

The British Gladio and the murder of Sergeant Speed

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Please note: the longer documents referred to in the footnotes below, can be found in a separate file in the [Appendices here](#).

Introduction

During the (first) Cold War, NATO countries set up secret 'stay behind' networks with caches of arms, ammunition and food/drink etc. in preparation for the day when they were invaded by the Red Army. In the 1970s and '80s elements of these networks were used against the left in Western Europe, notably in Belgium and Italy. In my review of the first book on this I wrote:

'An organisation set up by NATO to act as "stay behind" groups in the event of the Soviet occupation of Western Europe ended up murdering Franco's critics in Spain; murdered the left, union leaders and Kurds by the thousand in Turkey; was part of the "strategy of tension" in Italy; and killed 28 people in a series of random shootings in Belgium in the 1980s.'¹

Although Gladio was originally the name of the Italian network, when this story was revealed in the Italian press, Gladio became the shorthand for the entire multinational network. Officially Britain had no Gladio network. Almost nothing has come to light about it other than Gladio members from other NATO countries training in the UK.² This essay shows that Britain's post-war clandestine paramilitary organisation was effectively disbanded but later resurrected in the late 1970s. As part of an operation they undertook in 1984 to discredit the miners' strike, this UK based Gladio network murdered Leeds police Sergeant John Speed.

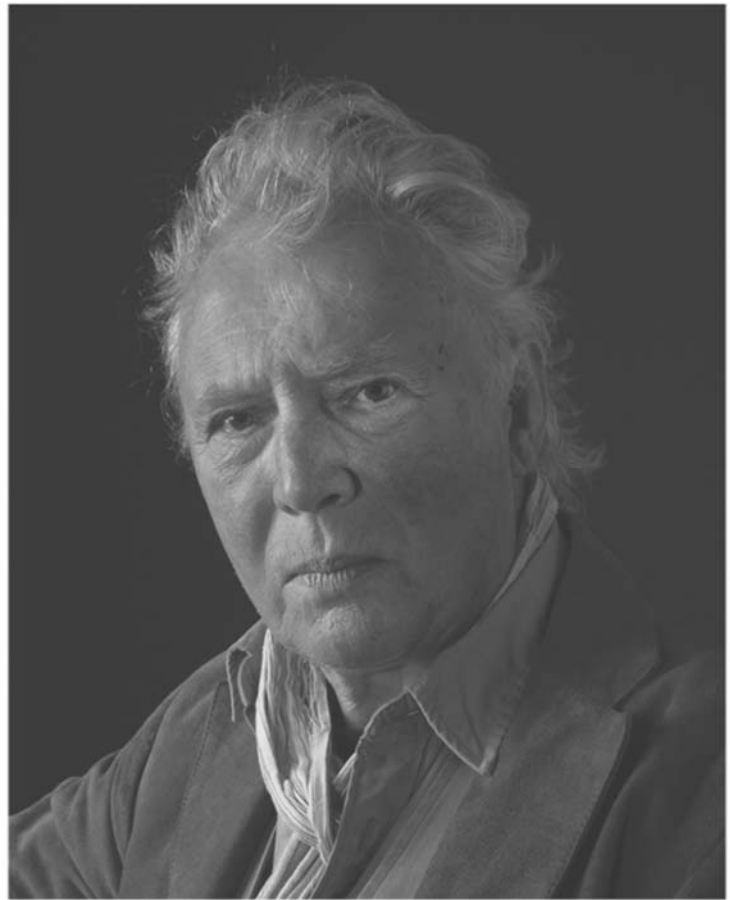
¹ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue49/lob49-44b.htm>> This was the book by Daniele Ganser, *Nato's Secret Armies* (London: Frank Cass, 2005) Extracts from it can be read at <<https://archives.globalresearch.ca/articles/GAN412A.html>>. There are many clips of Ganser on YouTube.

² Some of the little that is known about the UK's role in the formation of the network and subsequent activities is discussed by Nick Must at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster72/lob72-western-union.pdf>>.

The witness

This is Peter Sanderson. He is 74. He served eight years of a fifteen year sentence for firearms offences and armed robberies, crimes he didn't commit. His conviction was part of the cover-up of the murder of a policeman, Sgt. John Speed, in Leeds, by the British state during the miners' strike. His conviction was intended to ensure that what he knew about secret state activities would not be believed, should he choose to speak about them.

This is not the first attempt by Sanderson to get his story out. He began while still in prison in 1991, working with the Stockton Labour MP Frank Cook and academic Peter Smith.³ They both died before the job was done. Then he worked with a TV producer, a Cook Report alumnus, Howard Foster, from 2011-2014. He also died. (Cook and Smith died of natural causes and Foster drowned on holiday, while 'wild swimming'.)



In the beginning

In the mid 1970s Sanderson, a stonemason by training, was engaged in a number of business activities – building and contracting work – in Yorkshire with David Gricewith, a working partner since 1971. In 1976 Sanderson's father-in-law, a career soldier, encouraged him to join the Territorial Army (TA) for the business contacts it might produce. Sanderson declined to do so but compromised and joined the Legion of Frontiersmen, a part-time military

³ Smith wrote for *Lobster*. See, for example, his 'The Murder of Hilda Murrell: Conspiracy Theories Old and New' in *Lobster* 28 and 'Is Libya still the prime suspect in the murder of WPC Fletcher?' in *Lobster* 32. We met once, on York station. He didn't mention his work with Sanderson but there's a hint about it in the piece in *Lobster* 28.

outfit affiliated to the TA. The Legion did the same training as the regular TA. Today the Legion is regarded as something of a joke by regular army types.⁴ It didn't seem amusing when Duncan Campbell first wrote about them in the *New Statesman* in 1984.⁵ Campbell's article pointed out that the Legion claimed to be 'fully integrated into the Home Office Emergency Planning Organisation'.

David Gricewith also joined the Legion. Most Frontiersmen had previous military experience; and Gricewith and Sanderson, having none, were



David Gricewith

exceptions in that regard. This branch of the Legion became the field support unit, 9th troop of Y Squadron, Queen's Own Yeomanry. Sometimes they were referred to as *iota - iota* being the ninth letter of the Greek alphabet. Theirs was the only armoured unit in the TA. But the vehicles were old: one of them had been used at Suez in 1956. The TA unit to which they were affiliated was in a poor condition: unmotivated members, run-down equipment and corruption. With their skillsets – Sanderson in building and civil engineering, Gricewith in car

engines – they proved useful immediately, keeping the elderly vehicles on the road. Gricewith taught the members engine maintenance.

In 1977 Sanderson and Gricewith met a British Army officer, a Major Champion. He invited them to join a list of Ministry of Defence contractors who did alteration and maintenance work for military installations. To get on this list they were positively vetted. Champion then asked them if they would care to join a new, part-time paramilitary force that was being created. It would be affiliated to the Territorial Army and would be a 'stay behind' force in the event of a Soviet invasion. They agreed and began attending a selection course at the Civil Defence College at Easingwold and at Catterick camp. Having been selected, they started an induction course for membership of what was known as the Civil Contingencies Cadre (CCC).

