

METROPOLITAN POLICE

Subject
Death of Clement
Blair PEACH at
Southall
23.04.79

Complaints Investigation Bureau (2)
New Scotland Yard

CONFIDENTIAL 14th day of September 1979

Reference to Papers
OG1/79/2234

SECOND REPORT - DEATH OF BLAIR PEACH

Director C.I.B.

237. Further to my first report dated 12th July, 1979, concerning enquiries into the death of Clement Blair PEACH. No additional evidence of great significance has emerged in relation to the death.

IDENTIFICATION PARADE

238. A number of identification parades have since been held in connection with the death, but no positive identification of any officer has been made.

239. Identification parades were also held in connection with other incidents that had occurred in the vicinity at about the same time. At identification parades held on the 1st August, 1979, at Wembley Police Station, Officer I ***** and Officer 38 ***** were put up as

likely suspects for the alleged assault on Person U in the cul-de-sac in the vicinity of 82 Orchard Avenue.

Mistaken identifications were made by witnesses Person U, Person 156 and Person 157. It has been established beyond any doubt that the officers picked out were not on duty at the demonstration on the 23rd April, 1979. Officer 85, Officer 86 and Officer 87, the officers were mistakenly identified, have each made statements which are attached. In view of these identifications further parades in respect of the incident were not held for Officer 41, Officer 36 and Officer 43.

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240. A schedule of all identification parades is attached.

OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF IDENTIFICATION
PARADES

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90 - 92

241. Officer 88, dealt with the identification parades held at Wembley Police Station. His statements refer to the conduct of parades held for each of the officers concerned. It will be seen from the various letters received from solicitors representing Officer E that there was some delay before his eventual consent to stand on an

Identification parade. This and other aspects concerning Officer E will be dealt with in later paragraphs as he requires special mention.

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242. Officer 89 dealt with identification parades held at Hayes Police Station on 29th August, 1979.

Person C

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243. In a statement taken from Person C on 9th July, 1979, she was unable to add to her previous descriptions of officers, but in a statement taken from her after identification parades held on the 25th July

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July, 1979, a reference is made to some officers at the scene of the PEACH incident having moustaches. She agreed that she had not mentioned this in her previous statement.

244. Person C also suggested that the officer in charge at the PEACH incident had a moustache and that she knew he was in charge because he was wearing a 'flat helmet' and there was 'something different' on his shoulders.

245. The fact that such important matters were not mentioned by her when she was previously interviewed casts doubt as to her credibility. Although both ***** and ***** were in the area at the time of the PEACH incident, each wearing badges of rank ***** on their shoulders, there is no evidence to suggest that either were wearing a 'flat helmet'. It is, of course, generally known that ***** normally wear flat caps and badges of rank. This could be construed as detracting from her credibility. Statements were taken from her through an interpreter, Person 158 who had previously been utilised to interview her.

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2749

246. Further statements were taken from Person M, Person 91, and Person H, which refer to their unwillingness to attend as witnesses at identification. Person E made a further statement to the effect that she was unable to identify any officer.

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INCIDENTS IN ORCHARD AVENUE CUL-DE-SAC

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247. Person 156, attended the demonstration with Person 135, her sister, and others but at the time of the Beechcroft Avenue incident he was separated from them except for Person U. They ran together down an alleyway off the west side of Beechcroft Avenue, when the S.P.G. carriers arrived in the street.

248. They were in a yard from which another alleyway led to Orchard Avenue behind Number 82, the end house of the cul-de-sac. Person 156 left Person U and went to look down the alleyway. Three or four Asians then appeared round the corner of the house from the direction of Orchard Avenue.

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249. Running behind the Asians, Person 156 says he saw a friend, Person 159, and asked him if he was being chased. Before receiving any answer Person 159 ran past pursued by a police officer holding a truncheon.

250. Two or three other police officers then appears from the same direction, walking briskly. Person 156 jumped over a fence into the garden of a house in Oswald Road and escaped over a locked garden gate into the street.

