the end of the year when media stories about his role in illegal phone hacking made his position untenable,

2002 Operations Abelard and Morgan II

In October 2001 the Met's cold case review panel – The Murder Review Group – recommended re-investigating Morgan's Murder. Presumably they were not aware that Roy Clark and his "Ghost" squad had already done this. No doubt they were optimistic that progress was possible with Rees' credibility blown as a witness almost certainly as a result of Clark's operations.

In May 2002 they launched a sophisticated covert operation targeted on those who they believed Rees had paid to carry out the hit, the Vians and the builder called Jimmy Cook who they believe had driven a getaway vehicle for the killer.

Because there was no time when Glenn Vian's terraced house was empty they went to the expense of buying the house next to enable them to place their bugs in place. In 2002–2003, while Rees was still serving his sentence another suspect's car, and Glenn Vian's house were bugged.

But it was decided that so long after the event it would be necessary to generate discussion in Abelard's bugged environments and so an overt reopening of the case, called Operation Morgan II was launched, built round an new appeal for witnesses on Crimewatch on Jun 25 2002.

Morgan II and the new appeal was led by Detective Superintendent David Cook, whose then wife, Jacqui Hames, was a former police officer and now presenter on the programme. Although this combination of overt and covert activity seems to have generated new information and identified potential accomplices which resulted resulting in eight arrests, the DPP turned down a prosecution because of the evidence remained weak.

Cook like the previous Met Police investigators was convinced guilt lay exclusively with the Private Investigator, Rees and his associates, and not any of the policer officers who probably had more to loose had Morgan lived, that Rees had to gain from Morgan's death.

But following the launch of the key Crimewatch element of Operation Morgan 2. Rees persuaded the News of the the World to put DSI Cook and his high profile wife, Jacqui Hames, under observation by undercover reporters.

This was ramping things up dramatically and disturbingly. Hames had been a co-presenter with Jill Dando who had been assassinated on her door step in 1999. That crime was still unsolved and it was certainly believed the press had her under surveillance.

The observation was heavy handed and barely covert. It involved a sleazy hack sat in a van in the deserted street outside the family home. Hames eventually confronted the man who readily explained that he was from the NoW.

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Cook and Hames marriage didn't survive the scrutiny of the Murdock Press, but subsequently they joined Hacked Off and got a generous settlement from Murdock.

2005 Operation Abelard II

Two years later when Ian Blair took over as Metropolitan Police Commissioner the case was reopened for a fifth time and again in secret. Detective Superintendent David Cook was again given the job of reviewing he evidence, and new evidence was collected by bugs on Glen Vian's house, and more importantly from interviews with "supergrasses". Rees and the Vians were held on remand while Cook assembled the case that would he expected convict them

2009 The trial of Rees, Fillery, Cook and the Vian brothers

Finally with the evidence of three supergrasses the Met felt there was enough evidence to charge Rees, Fillery, the Vian brothers and builder Cook and in 2009, now twenty years after the murder, the trial of began at the Old Bailey. Sir Kier Starmer, the DPP, was clearly hoping to deliver delayed justice for the Morgan Family in the same in the same way that he would later do for the Lawrence Family.

Rees and the Vlan's were held on remand for two years before the trial started. But the trial started to unravel quickly when in February 2010 the trial judge dismissed a key super grass witness and Fillery's prosecution was halted. And then it carried on unraveling. In November James Cook was discharged as a second supergrass was dismissed third supergrass witness was dismissed in January 2011. By March the Director of Public Prosecutions and future Labour Leader, Sir Keir Starmer, threw the towel in.

The last defendants, Jonathan Rees and his brothers-in-law, were acquitted leaving Morgan's murder unsolved. The trial's collapse had stemmed from the fundamental unreliability of the evidence of the covert human intelligence sources (CHIS).

Supergrasses were a particular sort of CHIS – unlike the salaried undercover officers, unlike the informers who could be paid and even expect the police to turn a blind eye to crime they had committed, unlike the unpaid informers who provided evidence to the police pro bono inspired more by a sense of civic responsibility or in some cases personal animosity.

The prize for a “supergrass” was life-changing: Exoneration from prosecution for previous crimes, a new official identity for you and your family, if you had one. A new home, ideally in a sunny non-UK climate, and a stipend to support your new lifestyle.

The price was high, but a lot was expected in return, it included admission of all crimes they had participated in, and naming the organisers and their colleagues. In Northern Ireland they avoided the expression “supergrass” preferring the more formal and perhaps misleading term “Assisting Offenders” for para militaries who named their comrades in arms.

The problem with super grasses was that they were all professional liars, and often not the sharpest knife in the draw. And to win the prize of a new life and a slate wiped clean they tended to be eager to please and willing to deliver what their police handlers wanted to hear, and it was tempting for the lead detectives to coach them as witnesses which is of course a serious offence.

The ultimate problem was that even when they convinced the jury, if there was one, and the judge at the original trial, they often failed to convince the appeal court judges.

In a typical case in Northern Ireland in 1983, as a result of Christopher Black's supergrass testimony 22 “members of the provisional IRA” were convicted and sentenced to a total of 4000 years in jail. Three years later 18 of these convictions were overturned at appeal.

In the case of the trial of those involved alleged to be responsible for Morgan's death there was no need to appeal. The three super grasses were dismissed by the judge during the trial. The key super grass in the case against Rees was **Gary Eaton**, a man with mental health problems who was seriously coached by DSI Cook. When this came out in court the case collapsed.

2011 Levensen Inquiry

Following a string of revelations about the press, but largely Rupert Murdoch's News International Group use of private investigators to illegally tap and hack the mobile phones of celebrities and people in the Public eye David Cameron finally called a public inquiry led by Mr Justice Levenson which started taking evidence in 2011.