Acceptance into CCC and the training battalion of the still to be commissioned force was dependent upon applicants successfully completing a rigorous physical and mental training programme, devised and supervised by members of 21 SAS (TA). During this training period they came into contact with Squadron Leader Sandys, who represented the RAF on the Emergency

⁴ See, for example, <https://www.arrse.co.uk/wiki/Legion_of_Frontiersmen>.

⁵ 'Private "military-style force" gets government backing', *New Statesman* 10 February 1984. See <<https://www.duncancampbell.org/content/new-statesman-1984>>.

Planning Committee for North Yorkshire and was a member of the North Yorkshire Fire and Civil Defence Contingency Planning and Emergency Planning Unit. He lectured on Contingency Planning and Implementation in pre- and post-invasion/occupation scenarios.

In Sanderson's words:

'The original conception of CCC was of a highly trained nucleus of patriotic individuals: civilians with a well-developed sense of national integrity, capable of inspiring and organising others in a post-invasion scenario; able to organise resistance groups throughout the UK to carry out a campaign against the occupying power, through clandestine action and guerilla warfare. . . the organisation, engaged in "The Resistance", would be a truly secret army. Indeed, with the exception of unit leaders, members would be acquainted with no more than three or four others actively involved with CCC.'

Clearly this was a recreation or revamping of the 'stay behind' network created in the late 1940s in NATO countries; and this was made clear to the trainees.

Sanderson, Gricewith and two others began their work with CCC by attempting to locate and dispose of the arms dumps in Yorkshire left behind by the original 'stay behind' network. They did this undercover as members of the Royal Engineers 272 Field Support Squadron. Just finding the dumps was a challenge. Some of the people who had been in charge of them had died and in some cases they were on Forestry Commission land and 30 years of growth had to be penetrated. The dumps contained some weapons and ammunition, much of which was unusable; but also tinned food, primus stoves and even toilet paper. It was clear that this 'stay behind' network had been neglected for years if not decades.

The salvaged material was initially taken to a disused WW2 command centre under Fishergate House in York, then part of the York garrison.⁶ Later the weapons were moved to a farm run by a friend of Gricewith, Malcolm Tyerman, where Sanderson and Gricewith built a secure area in which to store them. A gunsmith, Tyerman checked - 'proved' - the weapons. Although Tyerman was never formally a member of CCC, Sanderson believes that the rent for Tyerman's farm was paid by Demeter - codename for Paul Hazelgrave,

⁶ See <<https://historicensland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1257845>>.

Peter Sanderson commented:

'In later years (1960s) Fishergate House became home to a sub-division of a government ministry department/agency - Ordnance Survey (Topography). This was used as the cover for "stay behind" units who operated out of it.'

the next step up in the chain of command. Hazelgrave was a serving policeman.

Their training continued at weekends, with lectures and seminars held at defence establishments throughout the country – Latimer House at Amersham, for example. The lectures were on a variety of subjects, including European history, ‘post-war’ economics, subversion, policing, espionage and counter-espionage. These are the names of the lecturers Sanderson recalled when writing the first version of this in prison. (The italicised comments in brackets are mine.)

Professor Norman Stone (*historian*)

Sir John Webster (*perhaps the Royal Navy Webster*)

George Young (*presumably George Kennedy Young, former Deputy Chief of SIS*)

Sir Michael Howard Smith (*Director-General of MI5*)

Cranley Onslow MP (*former SIS officer*)

Ian Gow MP

Charles Elwell (*MI5*)

Mr Hanley (*presumably Michael Hanley, some time Director-General of MI5*)

(Colonel) Maclean (*probably ‘Billy’ Maclean⁷*)

Admiral Sir Ian Hogg

Major Alexander Greenwood

Mr Meyer, an American (*probably Herb Meyer, CIA officer⁸*)

David Hart

The threat

Remember this is 1978. Sections of the British secret state, the British military and the CIA believed that the recently resigned Prime Minister Harold Wilson was a KGB asset, if not an agent; and that the KGB influenced – even ran – the Labour Party through the role of the Communist Party of Great Britain in several of Britain’s biggest trade unions. In the mid-1970s a section of the Conservative Party and its allies within the state believed – or pretended to believe, it’s difficult to be sure which – that Britain was in danger of becoming

⁷ <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy_McLean_\(politician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy_McLean_(politician))>

⁸ Herb Meyer worked with David Hart and Brian Crozier in the 1980s peddling the ‘enemy within’ story. See

<<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster67/lob67-atlantic-semantic.pdf>> and

<<https://www.nationalreview.com/2019/06/remembering-herbert-meyer-cia-contrarian/>>.

a Soviet satellite. Mrs Thatcher, leader of the Conservative Party, certainly believed something like this and, while Leader of the Opposition, tried to get the state to take the allegations about Harold Wilson seriously. She wanted the Cabinet Secretary to investigate it.⁹

In response to this perceived threat, so-called 'private armies' – notably Sir Walter Walker's Civil Assistance¹⁰ and David Stirling's GB75 – had been formed to combat the 'threat' from the left.¹¹ The Labour Cabinets of Harold Wilson (1974-76) had been under intense surveillance in the hunt for Soviet influence. Several members, notably Wilson himself, had been burgled. Smear and disinformation campaigns had been run against both Labour and Liberal politicians.

In this context it is a very striking list of speakers. Major Alexander Greenwood had been one of those preparing to meet the Communist 'threat' with a private militia.¹² His was called Red Alert and was created in 1973. G. K. Young had set up the Unison Committee for Action in the same year, from which emerged Sir Walter Walker's Civil Assistance. In 1978 Charles Elwell was head of MI5's F branch, monitoring 'subversion' and he was a believer in the great 'threat from the left' conspiracy theory.¹³ Admiral Sir Ian Hogg had been a member of Young's Unison Committee for Action.

Hart

The surprising name on the list is David Hart. Nothing in the man's official biography even hints at such a role in this period.¹⁴ However his activities a few years later, working against the miners' strike and then funding various outfits which continued the 'red menace' theme, make his presence on the list intelligible.¹⁵ While in prison in 1991, Sanderson wrote:

⁹ I discussed this in my 'The View from the Bridge' in *Lobster* 51. The source of the story was the BBC documentary 'The plot against Harold Wilson' which is on-line at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3-gT7CUA2o>>.

¹⁰ In 1980 General Sir Walter Walker published his account of the global Soviet threat, *The Next Domino?* (London: Covenant Books, 1980). The UK is not referred to in it.

¹¹ For Walker see, for example, <[https://military.wikia.org/wiki/Walter_Walker_\(British_Army_officer\)](https://military.wikia.org/wiki/Walter_Walker_(British_Army_officer))>. For Stirling see Alan Hoe, *David Stirling* (London: Warner Books, 1994).

¹² His views on this period are quoted at <<https://tinyurl.com/yym7rlfb>> or <<https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2006/04/wil2-a20.html>>.

¹³ See his obituary in the *Guardian* at <<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2008/jan/21/mainsection.richardnortontaylor>>.