251. He had looked back whilst escaping and saw the head and shoulders of three or four policemen. He thought Person U would be safe from them since she was alone, but heard her screams and believed she had been arrested.

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and 2805 -

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2841

252. Person 156 describes the first officer to arrive in the garden of Number 82, Orchard Avenue, as youngish, aged 23 to 25 years. This description could fit Officer 43 but since Person 156 had previously made a mistaken identification on a parade held with Officer I as a possible suspect, Officer 43 was not asked to stand.

253. Person 156 is a member of the Anti Nazi League, but states he did not know PEACH or his friends at the time of the demonstration. His statement was taken in the presence of a solicitor.

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254. Person 161, refers to the medical examination and treatment of Person U on the 24th April, 1979. There was no fracture of the skull as had been originally suspected. A single suture to a 1cm. laceration to the scalp was necessary.

255. Person 159 is a member of the Anti Nazi League and attended the demonstration with his friends. Although not mentioned in his statement he is known to Person 156 and friends. He gives a general account of movements prior to the S.P.G. carriers driving into Beechcroft Avenue, at which time he and his friends had been close to the bottom of the street near the junction with Orchard Avenue.

256. As the carriers approached, Person 159 turned right into Orchard Avenue, and ran with others towards the end of the cul-de-sac while others ran along Orchard Avenue in the opposite direction.

257. He suggests that most of those running were white people. Some climbed over a fence at the end of the street. He turned to see if such action was necessary and noticed a carrier stationary at the junction of Beechcroft Avenue and Orchard Avenue. About six officers with truncheons drawn was running towards him knocking people out of their way as they ran. He ran round the back of the end house into a yard area at which point he was grabbed round the neck and thrown to the ground by a police officer.

258. Person 159 continues by describing how another officer struck him a blow with a truncheon hitting his pelvis and how he was detained by police officers and further assaulted.

259. Person 159 says that he was then taken up Beechcroft Avenue and put into a carrier parked at Broadway junction with Northcote Avenue, in which he noticed an officer who appeared to be unconscious and there was some conversation between officers concerning the reason for his arrest, after which he was grabbed by the collar and pushed out of the van.

260. The carrier he suggests then started up and left him standing in the road. This part of his account does not tie up with the known facts as there is no doubt that the injured officer (Officer C) was taken away by ambulance before the carrier left the scene. I am of the opinion that Person 159 was taken back into the carrier, despite discrepancies in his account of the matter.

261. Person 159 describes the injuries sustained during his detention by police but in fact he says he did not consider it necessary to go to

his doctor or to hospital. He refers to meeting an Asian (not traced), who invited him into his house where he was cleaned up and later driven to Acton, where at about 10.15 p.m., he met up with Person 162 one of his friends, with whom he had been at the demonstration.

262. Person 159 attended identification parades held at Hayes Police Station on 29th August, 1979, where Officer 43 and Officer I were put up for identification. He was unable to pick out anyone who had assaulted him. Officer 40, (3 unit), who it is thought was possibly the third officer mentioned by Person 159 was not put on the parade because there were insufficient officers of similar description that day or likely to be. Since Person 159 did not identify either Officer 43 or Officer I it is thought there is no prospect or an identification of Officer 40, who according to Person 159 was following behind the other two officers at the time of his detention.

263. In connection with the assault of Person U and the detention of and assault of Person 159, interviews were conducted with various officers known to have been in the vicinity of the cul-de-sac at the relevant time. These interviews were by way of questioning and answers which for ease

of reference have been collated as statements to conform with the procedure of the first report.

