

Witness Name: Edwina Currie Jones  
Statement No.: 1  
Exhibits:  
Dated: 16 December 2018

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**THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

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**Witness Statement of Edwina Currie Jones**

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I, Edwina Currie Jones, will say as follows:-

1. I was the Member of Parliament for Derbyshire South from 1983 to 1997. When I was first elected I was a councillor for Birmingham for Northfield ward, serving from 1975 to 1986. In 1986-88 under Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister I was Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department of Health and Social Security, subsequently the Department of Health. I resigned in December 1988 over a food safety issue.
2. From 1987 to 2002 I kept personal and political diaries. Those from 1987 to 1997 were transcribed during 2001 with a view to publication; the first edited collection was published in 2002 under the title "Diaries 1978 – 1992." A second collection "Diaries 1992 – 1997" was published in 2012.
3. I have reviewed the witness statement dated 10 September 2015 which I gave to police as part of the IOPC investigations. I confirm it is an accurate reflection of my memory and knowledge of relevant matters concerning Peter Morrison MP.
4. When on 24 July 1990 I referred to Peter Morrison as "a noted pederast' with a liking for young boys" I was recording gossip widely disseminated at the time. I do not recall who mentioned this information.
5. I had no information about the age of the boys. However the age of consent for homosexuality was 21, 5 years older than the age of consent for heterosexual males and this inequality was a matter of active debate. My understanding was that the boys were probably within those two ages: old enough to give consent with a female partner, but not with a male.
6. I have no doubt that had Mr Morrison or any other MP confessed to having sex with children, that this information would have been treated with total condemnation, and that he would not have been allowed to continue as an MP.
7. When in my diaries I wrote that the information "scared" me, it was because Mr Morrison had just been appointed by the Prime Minister to be her Parliamentary Private Secretary, that is, an unpaid aide close to her. The information that he was, or might be, consorting with males below the age of consent might have been used in order to create reputational damage for the Prime Minister herself. I believe the diary entry makes that clear.
8. I do not know who Morrison's (woman) agent was.

9. The quote from the published book, "Teresa Gorman told me this evening.. that she inherited Morrison's (woman) agent, who claimed to have offered money to keep quiet about his activities" is a misquote from my original entry. That reads, "*Teresa Gorman told me this evening (in a taxi coming back from a drinks party at the BBC) that she inherited Morrison's (woman) agent, who claimed to have been paid to keep quiet about his activities.*" That makes it clear that Mrs Gorman said that the payment was made to the woman agent herself, not to any other parties. The editing was done by the publisher.
10. I did not pass on this information to anyone at the time.
11. My attention has been drawn to the article by Simon Hoggart from The Guardian of 16 November 2012. This is the first time I have seen it. I had not heard about the allegations in it made by Grahame Nicholls.
12. In reference to the entry in the published diaries of 16 April 1991, I have no information about "a homosexual vice ring operated from the Yes lobby of the House of Commons – that's true, too." at this distance in time. I have no idea where this idea came from, or who might have mentioned this to me, or whether such an activity was current or historical. I have no information to assist with what the word "vice" might refer to, or whether other people were also aware of this supposed ring, and I do not recall any discussion on such a matter.
13. My attention has been drawn to the observations of Tim Fortescue a former government whip in a BBC interview in 1995. I did not know this person and this is the first time I have seen his remarks. As he was referring to the 1970s I cannot comment, as I was not an MP at the time.
14. As I was never a member of the Whips' office I have no knowledge of particular cases in which the office sought or obtained confidential information, or how it might be obtained, recorded or utilised.
15. I believe that the Whips' Office would seek to assist a Member in difficulties, for example if he owed money, as a bankrupt cannot remain as an MP. I recall after John Heddle the MP for Mid-Staffordshire committed suicide over financial problems in 1989, a Whip lamenting that he had not sought their help.
16. I have no information about cases where the Whips' Office would pressurise a Member into voting in a particular way.
17. I have no information about any cases in which the Whips became aware of allegations of any kind of child sexual abuse.
18. I have no information concerning the other parties' Whips' Offices, except that following my resignation, a Labour Party whip, whose name I do not now recall, approached me to persuade me to "pair" with one of their MPs, an offer I accepted.
19. All my experience of the Whips' Office during my time in the House of Commons was of helpful assistance and advice.

### Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**DPA**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

16.12.2018