¹⁴ See, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/y2sggqss>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2011/jan/09/david-hart-obituary>>.

¹⁵ See <<https://tinyurl.com/y29ly6xy>> or <<https://fothom.wordpress.com/2015/11/19/the-observer-on-black-intelligence-rupert-murdoch-and-british-briefing/>>.

'Hart occupied a high position in CCC, possibly on the Executive Committee. He held the rank of Colonel, lecturing on a range of subjects, including counter-subversion preventative measures. I heard Hart speak on a number of occasions, first at the National Defence College, Latimer House, Buckinghamshire, in 1978, and later at various MOD establishments where courses and seminars were held. It was on one of those weekends that I heard Hart advocate "propaganda by outrage" as an extreme policy.'

In short: this speakers' list makes no sense for people being trained to run a genuine 'stay behind' network – i.e. one that would remain *inactive* until after a Soviet invasion. The explanation for the choice of speakers came fairly soon after the training ended. In the prison document Sanderson wrote:

'Due to growing concern among prominent Conservative thinkers at the growth of Socialism, both at home and abroad, and especially at the prospect of a Labour victory in the 1979 General Election, the existing structure was to be revamped. New funding had made possible a recruitment programme, which was the brain-child of some right wing politicians and senior military people. . . .

The dramatic shift in emphasis, brought about by fundamental changes in policy concerning the operations role of cadre personnel, became increasingly evident. The new thinking was inclined towards a proactive approach to dealing with what was perceived to be an enemy already inside British society, identified as "the enemy within" . . . In 1980 . . . After the first full scale rear link security exercise undertaken in the UK and Europe, carried out in conjunction with "Crusader 80",¹⁶ the new aims of CCC were officially made known for the first time.

The new aim was to undertake operations intended to counter left-wing subversion. A "Pre-emptive Action" policy was to be adopted whenever practicable to discredit political (including trade union) leaders and activists, and to cause dissension among supporters of same, and potential subversive elements (to include elimination). The cadre was to secretly operate "as a cohesive factor" between the security forces and the public in the UK. In short, to engage in internal intervention against domestic political targets.'

Now the choice of speakers at the CCC training events in 1978 makes sense.

The Civil Contingencies Cadre name echoes the Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) set up in the Cabinet Office following the 1972 miners' strike and the

¹⁶ A NATO military exercise in 1980.

apparent defeat of the state by the National Union of Mineworkers – led by the then young Arthur Scargill – at the gates of the Saltley coal depot.

'Behind the scenes the Civil Contingencies Unit . . . prepared a complete emergency structure of regional government in the event of a large-scale breakdown of energy supplies [. . .] Across the country a network of regional commissioners was ready to maintain basic services, as in a nuclear alert.'¹⁷

Steve Peak quoted *The Times* in 1979:

'By early 1973 ministers had detailed estimates of 16 key industries, their capacity for disruption, their importance to the country's well-being and the possibility of using alternative military labour in the event of strikes.'¹⁸

However, during an industrial dispute at the nuclear reprocessing plant at Windscale in early 1977, when using troops to break the strike was proposed, the then Energy Minister Tony Benn balked and forced the management to continue negotiating. Brian Sedgemore MP, Benn's Parliamentary Private Secretary, from whose account this is taken, reported that the management of the plant had concocted a false story about the dispute and seemed to want the use of troops.¹⁹

My guess would be that the creation of the new Civil Contingencies Cadre (CCC) into which Sanderson was recruited in 1978 was in part a response to the perceived failure of the Civil Contingencies Unit the year before at Windscale; the 'stay behind' aspect was essentially a cover story.

The context

The mid-1970s was a turbulent period for the Anglo-American intelligence and security services. In the United States, in the wake of Watergate the CIA was under scrutiny by Congress and journalists as never before. CIA officers, notably Philip Agee and Victor Marchetti, revealed details of the Agency's operations. In the UK the Information Research Department, a propaganda and psy-ops agency created in the late 1940s, was closed by Foreign Secretary David Owen. For the anti-subversion lobby in the UK, Brian Crozier and people

¹⁷ John Campbell, *Edward Heath* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1993) p. 571

¹⁸ Steve Peak, *Troops in Strikes* (London: Cobden Press, 1984) p. 117.

¹⁹ Peak (see note 18) pp. 128/9

of his ilk, for many of the speakers listed above, all this was the work of the KGB.²⁰

In 1976 the Labour government had apparently also tried to shut down the Resistance and Psychological Operations Committee (RPOC), a section of the Reserve Forces Association, which was formally planning resistance in the event of a Soviet invasion of Britain. There is almost nothing published about this and that we know about it at all we owe to the late Chapman Pincher who wrote about its threatened demise in 1977.²¹ According to Pincher, RPOC was set up in 1970 under the banner of the Reserve Forces Association:

'For the past six years a clandestine section of it had been setting up the nucleus of an underground resistance organisation which could rapidly be expanded in the event of the Russian occupation of any part of NATO, including Britain itself. With the Tory Government's blessing it was given access to Defence Ministry departments like the Combined Operations Executive and the Joint Warfare Establishment . . . formed close links with the SAS . . . own secret intelligence network . . . secured access to the Foreign Office's Information and Research Department which has special functions.'²²

Of RPOC there is only one other reference that I can find. In 1973 it approached the anti-communist organisation composed of European intelligence officials, Interdoc, with a conference proposal.²³ The conference, in June, was

' . . . entitled "Resistance and the New Generation", which involved participants from the Netherlands, Belgium, Britain, and Germany, and which was centred around a proposal from the Resistance and Psychological Operations Committee of the British Reserve Forces Association – a member of which, Arnhem veteran, Daily Telegraph

²⁰ Although Brian Crozier isn't on the list of names Sanderson recalled as speakers, in his memoir Crozier describes being invited to lecture to the Army on a number of occasions in the 1970s with his message about the menace of subversion within; and once, in Harrogate, talking to an audience of the Territorial Army. Brian Crozier, *Free Agent* (London: HarperCollins, 1993) pp. 121/122.

²¹ And conspicuously omitted it in his 1978 book *Inside Story* ((London: Sidgwick and Jackson)

²² *Daily Express* 18 July 1977. This was Reprinted in *Searchlight* 27, discussed in *State Research Bulletin* No 2 and quoted in *Lobster* 11.

²³ Giles Scott-Smith, *Western Anti-Communism and the Interdoc Network* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) p. 221.

Scott-Smith discusses the formation of Interdoc at <<https://tinyurl.com/y3zq2el4>> or <https://wikispooks.com/wiki/Document:Psychological_Warfare_for_the_West:_Interdoc_and_Youth_Politics_in_the_1960s#_Of9f35bfc287f14b138cbb90ea55e3af>.

military correspondent, and ISC board member Brigadier W. F. Thompson, was also the new president of Interdoc (replacing Louis Einthoven).'²⁴

Sanderson says that within CCC the RPOC – which they referred to as 'psy-ops' – was regarded as the 'top of the tree'

There is one final link here. The CCC group sounds like the 'army of resistance' which Airey Neave talked of setting up in the event of a Labour victory in 1979 to forestall a 'communist take-over'.²⁵ Neave was involved in the creation of CCC and was seen within the group as one of its founding fathers. Thus his talk to former SIS officer Lee Tracey of setting one up was misleading: it already existed. In the months before the general election of 1979, CCC was on a 'war footing', says Sanderson, in case Labour won.