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264. It will be seen from previous statements and interviews of officers that Officer 43 (1 Unit) and Officer 41(3 Unit), each claims to have been first at the end house. The interviews most recently conducted suggest that Officer 43 of 1 Unit and one other (probably Officer I of 1 Unit), were the first officers behind the house in pursuit of demonstrators. Officer 43 had admitted when previously seen that he had detained a man with long fair hair (Person 159 has long black hair), at the rear of No. 81 Orchard Avenue. He stated he released the man in Orchard Avenue there being no evidence to detain him further. Evidence of the interviews of 3 Unit officers refer to the detention of a white man by 2 'strange' officers at the rear of 82. This was undoubtedly the arrest made by Officer 43 (and another officer) who were unknown to the 3 Unit officers.

265. Officer 43 emphatically denied any assault on the man he detained and refuted the suggestion of the more lengthy detention described by Person 159. Officer I of 1 Unit, who also chased demonstrators into this alley, similarly denied any involvement in the detention of a white man at the rear of No. 82. As previously mentioned identification parades held for these officers with Person 151 as the witness were unsuccessful.

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266. Officer 40 of 3 Unit denied assaulting Person 159 in any way although the evidence available suggests that he was the third officer referred to by Person 159. He admits being the officer who said, "Good Evening", to Person 157 a resident of Orchard Avenue, which would place him at the location described by Person 159 and in a position to have 'prodded' him in the back with a truncheon. Officer 40 denied having his truncheon at the scene.

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267. Officer 41 of 3 Unit declined to answer questions. He claimed he does so on the advice of a solicitor, Person 163, *****. It is believed that this firm of solicitors have been retained by the Police Federation to act for S.P.G. officers in connection with the Peach enquiries.

268. Officer 41 is the principal suspect for the assault on Person U in the alleyway at the side of No. 82, Orchard Avenue. In her statement she described being hit over the head with a truncheon by the third officer to arrive at the scene. Officer 41 had stated, when interviewed earlier, that he was the first officer to arrive at the rear of No. 82. Consideration of evidence of other officers

to arrive at the scene tends to suggest that although he was the first 3 Unit officer to arrive, Officer 43 of 1 Unit and another officer (probably Officer I), were already there. On this supposition the Asian man described by Officer 41 in his statement as being in the alleyway and brushed aside by him with his truncheon, may well have been Person U mistaken by him for an Asian demonstrator. There appears to be no other explanation why Person U should be hit over th head at that time.

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269. Officer 36 was the only officer to decline to answer further questions at interview on this aspect. He had been requested earlier to attend an identification parade and considered that having been cautioned on that occasion he should not answer questions put to him in relation to those matters without first obtaining legal advice. There are a number of questions unanswered in respect of the movements of Officer 36. Other officers of his Unit refer to his being at the rear of No. 82 speaking to a distressed girl (obviously Person U), and where the two 'strange' officers had detained a man. His previous statements do not refer to his being in the garden nor show his actions there. His attitude of non co-operation suggests he may well have witnessed incidents he does not wish to relate as he may put himself in jeopardy.

270. None of the other S.P.G. officers interviewed in connection with these incidents in the cul-de-sac add materially to the evidence other than to clarify movements of themselves and colleagues at that time. There is no corroboration of Person 159's account of being detained in a carrier in Broadway. There are other officers of the Unit who could be interviewed in this connection but it is not anticipated that any of them would have knowledge of Person 159's presence on the carrier.

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271. Officer C the injured officer, from whom no statement had previously been taken has now been seen and a statement obtained. His account does not add to the evidence.

OTHER ASSAULTS IN ORCHARD AVENUE

272. Additional statements have been taken regarding other assaults in Orchard Avenue, including from Person V victim of an assault in an alleyway off Orchard Avenue. She describes returning down Beechcroft Avenue and turning left into Orchard Avenue with three friends Person 135, Person 164 (from whom statements had previously been obtained), and Person 165. Person V jumped into the garden of No. 46 Orchard Avenue and saw about six officers get out of a carrier parked diagonally across the corner

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585A

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of Orchard Avenue and Beechcroft Avenue. Three or four were holding truncheons. Person V left the garden and ran down Orchard Avenue towards Herbert Road and caught up with her friends as they turned into an alleyway. Person 164 fell down and Person V stopped. She saw a police officer stepping over Person 164 and turned to run, but was hit on the head and fell to the ground. She describes the officer as having blond, straight, thick but tidy hair, wearing a mackintosh. She then saw the same policeman hitting a man about the legs with his truncheon.