2011 The Trial of Dobson and Norris

In November 2011, 18 years after Stephen's murder two initial suspects who had been arrested during the failed investigation were put on trial for his murder. Gary Dobson had been 17 at the time of the murder and David Norris, the son of Drug boss Clifford Norris had been 16,

In 1994, the year after Stephen's death, and in the absence of the MPS' willingness to prosecute, the family had brought a private prosecution against the youth's thought to have been in the group that killed him. It was unsuccessful. There was not enough evidence against Norris, and Dobson was acquitted.

For the trial to go ahead in 2011 that acquittal had to be set aside in court, which it was. In January 2012 Norris and Dobson were finally convicted,

2014 the Ellison review of the Stephen Lawrence Investigation

In 2014 at the request of Home Secretary Theresa May, Mark Ellison QC's later review of the evidence about the Lawrence investigation, concluded that information about corruption by one of the officers involved in the original investigation should have been passed to Macpherson.

The officer referred to was Detective Sergeant John Davidson, not to be confused with Malcolm Davidson the number three in the original Operation Morgan. In 2019 after a five-year investigation by the National Crime Agency (NCA), which they named Operation Probitas it concluded there was no evidence of corruption against him. The original evidence had been given by a super grass, not a criminal super grass but a police super grass: **Detective Constable Neil Putnam** was a Met Police officer in the South East Regional Crime Squad found to be recycling heroin, cocaine and cannabis seized by the drug squad.

In return for a vastly reduced sentence, he gave up evidence about a group of corrupt detectives in the Drugs Squad, nicknamed the **Groovy Gang** they were based at East Dulwich also in South East London.

On April 17, 2009 **Detective Constable Thomas Kingston**, 42, and **Detective Constable Thomas Reynolds**, 39, were jailed for three-and-a-half; **Detective Sergeant Terrance O'Connell**, 43, was jailed for two years. Their ringleader, **Detective ? Robert Clark**, had already been jailed for 12 years and his "enthusiastic" lieutenant, **Detective ? Christopher Drury**, was jailed for 11 years.

The rounding up of the Groovy Gang put **John Yates** career into the fast Track and when he was forced to resign in the wake of the phone hacking scandal and Levenson report he was **Assistant Chief Constable**. The Groovy Gang were re-tried and acquitted when it transpired that key evidence concerning the super grass evidence had been withheld from the defence.

John Davidson had in fact retired from the force in 1998 and initially set up a private investigation firm in Croydon, called Reid Davidson Ltd, but later moved to Menorca where he operated a Bar and Restaurant.

Some reports say that The NCA had not interviewed Putnam when looking into the claims against Davidson because they regarded him as a tainted witness,

2017 Rees, Vian, Fillery and Vian vs the Metropolitan Police Commissioner - The Mitting Judgement

Following the collapse of the trial in 2010 the four claimants had claim damages against the Metropolitan Police Commissioner for malicious prosecution and misfeasance in public office. The case was heard by Mr Justice Mitting. The Vians and Rees lost their case, but Mitting found in favour of the Police officer. They took the judgement to appeal and won. This was how the Barristers at 5 Essex Court representing the Commissioner reported the findings of the appeal court.

"The Court of Appeal gave judgment today in the case of Rees and others v The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis upholding the appeals of Jonathan Rees, Glenn Vian and Garry Vian arising out of their prosecution for the murder of Daniel Morgan in 1987.

The appellants had brought claims for malicious prosecution and misfeasance in public office following the collapse of criminal proceedings in March 2011. Relying in part on findings made in those proceedings that the senior investigating officer (SIO) had mishandled a prosecution witness, the appellants alleged that the re-investigation of Daniel Morgan's murder between 2006 and 2008 and their subsequent prosecution had been conducted in bad faith.

At first instance, Mr Justice Mitting dismissed the claims finding that the police were not the prosecutor; that there was sufficient evidence to provide reasonable and probable cause for prosecuting Mr Rees and the Vian brothers for Daniel Morgan's murder; and that, in any event, the prosecution was not brought maliciously.

The Court of Appeal overturned the decision of Mitting J finding that the SIO was the prosecutor for the purposes of the tort of malicious prosecution as he had deprived the CPS of its ability to exercise independent judgment by putting before it the evidence of a suborned witness. Although the Court upheld Mitting J's finding that there was, on an objective analysis of the admissible evidence, reasonable and probable cause to prosecute the appellants, it found that the SIO did not honestly believe that there was a proper case to lay before a court and thus acted maliciously. The Court concluded that the appellants would not have been prosecuted if the CPS had known of the SIO's misconduct at the time of

deciding whether or not to bring charges.

DSI Cooks introduction into the story with Operation Morgan 2 had provided unexpected links with the frustratingly disparate elements of the story including the wider picture of corruption in the South East London Met Police and Rees and Fillery's life in the big time thanks to Rupert Murdoch and Rebekah Brooks and Andy Coulson.

The relevance for the spycops inquiry is the insight this terrible tale should bring of the pervasive corruption and casual dishonesty of the Metropolitan Police Service during the period being considered, and the unreliability of judgements routinely made by detectives and senior officers.

But it is that extraordinary mis-judgement by Mitting, shockingly endorsing evidence tampering by police officers to secure prosecutions and convictions, which should give the greatest concern about a fair outcome to an inquiry under his leadership.

For Priti Patel, currently pouring over the independent panel review a fair outcome from the Inquiry will not be at the forefront of her mind. The damage that panel review might do to Mitting's ability to deliver the expected whitewash will be her main concern.

Mike Hughes 1/6/21