It seems to me that the intention behind the RPOC all along had been to create a force to oppose not a Soviet invasion – which was vanishingly unlikely – but 'the enemy within'. In effect, the 'anti-subversive' forces within the British state and Conservative Party created a taxpayer-funded, nationwide, covert operation to fight the coming 'red takeover'. And barely a hint of this has emerged.²⁶

Paul Hazelgrave, a serving policeman at the time, who used the codename Demeter, was the link to Sanderson's CCC cell. Above Hazelgrave was Captain Peter Hodgkinson, codename Holland, originally with the Parachute Regiment.

In 1980, on a CCC briefing and training weekend in London at the Duke of York's barracks in Chelsea, Sanderson met three young men on the CCC central staff: Robin Davies, Michael Walker and Roberto Fiore. All three of them have significant ties to the extreme right. Robin Davies became 'private secretary' to David Irving.²⁷ Michael Walker was the 'central London organiser

²⁴ Giles Scott-Smith, 'Interdoc and West European Psychological Warfare: The American Connection' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y3wr9lry>> or <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263693987_Interdoc_and_West_European_Psychological_Warfare_The_American_Connection>

ISC – the Institute for the Study of Conflict – was the project of Brian Crozier, another of those who thought that the UK was on the verge of becoming a Soviet satellite.

²⁵ *New Statesman* 20 February 1981, available at <<https://tinyurl.com/y4266d27>> or <<https://www.duncancampbell.org/menu/journalism/newstatesman/newstatesman-1981/what%20did%20a%20tory%20mp%20say.pdf>> The source for this story was former SIS officer Lee Tracey.

²⁶ If it seems implausible that an operation this large could be kept secret, the Bletchley Park enigma code-breaking operation in WW2 remained a secret until 1972.

²⁷ For Davies' working relationship with Irving (and a snippet on the nexus between Davies, Walker and Fiore – the three of them apparently shared a flat), see the following two pages from Irving's website: <<http://www.fpp.co.uk/Canada/FDCIfile/BoDSmear1990b.html>> and <http://www.fpp.co.uk/online/11/07/Rusbridger_memoirs.html>.

of the NF'²⁸ and is/was (it's unclear which) the editor of ultra right-wing magazine *Scorpion*.²⁹ Of the three, Roberto Fiore is the best known. Now a Member of the European Parliament, Fiore was an Italian neo-fascist who was living in London, having fled Italy where he was wanted by the police in connection with the bombing of the Bologna railway station which killed 85 people.³⁰ He became an associate of the British National Party. On 24 February 1994 his continued presence in the UK was the subject of an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons.³¹

Back in Yorkshire, the second stage of their CCC work was the creation of new SACs (strategic arms caches) – secure weapons dumps. Four were built in disused quarries, one being Jackdaw quarry near Tadcaster. But while food and water were stored in them, no weapons were left in them at that time. Those came later. The fifth, and most ambitious, was at Burdale, on the Yorkshire Wolds, in an abandoned railway tunnel.³² This was planned to be the central SAC. The idea for Burdale came down via Demeter. What may have seemed like a good idea on paper proved impractical on the ground. They began by clearing one of the ventilation shafts on the tunnel and started trying to reinforce a section of it. It was slow, laborious work. They wore grey overalls and yellow safety helmets and the occasional walker who came across them was told they were from British Rail, surveying the tunnel and making it safe. Their material and kit was stored at Strensall Camp on the edge of York. The job was never completed because of the Prudom affair.

Prudom

The story of Barry Prudom was much reported at the time and can be seen by Googling the name.³³ Prudom, who had been rejected by the Territorial Army

²⁸ Nigel Copsey, *The British National Party and the Quest for Legitimacy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) p. 34. According to that same source, indeed on the same page, we learn that it was Walker who introduced Roberto Fiore to Derek Holland and Nick Griffin.

²⁹ The website for *Scorpion* <<http://thescorp.multics.org/>> mentions Michael Walker as the UK nominee to receive dollar cheques from abroad. It is hard to know when that website was last updated – it looks very old and has possibly been stagnant since the early 2000s.

³⁰ See, for example, <<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2008/feb/29/thefarright.italy>> and <<https://tinyurl.com/yykzqgla>> or <https://espresso.repubblica.it/inchieste/2017/11/06/news/the-italian-far-right-money-1.313568?refresh_ce>.

³¹ <<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/9557/massino-morsello-and-roberto-fiore>> This was signed by 6 Labour MPs, one of them Jeremy Corbyn.

The information in footnotes 27, 28 and 29 came from Nick Must.

³² On the Burdale tunnel see

<<https://www.yorkshirewoldsrailway.org.uk/history/burdale-tunnel/>>.

³³ For example <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barry_Prudom>.

SAS, went on a killing spree in 1982. In the official version, having killed a couple of police officers and a civilian, Prudom managed to evade a police manhunt for 18 days in June/July 1982 before being cornered and committing suicide in Malton in North Yorkshire.³⁴ The full story is more interesting and



more complex than that. CCC member Prudom had been assigned to the group working on the Burdale project by their immediate superior Paul Hazelgrave who thought – wrongly in Sanderson’s view – that Prudom had useful skills. But Prudom was also committing armed robberies. Prudom was then driving a white Mini Estate, which he had stolen after his first robbery. After another robbery in Leeds, he tried and failed to destroy the white Mini Estate he had used. Sanderson saw the license plate in press photographs and recognised it as Prudom’s car.



Police photograph of Prudom’s burned-out Mini Estate.

Prudom was a threat to Sanderson’s work for CCC. He reported his concerns to his superior officer, Hazelgrave. Sanderson’s whole unit then came under suspicion because there were apparently three people involved in the robbery of a post office at Kramer Bank in Moortown, Leeds on 28 April 1982 for which Prudom was wanted.

Thus, while the Army’s Special Investigation Branch (SIB) investigated the unit, the Burdale project was suspended. The irony here is that during their training by the SAS, merely as a theoretical exercise CCC members were taught how to plan a bank robbery. Press reports of the post office robbery in Moortown reminded Sanderson of that training, which Prudom had also

³⁴ For example at <<https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/7933616.gunning-for-barry-prudom/>>.

undergone. Prudom's robberies were later added to the list allegedly done by Gricewith and Sanderson (discussed below).