273. Person V and her friends went to No. 34 where she was given first aid. The next day she went to Royal Northern Hospital. Although she stated she would be able to recognise the officer again she made no identification at parades held on 25th July, 1979, where Officer G and Officer L were possible suspects. Officer G would appear to be the most likely suspect for this assault on his admitted movements that day. He has not been further interviewed since he has already given a comprehensive account of his movements.

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274. Person 165 was with Person V during the demonstration but did not actually see her assaulted. She was present in No. 34 Orchard Avenue when she was given assistance.

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275. Person 166 was the Casualty Officer at the Royal Northern Hospital. Because of swelling to Person V's face it was not possible to definitely disclose any bone injury. Person V did not return for further x-rays.

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276. Person 167 is a friend of Person V and refers to taking two photographs of her facial injuries two days after the incident. He has retained the two developed slides.

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277. Person 168, a member of the Anti Nazi League, went to the demonstration with Person 164 and friends. He gives a general account of activity in the Broadway/Beechcroft Avenue area and saw missiles thrown at police vans by demonstrators. When Police Officers advanced across the junction he ran down Beechcroft Avenue and turned left into Orchard Avenue. He saw a Police van arrive at the junction and noticed an officer whom he could not describe get out of the seat

next to the driver and shout 'Come on you bastards' whilst waving his truncheon. This officer was obviously Officer E. As other officers then get out of the van a second van arrived at the junction. Person 168 later saw a police officer hitting a white youth on the shoulder with his truncheon.

BUILD UP

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278. Person 162, did not see any missiles being thrown although policemen with shields and mounted officers charged the crowd. In Beechcroft Avenue he saw activity which may have been arrests being made in the Broadway. He saw two vans turn into Beechcroft Avenue at which time he turned, ran left into Orchard Avenue. He did not see PEACH or indeed any police officer hit any person in that area.

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279. Person 169 saw the crowd throwing bricks etc., at police on various occasions at different locations. He was arrested at Broadway/Northcote Avenue junction and placed in an S.P.G. carrier at that location.

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280. Person 170 saw bricks and rocks being thrown at police vans and officers from the vans get out with their truncheons and start hitting and chasing people and arresting a few.

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281. Person 171 states that she met PEACH at others in the Broadway, but left them to go home when the crowd sat down in the road and were moved on by mounted branch officers. She mentions officers making 'racist remarks' and then she left the demonstration. The following day she was interviewed on L.B.C. radio.

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282. Person 172 was in the Broadway when the petrol bomb was thrown at the coach and saw three S.P.G. carriers in the Broadway and one of them turn into Northcote Ave. He saw police pushing the crowds away, some officers with truncheons, but did not see anyone hit with a truncheon. After an hour when it had quietened down he and his brother left.

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283. Person 173 was in the Broadway and saw stones being thrown at police by the crowd. He states that officers got out of the S.P.G. vans and blatantly manhandled the crowd without attempting to arrest anyone, their intention being to disperse the crowds, and that the physical contact included the use of truncheons. He is unable to identify or describe any particular officers. About an hour later he and his brother left the scene.

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284. Person 174 states that a colleague, Person 175, heard from her son ***** that police had not been responsible for the death of PEACH, but that brick thrown by someone had caused his death.

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285. Person 176 states that in conversation a Person 177 had stated that he had seen a white man hit on the head by a brick or stone and fall to the ground. Person 177 had not said it definitely was PEACH although it seemed obvious he thought that it was. No mention was made in this conversation of Person 177 going to the police with this information.

