

Witness Name:
Statement No.: 1
Exhibits: 1
Dated:

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Witness Statement of Barry Strevens

I, Barry Strevens, will say as follows:

1. I joined the Metropolitan Police Force ("MPS") in October 1970. I was a uniformed officer for approximately two years until I passed the exams to work in Special Branch. I then worked in Special Branch until I retired in 1998.
2. I held a number of roles during my time working for the MPS. From 1978, I was the Personal Protection Officer ("PPO") for Baroness Thatcher when she was leader of the opposition. I was briefly a uniformed Inspector in Brixton from 1982 to 1984. From 1985 until 1988, I was the PPO for Baroness Thatcher when she was Prime Minister. I worked as a Detective Chief Inspector in another section of Special Branch from 1988 to 1990. I took over Baroness Thatcher's protection from November 1990 until I retired from the Police Force in August 1998. After I retired from the Police Force, I worked for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office until I retired again.
3. I am sure that everyone will have seen the BBC TV series the Bodyguard. The duties of a PPO were not quite like that. We would travel with the Baroness Thatcher whenever she was outside a safe environment, for example travelling around or on holiday. It was quite a big team and I would have different levels of contact with her depending on what I was doing on the day. One day I may be in the car with her and have the chance to say "hello" whereas, other days, I would be doing something else and someone else would be in the car with her. I would say that PPOs generally have a very good idea of what was going on. This is because of the level of contact they have with the Principal, for example from travelling around with them.
4. I have been asked to review a witness statement that I gave to the Police dated 7 August 2015 [Exhibit BS/1] [OHY005430]. I confirm that everything that I told the Police then remains true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

5. We had travelled up to Chester for an event and I was out and about with an Assistant Chief Constable. As I said in my statement, I am sure that his first name was Brian but I cannot remember his surname perfectly, it was something like Basset or Barratt. After thinking about it, I believe that we had been discussing the recent fiascoes in the Tory party (the Jeffrey Archer scandal had happened relatively recently where he had resigned as Deputy Party Chairman). Looking back now, I believe this is why I mentioned that they were considering Peter Morrison for Deputy Chairman. I remember that the officer asked me if I was aware that Peter Morrison lived up there, I had not been. He then went on to inform me that there were some local press sniffing around. He said that there were rumours that a 15 year old boy was going to parties at Peter Morrison's home in Chester. He did not provide any other information or imply that anything untoward was going on.
6. My opinion of this was that Peter Morrison probably didn't realise that the boy was 15, he probably thought that he was older. I knew that he was homosexual and so just thought that he hadn't realised and that this would be a bit of a wake up call. I didn't think that he was a paedophile.
7. We drove back from Chester the same day and I decided that I should say something to Baroness Thatcher because of the recent difficulties with Jeffrey Archer. I waited until we got back to Number 10. I remember that it was at Number 10 because I called the telephonist and asked her to put me through to her. I said that I had something to tell her and she invited me up to the flat. I am positive that it was the flat and not the House of Commons because I very rarely went up to the apartment at Number 10.
8. When I got up there, Archie Hamilton was there. I told Baroness Thatcher what the Chester officer had told me and she said thank you. She may have also said I will have a word with Archie or she could have called him Mr Hamilton. I cannot remember which name she referred to him by, I always called him Archie. I said thank you and then I left.
9. When I referred to "investigation" in my police statement, I meant that she would either ask Peter Morrison herself about it or ask Archie Hamilton to speak to him about it. I thought that this would involve a conversation to ask him about it and then take action depending on what he said.
10. I know that Peter Morrison was spoken to about it (or learned of it some other way) because he brought it up to me in conversation. We were in California for the opening of Ronald Reagan's library opening. He made a comment to me about being aware of my conversation with Baroness Thatcher and I thought that they must have had a conversation about it. He was very nice and approachable, as I said, there was no animosity.

- 11. I have been asked why I decided to speak out about the allegation when I did. I believe that there had been a big news piece and for some reason it had jogged my memory.
- 12. I have been asked about the culture at the time and whether there was anything to indicate that this kind of thing was tolerated. I was aware that Peter Morrison was gay and there were a number of other people working for Baroness Thatcher who were gay. However, I did not hear anything else involving children. If I had done I would have told her or reported it.
- 13. Baroness Thatcher knew Peter Morrison well and had even holidayed at their house on the Isle of Isla in 1979. My impression was that they were a nice family. She had also been to a dinner party at Peter Morrison's house in Wiltshire. I did not see or hear about anything of concern. As I said above, I would have told her or reported it if I had.
- 14. I have been asked if I can recall who Peter Morrison was friendly with. I am afraid that I did not really know any of his circle, he kept his contacts quite close to his chest. I believed that he did have contacts in the security services but I couldn't say whether this was through the work that he did on behalf of Baroness Thatcher or from outside work. When we did speak with each other, it was mainly about work.
- 15. I have been asked whether I can think of anyone else or any other rumours from my time as PPO.
- 16. I was aware that there were rumours of Cyril Smith with young people. These rumours were along the lines of him generally involving himself with children, not in children's homes, and implications that there was more than meets the eye about his interest. It was only ever rumours, however, and nothing to the same degree as what the Officer told me about Peter Morrison. I became aware of these rumours primarily from being around people linked to Rochdale Council, the Tory party up there and local police. If I had heard anything more, I would have told Baroness Thatcher or reported it.

I believe that the contents of this statement are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and believe

Signed . **DPA**

Dated 1st February 2019