Gricewith's version of events (as told to Sanderson) was that Prudom had gone to ground in Dalby Forest, in North Yorkshire, in which there were a number of strategic arms caches (SACs) whose location was known to Prudom through his membership of CCC. These SACs contained emergency supplies – food, water etc. Because Gricewith also knew the location of those SACs, he was brought in to track him down with SAS man Eddie McGee who had trained both Prudom and Gricewith when they were attached to the Paras in Leeds. According to Gricewith, he and McGee killed Prudom. Sanderson thinks this was just Gricewith boasting and that Prudom was killed by the SAS. Prudom had to die because he threatened to expose the CCC work on the creation of SACs. The big one in the Burdale tunnel, for example, was 'live'. Only the presence of McGee as a 'tracker' is in the official version of the events.³⁵

Within CCC Sanderson was formally Prudom's superior and during the hunt for him the police monitored Sanderson's phone in case Prudom contacted him; and his family were given armed protection for the duration of the manhunt. Prudom had earlier rung Sanderson's home and told his wife he would kill Sanderson.

There was a bizarre coda to the Prudom affair. In September 1982, Sanderson's superior in CCC, Paul Hazelgrave, contacted him. In an unsolved 1981 attempted armed robbery, Prudom had fired a very unusual bullet which he had pilfered from one of the CCC caches. This bullet threatened to link Prudom to the CCC operations. Hazelgrave wanted to mount another armed robbery, using a similar bullet. As Prudom was dead, this was an attempt to deflect the police's investigation and make them think that Prudom couldn't have committed the original robbery (and there was, thus, no link to the CCC) if the same type of ammunition was still being used, in the same style of robbery.

And this was duly organised: the same place, the Asda Supermarket in Pudsey in Leeds, was robbed on 24 September 1982 and a member of staff was shot in the leg with the same kind of unusual bullet used in the first raid.³⁶

The work on the Burdale tunnel SAC that was halted because of Prudom's criminal activities was never restarted. It simply wasn't practicable. There was too much water and even with a suspended floor it would have

³⁵ McGee died in 2002 aged 64. See <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/alt.obituaries/u97lvcDjBKA>.

³⁶ See Appendix 1.

required continuous pumping out; which would have required constantly changing batteries to power the pumps.

Gricewith told Sanderson that, as a result of what he called 'the Prudom affair', Gricewith was put in charge of all the strategic arms caches in CCC's Northern Command.

In the summer of 1983 Gricewith suggested that he and Sanderson go into business together again: Sanderson would take over a timber yard near Leeds owned by a friend of Gricewith and expand it into a full-scale builders' merchants. As Sanderson expanded the business it would acquire increasing credit facilities which would support Gricewith's property development plans. This was duly done and Sanderson relocated the business to Boston Spa, between Leeds and York, and commenced trading in early 1984.³⁷

The place to which he relocated his business was a set of farm buildings where one of the original 'stay behind' arms caches had been. He had come across the farm while tracing the original cache. It was an ideal spot for a new cache because of tunnels already dug into a chalk hillside on the site.

The usable munitions and survival equipment which the CCC group had gathered from the old 'stay behind' dumps was moved from Tyerman's farm and stored in the tunnels on Sanderson's new business premises before being moved elsewhere. In effect Sanderson was the quartermaster of this operation. Newer weapons were also regularly added to the stock. CCC member Paul Guest, a friend of Gricewith, was one of those who drove lorries containing the weapons. Some of them were being supplied by the Leeds-based arms dealer John Longstaff, who committed suicide in the toilet of a plane on a flight from West Germany to the UK in March 1984.³⁸ The subsequent police investigation of Longstaff led them to two other men, John Richardson and Ashley Lawson. They were CCC members in another cell in Yorkshire and were part of the arms collecting activity. Even though they were found guilty at York Crown Court of possessing unlicensed weapons and ammunition, including machine guns, Richardson was only fined and given a suspended sentence and Lawson merely fined. (For possessing machine guns? The fix was in; the appropriate judge had been selected for the trial.) Richardson was described as a former member of the Territorial Army.³⁹

³⁷ See Appendix 5.

³⁸ 'Arms dealer cash riddle', *Daily Mirror* 4 April 1984 Longstaff's wife was initially sceptical about the suicide verdict but accepted it after seeing the suicide note he left with his body. 'Now widow says "not murder"', *Yorkshire Post* 16 July 1984.

³⁹ 'Deadly arms cache', *News of the World*, 22 March 1985.

The miners' strike

Running parallel to this was the miners' strike – the action of the 'enemy within' for which the anti-subversives had been preparing. Sanderson's CCC group got involved. By exaggerating the seriousness of a back injury he had incurred earlier while on a CCC training course, Sanderson had dropped out of active service and had gone on a reserve list. However, even though he was on that list, Sanderson was recalled to active service and tasked to take lorry loads of timber from his woodyard to picket lines to keep the miners' braziers going, at Grimethorpe colliery, near Doncaster. Having thus created the appearance of supporting the strike, he offered to buy coalite – smokeless fuel – that the miners would steal, which he then stockpiled in his yard. He, thus, encouraged striking miners to steal and the exchange of pilfered goods was duly photographed by the police. Groups of unemployed Territorial Army men from Teesside would rendezvous at Sanderson's business where they were given police uniforms to work on the picket lines and refreshments – tea and sandwiches. The rumours of troops dressed as police were true: but in this instance they weren't regular army, they were unemployed Territorials.⁴⁰

Gricewith, meanwhile, was involved in monitoring two officials of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), known to Sanderson through a tape recording made by Gricewith (discussed below) only as Greaves and Summerfield, two of the 'flying pickets'.⁴¹ Greaves and Summerfield had been chosen to be the patsies in a CCC plan to discredit the miners' strike. The first



Here are Reg Greaves (on the right) and Ralph Summerfield, bloodied after clashes with the police on the picket line.



⁴⁰ In his *The End of an Era: Diaries 1980-90* (London: Arrow Books, 1994) Tony Benn reports on pp. 479/80 meeting a man who had been in the Army during this strike and had been in a sixty strong group of soldiers deployed in police uniforms on the picket lines. Thanks to Scott Newton for this reference.

⁴¹ NUM members who, as a part of their strike activities, travelled to reinforce the picket lines at locations other than their actual place of work.

part of the plan was for Gricewith to shoot a policeman, Sgt John Speed, outside Leeds Parish Church, St Peter's (now a cathedral) in Leeds. (Why Speed was chosen isn't known.⁴²) However, on the day another policeman, PC Thorpe, arrived first. Gricewith shot but didn't kill him. Gricewith then shot and killed Speed when he turned up. A third officer, PC Raj, appeared and was fired at but not hit.⁴³ With Gricewith was Paul Guest, a CCC member and a friend of Gricewith who had been recruited and trained by him. Sanderson says Guest panicked and drove off, leaving Gricewith stranded; the police account says the two men ran off in different directions. Either way Gricewith fled on foot, hi-jacked a van at gunpoint at a petrol station and escaped.⁴⁴

The second part of the plan was planting incriminating evidence which would implicate Greaves and Summerfield in the shooting. Gricewith failed to do this. He had become suspicious of the motives of his superiors, suspected he was about to be set-up by them, asked for clarification and the second part of the operation was aborted.

