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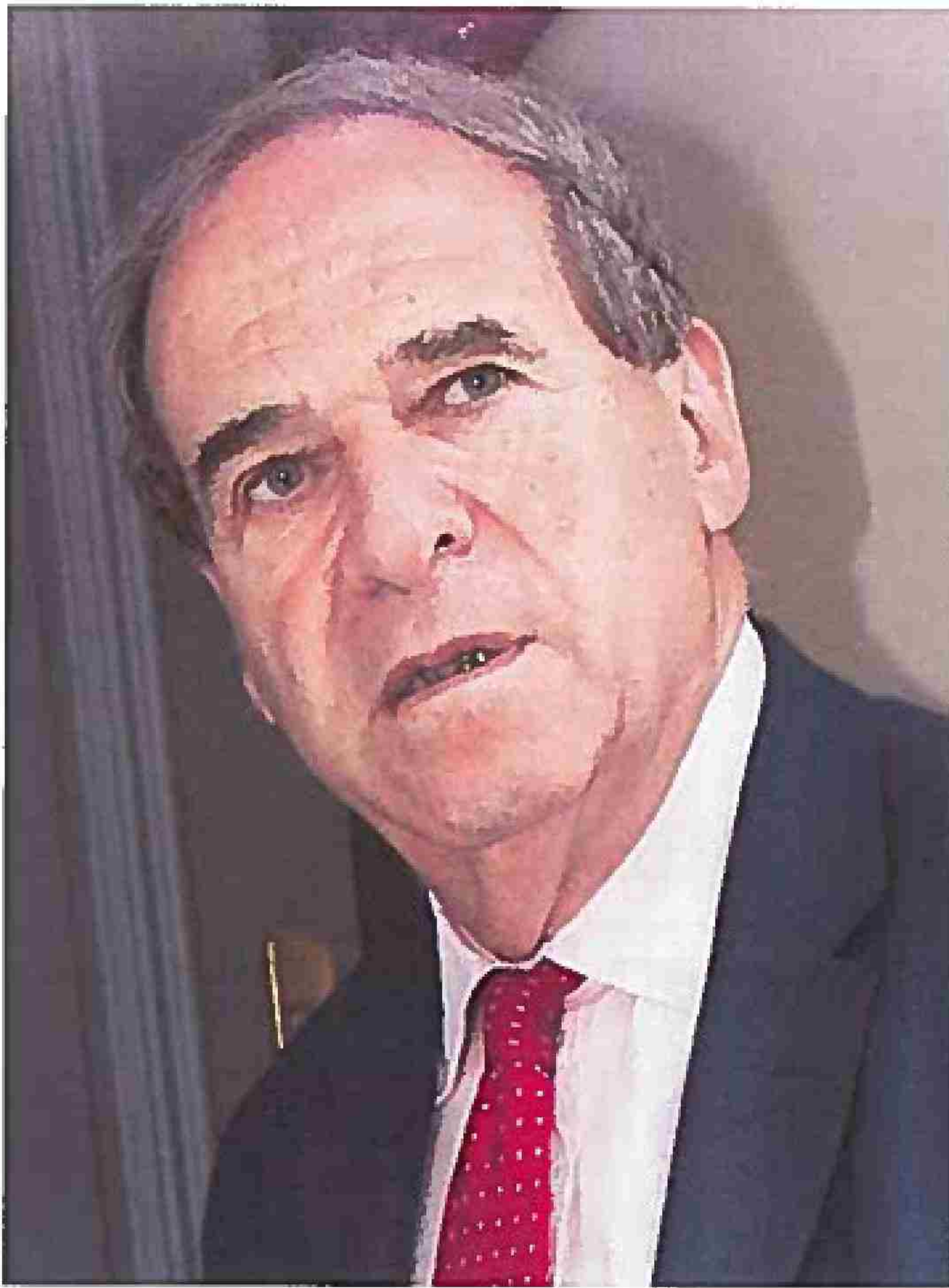
Leon Brittan: Ex-Labour MP Barbara Castle said former Home Secretary was man 'she could not trust'

The former cabinet minister said the Tory peer was "a powerful man with many secrets"

By **Don Hale**

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No trust: Ex-Labour MP Barbara Castle said Leon Brittan was a man with many secrets who she could not trust (Image: REX/POPPERFOTO/GETTY IMAGES)

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Former Labour MP Barbara Castle said Leon Brittan was a man that she 'could not trust,' and was highly critical of his handling of a dossier said to have contained the names of VIP paedophiles.


She said he was 'a powerful man with many secrets,' and claimed many of his colleagues 'just dare not get the wrong side of him.'

She added that the then Home Secretary ran Special Branch as his own personal 'Gestapo,' who monitored fellow MPs.

The dossier was handed to Brittan in 1983 by campaigning MP Geoffrey Dickens but vanished without a trace.

And Mrs Castle's own files were seized by Special Branch operatives and police, who raided the offices of her local newspaper in Bury in September 1984.

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She said she had been made aware of a proposal to legalise sex with children, particularly if encouraged within a family environment, and attacked another equally horrific proposal to similarly reduce the age of consent.

Mrs Castle was scathing of any neutral interest by Mr Brittan and revealed that a second secret internal inquiry had been instigated by him to found out who knew what, when and where, about allegations of child sexual abuse.

She found a raft of confidential sexual abuse papers and claimed, 'they had Leon Brittan's fingerprints all over them,' and believed he was in possession of key facts.

They related to paperwork sent back and forth to his office listing names of people attending, or unable to attend private meetings, to talk about support for PIE and funding opportunities, and news of promotions to encourage opportunities to meet young boys.

Barbara explained: "There were lists of MPs actively involved in supporting this paedophile network, together with other lists of wealthy backers, and of more than 1,000 people who took the Magpie magazine.

She added that Brittan was 'determined to keep a lid on things,' and had the full support of the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who acknowledged she had some 'bad boys,' on the team.

They included sexual allegations against many of Mr Brittan's friends and political associates.

The papers also identified Rhodes Boyston as a speaker finder and fundraiser for PIE - who had their own office within Westminster - and confirmed he was also a key distributor of Magpie.

Baroness Castle died in May 2002 but campaigned throughout her life to unravel the truth about these files.

▶ Leon Brittan