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286. Person 177 states that he saw missiles being thrown at the police and one hit a P.C. on the side of the head. He did not see any demonstrators hit by any of the missiles. He states he did not see anyone hit by a brick or police truncheon in the Orchard Avenue, Beechcroft Avenue area.

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Doc. No. 28 P. 95 - 96

Doc. No. 29 P. 97 -

Doc. No. 30 P 98

Doc. No. 31 P. 99

287. I have attached various documents relating to instructions for the use of and training in the use of police truncheons, for information.

Officer E

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Doc. Page No. 90

288. Officer 90, C.I.B. (2) refers to a conversation between Officer 83 and Officer E on 9th August, 1979, in the presence of Person 151, his Solicitor, concerning Officer E's reason for not wishing to stand on an identification parade. A letter dated 7th August, 1979 from the Solicitor was produced during the interview and refers to Officer E's reason for not wishing to stand.

289. A further statement from Officer 90 refers to a conversation later between Officer 84 and Officer E and the solicitor also referring to the refusal. It was a matter for consideration whether or not to have a confrontation but I decided against it that day because at the time Officer E had a beard and a black eye and may well turned himself to the wall or taken other evasive action. That evening Person B was scheduled to address a political meeting on the 'death of Blair Peach'. No doubt Officer E and his Solicitor believed I would arrange for the witnesses to see the officer for identification purposes without him knowing on some other occasion so he later recanted and took part on a parade about two weeks later without the beard. I did not disclose it but I contemplated having the witnesses at some Magistrates Court where Officer E was to be scheduled to be giving evidence, but as it turned out this was unnecessary.

290. Some further questioning of Officer E was intended, but he has declined to attend and in the circumstances I have not pressed it very hard because evasive replies are expected. If some other evidence emerged it would be a different matter

and positive action would be taken. I declined to supply copies of his previous statements on the grounds that I felt it would reduce the credibility of the interview and he would answer as previously as distinct from current recollection of events.

291. On 4th September, 1979, Person 151, without Officer E, called upon me at New Scotland Yard to discuss the proposed further interview and gave me the impression he wanted his client to agree but could not convince him of the desirability to give the impression of full outward co-operation. There is no doubt that Officer E is very worried and I understand there are peaks and troughs in his demeanour at the present time. He has been transferred from the S.P.G., but not suspended from duty, and is resentful of the fact that his hopes to go on a University Course have not materialised. Person 151 also put it that Officer E objected to being interviewed by Officer 91 or by myself - Officer 84 - perhaps he feels either of us would be too probing. I put it to Person 151 that I felt I could not really delegate such an interview at this juncture and in view of the impasse. He accepted that reasoning. The further interview

has not therefore taken place but will be subject of a further report if it does. Expectancy of the interview has further delayed this report which is now pressing. In passing Person 151 expressed the view that it was unlikely the officers responsible would come forward at this stage. He represents Officer E and Officer H. If there has been any 'closing of ranks' in the S.P.G., I cannot envisage that Officer E was not so involved.

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SCIENTIFIC TESTS Person 150, Senior Scientific Officer refers to the examination of exhibits submitted to the Police Forensic Science Laboratory. Nothing of evidential value was found.

FURTHER STATEMENTS - NON RELEVANT

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Person 178 knows Blair PEACH, but states he did not see him at Southall demonstration. He decided to go home because police cordons prevented his movement towards the Town Hall. Person 179 saw a police officer hit back at a demonstrator in retaliation in South Road. Person 180, Interpreter, took the statement from Person 67.

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INQUEST

292. The date of the Inquest still stands as 11th October, 1979, at Hammersmith, but owing to lack of facilities and the public attendance expected (with demonstrators) other accommodation, such as the Town Hall, is being considered. In the event of the Director of Public Prosecutions instituting any criminal proceedings, a further adjournment would be a matter for earnest consideration.

CONCLUSIONS

293. Despite extensive enquiries made into the death of Blair PEACH and the surrounding circumstances, it has not been possible to establish exactly what caused the injury or who struck the fatal blow.