In his investigation of these events while Sanderson was in prison, the late Peter Smith interviewed Greaves and Summerfield.⁴⁵ They had both been injured on a picket line in clashes with the police the previous day and were at home, hurt, when the shootings took place.⁴⁶

Crisis management

How did CCC manage the crisis caused by the shooting of Sgt. Speed? Strings were pulled with the West Yorkshire Police and a few days after the shooting two junior officers, Detective Constables Castell and Rayner were sent, unarmed, to 'trace and eliminate' Gricewith from the inquiry.⁴⁷ This is very

⁴² Nick Must commented: Sergeant Speed's police service was somewhat unusual. He served in Special Branch for a significant portion of his nearly 20 years in the force. See <<https://www.secretleeds.com/viewtopic.php?t=3701>> and <http://www.leodis.net/display.aspx?resourceIdentifier=200424_45484561&DISPLAY=FULL>.

However, on the day of his death, he was a uniformed beat sergeant. Although that's not an impossible career path, it is still quite an odd one.

⁴³ At Speed's inquest PC Raj described the shooting as an 'SAS-style execution'.

⁴⁴ In the statement created by the police but attributed to Paul Guest's wife, Alison, she states that Guest had told that her and Gricewith had gone to Leeds from York to steal a car. See Appendix 17.

⁴⁵ After Smith's death all his research materials on this story were stolen. Sanderson has been burgled twice and had paperwork stolen.

⁴⁶ These photographs are photocopies made by the late Peter Smith from Brian Elliot's *Yorkshire's Flying Pickets in the 1984-85 Miners' Strike* (2004). The assault on Summerfield is also described in <<https://libcom.org/library/come-and-wet-this-truncheon-dave-douglass>>.

⁴⁷ From a police report in possession of Peter Sanderson. This is mentioned by Judith Cook in her *Unlawful Killing: the Murder of Hilda Murrell* (London: Bloomsbury, 1994) p. 151.

striking. Had Gricewith been a *suspect*, armed police would have arrived mob-handed. This formal elimination from inquiries was requested by Gricewith himself because he knew he had been seen shooting Speed, not least by the injured PC Thorpe. Gricewith's girlfriend, Adrienne Robinson, and his mother provided him with an alibi. Robinson was eventually charged with perverting the course of justice for providing that false alibi.

After the shootings, Hazelgrave (Demeter) officially retired but reportedly departed to Spain to infiltrate expat IRA sympathisers living there.⁴⁸ Sanderson declined the offer of some extra training which would have enabled him to replace Hazelgrave as Demeter in the network.

Shortly after the Leeds shootings, says Sanderson, Gricewith became irrational. He accused Sanderson of conspiring against him and keeping records of his movements. In January 1985, afraid for the personal safety of himself and his family, Sanderson contacted the gunsmith, Tyerman, on whose farm he and Gricewith had built a secure area for storing the supplies found in the old 'stay behind' arms dumps. From Tyerman, Sanderson bought a revolver and ten rounds of ammunition. In February Sanderson moved to York into a property owned by his in-laws. Gricewith had threatened his children and Sanderson escorted them to and from their new school.

In late 1985 Gricewith seemed to regain his former composure. He apologised for his behaviour over the previous months – which he put down to stress over the Leeds shootings. Nonetheless Sanderson had had enough of him and looked for a way out of their business relationship. He tried to make over the builders' merchant business to him: Gricewith refused. Instead he suggested lending Sanderson more money so that Sanderson could build a large house with it – the idea being that Sanderson's debt to Gricewith would be paid when the house was sold. Work on this began in January 1986 but with two thirds done, construction work came to a halt due to lack of funds. They met at the end of January 1987. Gricewith had borrowed Sanderson's 4-wheel drive truck and when Sanderson went to collect it he found it loaded with boxes of ammunition. At their next meeting Gricewith explained that his 'team' was collecting arms and ammunition which was being taken to Northern Ireland for Loyalist paramilitaries. This was being organised by Military Intelligence with the knowledge of CCC 'Control', said Gricewith.

They met two days later and Gricewith was again paranoid. There had been a shortfall with one of the deliveries of weapons and Gricewith was under suspicion. Gricewith played him a tape-recording he had covertly made of

⁴⁸ Hazelgrave had invested £9,000 in Sanderson's business, Rudgate Timber and Builders Merchants. He lost this when Sanderson was bankrupted after his conviction.

conversations between himself and a senior police officer, in which the murder of Sergeant John Speed was discussed before his death. Gricewith gave Sanderson cassette tapes and a handgun to keep for him. Their existence would be his security, he said. Sanderson subsequently listened to the tapes several times and commented in his 1991 account:

'They represented a comprehensive record of Gricewith's service, detailing the covert operations that he was involved with from 1981 to the present day. Also on the tapes were recordings of interviews with police and army officers, who, judging by their incautious language, were unaware that their conversations were being recorded. . . . These included secret recordings of formal and informal conversations between Gricewith and a senior police officer, identified as an "Operational Controller", someone to whom he was plainly subordinate. This officer . . . specifically names the police sergeant to be assassinated as John Speed and where he could be found.'

This was the last occasion on which Sanderson saw Gricewith. Five days later, on 12 February 1987, Sanderson heard about Gricewith's death on a radio news bulletin. That same day the gun dealer Malcolm Tyerman was named as a person of interest by the police.

So how did David Gricewith die? On 13 February, the day after his death, Sanderson contacted his partner, Adrienne Robinson. She had been working with Gricewith, and had been involved in the arms collection and storage. She told Sanderson they had gone to meet 'Captain Holland' (Peter Hodgkinson), at the Territorial Army centre at Norton, near Middlesbrough.⁴⁹ He was adjutant there and their CCC superior. Some of the weapons which were being shipped to Northern Ireland for the Protestant paramilitaries had gone missing. Sanderson was due at this meeting and he had also driven to Middlesbrough. He arrived to be told he wasn't needed and drove home again.

Parked in a supermarket car park near the meeting place with Hodgkinson, Adrienne accidentally shot Gricewith with a pen gun⁵⁰ he had in his car's glove compartment. It fired a .22 round into his abdomen.⁵¹ Gricewith drove off in a hurry, towards the nearest hospital. However, there had been a number of robberies of security vans at supermarkets in the

⁴⁹ TV journalist the late Howard Foster, in the second investigation of these events, contacted Hodgkinson in 2012 and was politely blanked. See Appendix 19.

⁵⁰ Literally a gun which looks like a ballpoint pen. It fires a single small calibre bullet, often a .22 round. See, for example, <<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/749075350498444446/>>.

⁵¹ Gricewith got the pen gun as a freebie at an Eley Arms event attended by CCC members, including Sanderson. Eley make .22 ammunition. See <<https://eley.co.uk>>.

Middlesbrough area and the police were watching some of them in what was called 'Operation Vanguard'.⁵² One such surveillance team was in the car park where the pen gun incident took place. Seeing Gricewith speeding off, the police vehicle followed him. On discovering that they were being followed by the police – and unaware of Operation Vanguard – Gricewith jumped to the conclusion that it had to do with his CCC activities. He stopped the car and fled on foot (he had been trained in escape and evasion) and Robinson drove the car home.

