

METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE

Form 728

1A

To: Detective Chief Superintendent Spindler

From: DCI Steve Ranson

Division/Branch/Area: SCD-5

Division/Branch/Area: SCD2-1

Reference:

Telephone No.: DPA

Date: 12th August 2003

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Re: Operation Middleton

The above operation began in December 1998. The starting point for this operation was an investigation by Merseyside Police into John CARROLL. The London Borough of Lambeth had employed CARROLL at Highland and Angell Road Children's Homes. During the time of his employment it was discovered that he was a Schedule 1 offender. Lambeth had disciplined him, but he was not dismissed and allowed to return as officer in charge of Angell Road.

Merseyside Police was allowed to begin investigating CARROLL at these two homes. The local Child Protection Unit (CPU) assisted them by facilitating letters to be sent to ex-residents through the DSS. The CPU was also to deal with any new allegations that were not linked to CARROLL. They named this Operation Trawler. Merseyside Police identified three victims through their letter drop. No other new suspects or victims were forthcoming for the local CPU.

As Merseyside's Police investigation progressed the relationship between the CPU Detective Inspector and senior managers within Lambeth's Social Services broke down. This resulted in the Chief Executive of Lambeth, Heather RABBATTS approaching Denis O'CONNOR, who was then the Assistant Commissioner for 5 Area. Detective Superintendent GARGINI was given the task to scope issues identified by RABBATTS and the outcome of this was the beginning of Operation Middleton.

Terms of reference were agreed, at 1B. This was to investigate alleged instances of abuse committed by persons over the age of 18 to the prejudice of children who were in the care of the London Borough of Lambeth between 1974 and 1994. It was a joint investigation working with an independent social services team named C.H.I.L.E. (Children's Homes In Lambeth Enquiry). Helen KENWARD, an independent consultant, led this team. The police investigation was run on HOLMES 1, account number L762. This has now been transferred onto HOLMES 2.

Operation Middleton closed on 31st July 2003. During that a total of 124 allegations of abuse were made and investigated. The details of suspects and victims are listed at 1C.

In total 6008 children are known to have been placed in care by Lambeth during the period mentioned in the terms of reference. The borough now has computerised records of these and all their staff. As the investigation was intelligence led about 15% of this total was seen by the joint team. It would therefore be naive and wrong to think that all victims and suspects were identified by this investigation. However, all outstanding trials and lines of inquiry have now been completed and for this reason it was agreed jointly between the MPS and Lambeth to end the operation.

It has been agreed that the Child Protection Unit at Lambeth now will investigate any new allegation made. The Detective Inspector in charge of that unit is aware of this policy and that the HOLMES account has been transferred to HOLMES 2

Under these circumstances this investigation can now be put away.

Steve Ranson
Detective Chief Inspector
SCD2(1)

All minutes are to be numbered in consecutive order