294. It is not possible to state with certainty whether the death resulted from an unlawful act. As pointed out in the FIRST report there are a number of witnesses who say that they saw PEACH struck by a police officer and there is no evidence to show that he received the injury to the side of his head in any other way. No police officer says that he saw PEACH or admits to striking anyone at the time and place the fatal injury was sustained. There is the possibility that the injury may have been caused accidentally or unwittingly but officers' accounts do not encourage that line of thinking. In the absence of other evidence it is therefore a matter of consideration as to whether the death was unlawful, there being little evidence from any source that criminal acts were being committed by the demonstrators at the time of the death, but immediate pursuit of the rebellious crowd from the top of the road needs to be given full consideration.

295. Whilst the evidence of some of civilian witnesses may be tainted or contain discrepancies they cannot be totally discounted as it is in some cases supported by credible witnesses.

296. The actions of the officers involved especially those ***** carrier U.11 or U12 appear to be in excess of what was necessary, but due regard must be given to the events of the day. It is difficult to see how one can justify striking demonstrators who are running away or who have been pursued for some distance. These are aspects which will be relentlessly put by lawyers for the family of the deceased or the Anti-Nazi League.

297. There is some evidence to suggest that the fatal blow was struck by a member of the first carrier at the scene, U.11., and indeed, an indication that it was the first officer out of that vehicle. This of course, was Officer E. However, there is no evidence of a conclusive nature. Officer F was in the ideal position to see what happened and I feel Officer E is aware of what actually OCCURRED.

298. Whilst it can reasonably be concluded that a police officer struck the fatal blow, and that that officer came from carrier U.11, I am sure that it will be agreed that the present situation is far from satisfactory and disturbing. The attitude and untruthfulness of some of the officers involved is a contributory factor.

299. It is understandable that because of the events of the day officers were confused, or made mistakes, but one would expect a better recall of events by trained police officers. However, there are cases where the evidence shows that certain officers have clearly not told the truth.

300. It is now clear that U.11 was at the scene and almost certainly the officer who struck the blow had come from that carrier. It will be appreciated that the explanation given by the crew of the carrier would be of paramount importance to the investigation.

301. It can be clearly seen from the various statements and records of interviews with these officers that their explanations were seriously lacking and in the case of Officer E, Officer F and Officer H, there

was deliberate attempt to conceal the presence of the carrier at the scene at the vital time. The action of these officers clearly obstructed the police officers carrying out their duty of investigating this serious matter.

302. The specific false statement to which I refer was as follows:-

Officer F

303. This officer was the driver of the carrier U.11 and when questioned on the day following the death of PEACH he said that having driven the carrier into Beechcroft Avenue, some if not all, of the officers got out. He later confirmed this in the same interview by saying that he thought he was alone when he drove the carrier down Beechcroft Avenue and that when he did so his officers were in front of him.

304. In his written statement of the 17th May, 1979, Officer F said that he did not stop the carrier until he reached the junction of Orchard Avenue. He remembered that Officer E and Officer H were on the carrier at that time with two other officers whose names he could not remember.

305. When interviewed, under caution, on the 6th June, 1979, he said that he drove the carrier straight down Beechcroft and stopped just into the junction of Orchard Avenue where Officer E, Officer H, Officer I and Officer F got out of the carrier and pushed the demonstrators round the corner.

306. During the interview the officer marked on a plan (Exhibit LS/1) 'A' - where he stopped the carrier and 'B' where he said a group of demonstrators were standing and confirmed that Officer E went towards these demonstrators with the other officers. From this Plan it will be appreciated that Officer E and the officers named were at the immediate location where witnesses say PEACH was struck down. This aspect was also later confirmed by Officer D on a similar plan.