The police version does not feature Adrienne Robinson at all and has it that the uninjured Gricewith (who in this version, because there was no Robinson, hadn't been shot with the pen gun) evaded his pursuers and abandoned the vehicle he had driven away from the supermarket. Then Gricewith hi-jacked a police car in Middlesbrough and was pursued by other police. Finally, Gricewith crashed the stolen patrol car when he was rammed by another police vehicle. The police version has it that he was carrying a sawn-off shotgun in the car with him,⁵³ which went off when Gricewith was rammed, and that is how he was injured.

At this point the official version gets very fuzzy, very quickly. Initially police said he died of a single bullet wound (which would tally with Adrienne Robinson accidentally shooting him with the pen gun). However

'a post-mortem examination revealed that Gricewith suffered massive internal injuries caused by a shotgun blast, even though there was only minimal evidence of bleeding'.⁵⁴

'Police said he complained he had broken his ribs and made no mention of being shot'.⁵⁵

Deputy Chief Constable Jack Ord 'said the man was found to have a bullet wound in the region of his heart . . . died from loss of blood from internal injuries caused by a wound from a shotgun . . . but there was no sign of serious injury'. Gricewith apparently collapsed while handcuffed to officers in the station minutes after his arrest.⁵⁶

⁵² 'Vanguard' is referred to in *The Journal* (Newcastle), 7 September 1988 and by Cook (see note 47) on p. 147.

⁵³ The *Evening Chronicle* (Newcastle), 7 September 1988 stated that 'before the crash he was seen to drive off in the police car with the shotgun between his legs'.

⁵⁴ *The Journal* (Newcastle), 16 February 1987

⁵⁵ *Evening Chronicle* (Newcastle), 13 February 1987

⁵⁶ *Evening Chronicle* (Newcastle) 13 February 1987

'Mr Ord . . . attributed the initial mix-up over the cause of death to the fact that there was heavy internal bleeding but little external evidence of blood'.⁵⁷

More than a year later, at an inquest,

'PC Richardson said he saw Gricewith had a hole in the left side of his jumper and there appeared to be blood underneath'.⁵⁸

But 'Chief Inspector Coleman said there was no sign at the time that Gricewith was injured'.⁵⁹

Coleman also said 'it was only when Gricewith's jumper was lifted up in the police station that his serious injury was discovered'.⁶⁰

But this 'serious injury' notwithstanding, Gricewith died from 'a single shotgun pellet wound to the heart'.⁶¹

In her *Unlawful Killing: The Murder of Hilda Murrell*,⁶² Judith Cook quotes some of the other evidence given by the police at the inquest. Which makes the story even less plausible.

'Detective Constable Kenneth Dunn said:

"I saw him climbing out of the vehicle. He stumbled onto the ground and two police officers jumped on top of him. I saw a shotgun on the ground. I saw that both hammers were closed, giving the impression that it had been fired. He was struggling violently. I stuck him in the stomach with the butt of the gun and he quietened down. . . I did not see any injuries whatsoever on Gricewith.""⁶³

Also at the Inquest:

'The jury was told by pathologists Dr Harvey McTaggart and Professor Alan Usher that it was understandable, because of the nature of the wound, that the police did not realise he was seriously injured. They speculated Gricewith himself, who at the time only complained of a pain in his ribs, possibly did not even know he had been shot.'⁶⁴

⁵⁷ *The Journal* (Newcastle) 14 February 1987

⁵⁸ *The Journal* (Newcastle) 7 September 1988

⁵⁹ *The Journal* (Newcastle) 7 September 1988

⁶⁰ *Evening Chronicle* (Newcastle) 7 September 1988

⁶¹ *The Journal* (Newcastle) 16 February 1987

⁶² See note 47.

⁶³ Cook (see note 47) p. 148

⁶⁴ *Dundee Courier and Advertiser* 8 September 1988

The inquest attributed Gricewith's death to a faulty shotgun with a very delicate trigger.⁶⁵ Better yet, this was reported to have been a sawn-off shotgun.

So there you have it: he drove off in a police car with an antique, turn of the century, double-barrelled shotgun⁶⁶ with a dodgy trigger, cocked and with barrel up between his legs, and it went off accidentally. This caused massive internal injuries but no visible wound other than a hole in his jumper. One pellet struck him in the heart and he may not have even known he'd been shot.

Let's be generous: this is highly improbable. A shotgun discharged into his body at such close range would have made a large hole and he would probably have bled to death, or died of shock very quickly. Either way he would have been covered in blood and his clothing shredded.

Reading the immediate press reports of the time, a reasonably clear picture emerges. The police arrested a man without a serious visible wound who was put in a car, handcuffed between two officers and driven to a police station. This is consistent with Adrienne Robinson's account of Gricewith's wounding. The rest appears to have been added after his death. If so, was the post-mortem simply faked? Or was the shotgun wound added to his corpse? (I was unable to get a copy of the post-mortem report.⁶⁷) Either way, by the time of the inquest a year later, the police wanted to make Gricewith's death fit the picture being painted of an armed robber. So, despite Gricewith having access to hundreds of modern military weapons, the police gave the public the appropriate image: he had the sawn-off shotgun familiar from gangster films and TV programmes.

Adrienne Robinson, Gricewith's partner, was later wrongly convicted of taking part in an attempted armed robbery with Sanderson and Tyerman. This happened because Tyerman, suffering from mental illness and extremely suggestible, had confessed to doing something he hadn't done and (ergo, falsely) implicated Robinson and Sanderson in the process. Robinson was also convicted of perverting the course of justice by giving Gricewith a false alibi for

⁶⁵ *Dundee Courier and Advertiser* 8 September 1988

⁶⁶ Sanderson saw it when it was shown to the jury at his trial.

⁶⁷ Teesside Coroner's Service replied to my request: 'HM Coroner has advised that the PM report is not a public document and unfortunately you are not legally classified as an interested party (under The Coroners Inquests Rules 2013) therefore I am unable to fulfil your request.'

the Speed shooting.⁶⁸ She was initially given a three year sentence, reduced to two on appeal. She served less than a year.

Aftermath

With Gricewith dead, Sanderson wanted rid of Gricewith's cassette tapes and handgun. He took them to the home of Peter Jardine, another member of CCC, recruited by Gricewith. Jardine lived on a converted fishing boat, moored on the River Ouse very close to Sanderson's home. Jardine was not on the boat and, after several abortive visits, Sanderson left the gun and the tapes underneath a wooden hut close to the boat. (Jardine was found dead some weeks later.)

On Saturday 14 February Sanderson was contacted by two officials. One of them introduced himself as his new CCC contact, the new Demeter. They told Sanderson that the issue was the arms stored at Sanderson's farm buildings in Boston Spa. Sanderson's visitors also wanted Gricewith's tapes – their knowledge of the tapes suggests that Gricewith was being surveilled. They advised him to contact his lawyer as he would be questioned by the police.