307. In that interview Officer F was very much more forthright in his explanation of events leading up to his carrier's arrival at Beechcroft Avenue junction with Orchard Avenue. This prompted

the officer interviewing him to say to him 'I must put this to you, why on earth didn't you say this earlier' and he replied, 'You reminded me of Officer I because he sits in the back. He's a quiet sort of person, you sort of don't remember he's there and you reminded me of Officer J' He had a remarkable recall.

308. At a further interview the following day the officer conducting the interview told Officer F that he accepted much of what he now had to say as being the truth of the matter, but he did not consider that what he said about what happened AFTER the officer left the carrier was anywhere near the truth of the matter. It was put to him that from that point he was prevaricating in order to frustrate the identification of the officer who killed Blair PEACH and he replied, "In my position now I wouldn't be protecting anyone and that's the truth."

Officer E

309. In his self prepared statement of the 24th April, 1979, Officer E said that having arrived at Beechcroft Avenue he saw ***** and his men chasing missile throwing demonstrators down the road, some of his officers and himself got out of the carrier at that point and ran after the 3 Unit officers to the junction of Orchard Avenue where he saw Officer D struggling with a violent prisoner. Attention is also drawn to the Form A.8/19 submitted by Officer E when going off duty.

310. In a statement of 17th May, 1979, he said officers on the carrier with him were Officer J, Officer I, Officer H and Officer G and that the carrier went straight down Beechcroft and pulled up sharply at the junction of Orchard Avenue. There he saw Officer D struggling on the ground with a prisoner. Officer D and a 3 Unit officer put the prisoner on board the carrier and his officers were now off the carrier. He then had the impression they were in Orchard Avenue ahead of him.

311. He concluded by correcting what he had said in his self-prepared statement about having got out of the carrier at the Broadway end of Beechcroft Avenue and of first seeing Officer D at the location but could not explain these discrepancies.

312. On 8th June, 1979, Officer E was interviewed by Officer 91 in the presence of his Solicitor. During this interview the Interviewing Officer pressed him on why he had claimed earlier to have left the carrier at the Broadway end of Beechcroft Avenue and he said, "It was an honest mistake". The officer asked him when he first realised he had made that mistake and he could not remember.

313. Officer 91 then put to him that he had deliberately stated that he had got out of the van at the wrong position to mislead the investigators and he replied, "It was a genuinely made statement with no such intention". He then, after consulting with his Solicitor, declined to answer any further questions.

Officer H

314. This Officer was questioned by Officer 92 on 24th April, 1979, he said that “We got out of the carrier in Beechcroft Avenue and they ran off and we ran after them”. He said he ran down the left hand pavement of Beechcroft and when he got to the junction of Orchard Avenue there was a Police Constable with an Asian prisoner and he and the officer with the prisoner got out of his carrier at that location and went to the end of Orchard Avenue. He said that when he got out of the carrier in Beechcroft Avenue he saw Officer E and Officer 45 there.

315. In his statement of 27th April, 1979, he said that the carrier stopped in the side road (Beechcroft Avenue) just by the main junction (Broadway) and everyone except the driver got out. He said he chased a bunch of demonstrators down the road and stopped to help a P.C. to put a Pakistani prisoner on the carrier driven by Officer F. The carrier was then parked in Beechcroft Avenue at the junction with Orchard Avenue. He said that he

and the officer and the prisoner got on the carrier and that he did not think that anyone else got on.

316. In his statement of 17th May, 1979, he said that the carrier stopped in the Main Road (Broadway) at the junction with Beechcroft and that they all got out and walked up Beechcroft. Later he correct this by saying that when he said, "We" he meant himself and assumed the others got out but he didn't recall seeing them.

317. On 8th June, 1979, Officer H was questioned by Officer 83. He was pressed specifically on where he had left the carrier and insisted that he had disembarked at the Broadway end of Beechcroft. It was put to him that there were two officers who were present when the prisoner had been put into the carrier and that it could be proved he was lying if he insisted that he was one of them and he replied, "I helped put a prisoner on that carrier and you can say what you like".

318. It may be considered that other officers, albeit to a lesser degree, have also obstructed the investigating officers by making false statements. It is not proposed to reiterate their statements which have been submitted but which may best be dealt with by

way of conference.

319. Earlier I touched on the general behaviour of the officers. In addition to the fatal injury to PEACH, there were various persons who received injuries at about the same time. They have been included in this report in order to give a more comprehensive account of the incident and could not properly be dealt with in isolation. Basically the same arguments apply regarding justification as in relation to Blair PEACH.

RECOMMENDATIONS

320. At this stage there is insufficient evidence to support proceedings against any person mentioned in this report regarding the death of Blair PEACH and I recommend accordingly.

321. There are nevertheless, the other matters which have been discovered during the investigation, some touching on the death of PEACH and others unconnected.

322. The most serious aspect of this case has, without doubt, been the obstruction of the investigating officer in the execution of their duty. Under 'conclusion'

I have listed specific instances. It is my view, that to give false information to the police with the intention of obstructing them in their duty to decide upon the institution of criminal proceedings is an offence which can be dealt with both under the Common Law and also under Section 51(3) of the Police Act, 1964. I would further suggest that such action may also amount to an offence of 'perverting the course of justice'.

323, Whilst it is obviously a consideration that one or more of the officers mentioned may have told lies in their own defence which would perhaps be acceptable behaviour in certain circumstances, it is suggested that in this case there are special considerations, in particular, the suspicions thrown on all members of the police force present at Southall on that day and of course, the serious nature of the investigation itself.

324. I feel that previous interpretation of the law fully supports the view expressed above. I presume to draw attention to the following cases.

HINCHCLIFFE V SHELDON (1995 1 W.L.R. 1207;
RICE V CONNOLLY (1966) 2 Q.B. 414 per LORD
PARKER C.J. at P. 420; R.V. PANAYOTOU (1973) 1
W.L.R. 1032;

Harvey SHARP 3726 CR APP R 122 & R.V. FIELD & WHETHER (1965) 1 Q.B. 402 48 CR APP R 335.

325. Furthermore, it will be seen that the false statements made by Officer E, Officer H and Officer F, are all of the same content. A strong inference that can be drawn from this is that they have conspired together to obstruct police.

326. The conduct of these officers made it more difficult to carry out the investigation and arrive at a proper conclusion. Consequently, I strongly recommend that proceedings be taken against Officer E, Officer H and Officer F for obstructing police in the execution of their duty, conspiring to do so, and attempting or conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

327. I will now deal with other matters occurring on the day of 23rd April, 1979, regarding the alleged assault on Person U at the rear of 82, Orchard Avenue. Whilst the outcome of investigations is unsatisfactory there is no evidence to support proceedings against any person mentioned in this report and I recommend accordingly.

328. Regarding the alleged assault on Person V in an alleyway off Orchard Avenue, as previously stated it would appear that Officer G was the person responsible. When interviewed he admitted actions similar to those alleged by Person V but to a lesser degree. However, Person V was unable to identify Officer G or indeed any person. In the circumstances, I feel that there is insufficient evidence to take proceedings against Officer G or any other person mentioned in this report and recommend accordingly.

329. With regard to the alleged unlawful arrest and assault on Person 159 I submit there is insufficient evidence for criminal proceedings.

330. Regarding the alleged assaults on Person 103, Person B and other persons there appears to be insufficient evidence to take proceedings against any person mentioned in this report.

331. It will be recalled that a search of the Special Patrol Group officers' personal lockers at Barnes Police Station revealed various items. The possession of these weapons and tools by the various officers and in particular Officer F is viewed with grave concern. There is the inference that he could have had the cosh (offensive weapon) in a public place.

Officer 61 was in possession of keys which raises the question of him going equipped to steal. However, I feel there is insufficient evidence to justify criminal proceedings in respect of those matters.

332. I ask that this report be forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutors for his consideration and decision.

John CASS
Commander