The arms were subsequently removed and stored on a farm at Burley in Wharfedale, a few miles from Sanderson's premises in Boston Spa. They were found there some years later.⁶⁹

The next day Sanderson heard that the police were searching for Malcolm Tyerman, who had sold him the handgun. Tyerman was arrested on the 15th February and made false statements implicating Sanderson in an armed robbery with Gricewith.



Paul Guest



David Gricewith

Paul Guest, who had been with Gricewith on the operation to shoot Sgt Speed, went to the police on 17th February, four days

⁶⁸ *The Journal* (Newcastle) 23 July 1988

⁶⁹ See Appendix 7.

after Gricewith's death. Gricewith and Guest had been friends as well as colleagues and had worked together as bouncers at a club in York.

Sanderson presumes that on learning of Gricewith's death, Guest had contacted his CCC superior, Demeter, or was contacted by him. This was a crisis: investigation of Gricewith might reveal the arms operations and/or the deliberate targeting of Sgt. Speed. The state had a problem: how to explain Gricewith's death in such a way as to exclude his CCC and arms-collecting activities. It seems very likely that the idea of accounting for Gricewith's activities with stories of armed robbery was agreed by senior military people over the weekend of the 14th and 15th February. (It is difficult to think of another plausible story which would have explained the shooting of two policemen.) At any rate, the robbery gang story emerged after Guest's talks with the police. Eventually over a decade's worth of robberies were attributed to this fictitious gang.⁷⁰ And this gelled with the experience of the police in Middlesbrough: engaged in an operation against armed robbers of cash deliveries to supermarkets, officers chased an armed man who had been in a supermarket car park. It was hardly a surprise that they assumed Gricewith to be a robber.

Before the discovery of Gricewith, the West Yorkshire Police believed that the shooting of Speed and twelve years of armed robberies in the area were the responsibility of a gang led by Anthony Kelly, an Irishman, who was in prison in the Irish Republic for the kidnapping of a Guinness heiress at the time of Gricewith's death. The Kelly link was mentioned in early press reporting of the Speed killing.⁷¹ Judith Cook tells us that 'By the summer of 1985 police had prepared a thousand-page dossier on Kelly for the Director of Public Prosecutions'.⁷² All that work was ditched in favour of the fiction that Gricewith was a member of a gang of violent criminals who were responsible for all of it – reinforcing the cover story that it was by chance that Speed was the policeman who had been killed.

The second problem was Peter Sanderson. Although he had no direct evidence relating to the shooting of Speed, he had Gricewith's tape-recordings and he knew about his arms collecting and other CCC activities. Guest had not been charged when he first contacted the police – but he was the second source needed by police to get a warrant to arrest and charge Sanderson, who

⁷⁰ See Appendix 13.

⁷¹ For example, 'Police Murder Link' in the *Dundee Courier* of 23 February 1987, ended 'West Yorkshire police . . . still want to interview John Kelly and John Cunningham, both in jail in the Irish Republic, about the killing of Speed'.

⁷² Cook (see note 47) p. 146.

had already been named by Tyerman. None of Guest's statements to the police has been made public.

The third problem was Paul Guest. After being at large for 10 days after he went to see the police, Guest was charged with murder and was on remand for a year. But the charge was dropped before his trial. The judge ruled that the police treatment of him had been illegal: he'd been denied access to a solicitor and nothing had been recorded. But he was wrongfully convicted of conspiracy to rob and got seven years, of which he did about half.

On the 18th February 1987, at 6.15 am, armed police raided Sanderson's house, arrested Sanderson and took him, his wife Louise (an administrator at the University of York), their 15 year-old son, Che (and the family dog) in separate cars to York police station and then onto Stockton-on-Tees. In effect all three were arrested.

Sanderson was stripped naked and underwent a hostile interrogation by police officers McSorley and Miller in a damp, cold room. McSorley had been a member of the West Midlands Serious Crime Squad which specialised in framing people and getting false confessions. It was disbanded in 1989 after its activities came to light.⁷³ The interrogation was overseen by Detective Chief Superintendent Conboy of West Yorkshire police and DCS Basham of Cleveland police who were in the next room. Conboy was leading the inquiry into the shooting of Sgt. Speed.

They wanted to know the whereabouts of Gricewith's gun and the tapes. Sanderson thinks he was drugged, given something in the water he was drinking. And after eight hours of questioning, threats to prosecute his wife for conspiracy and put his son into care, Sanderson signed a confession that he had committed a robbery a decade earlier with David Gricewith. He signed this thinking it didn't matter: he had been casually asked about this event at the time and his father-in-law and brother-in-law had provided him with an alibi for his whereabouts when the robbery took place. And by 'confessing' he hoped to secure the release of his wife and son who were being held by the police. The police were content: they now had enough for a holding charge. As soon as he signed the confession his wife and son were freed by the police and he was given a dirty blanket to wear.

Then it was the turn of the Army's Special Investigation Branch. They also wanted to know where he had stashed Gricewith's gun and the tapes. After

⁷³ See, for example, <<http://www.mojuk.org.uk/MOJUK%202013/WMSCS-Table.htm>> and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Midlands_Serious_Crime_Squad>.

four hours of even more hostile interrogation, including being forced to stand in stress positions and having a bucket of cold water poured over him, he told them where they could find Gricewith's gun and tapes.

During these hours of interrogation there was no solicitor present, no witnesses and nothing was recorded.

Rearrested

At a hearing in Stockton on the 23rd February he was rearrested by the West Yorkshire police in the court building and driven to York. The next day he was taken back to his house. It had been searched and all his financial documents had been removed. He was taken to his local bank, his chequebook and cheque card were returned to him and he was allowed to withdraw the maximum – it was £500 then – to give to his wife. This visit is not in the custody record, which he has, and was in breach of police rules.⁷⁴ Sanderson calls this the carrot after the sticks; the police called it an act of 'good faith'. The next day he was taken to Leeds.

Under further interrogation, under stress, possibly under the influence of drugs, with threats by the police to charge his wife and frame his oldest son, he signed blank sheets of paper, on which his 'confessions' were later typed by the police. He was also persuaded to sign a confession that he had been with Gricewith when Speed was shot.⁷⁵ This proved embarrassing for the police when Paul Guest subsequently told the police that he was the second man at the scene. In breach of the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE), at none of these interrogations were recordings made; there were no independent witnesses. His solicitor calculated that in the course of his initial 13 days in custody, he was interrogated for 77 hours.

In prison

Awaiting trial, he was kept on remand for 15 months in solitary confinement, mostly in the psychiatric wing of Durham prison but with a couple of months in the punishment block, known to the inmates as GOD – good order and discipline.⁷⁶ He was treated as Category A, 'exceptional risk', and kept on drugs – 'the liquid cosh'. Attempts by the governor to get him reclassified and moved were blocked.⁷⁷ He appears to have been kept in custody until the trial of Paul Guest was completed. Sanderson thinks that it was done in this

⁷⁴ The withdrawal was confirmed by a bank employee. See Appendix 21.

⁷⁵ See Appendix 12.

⁷⁶ See Appendix 15 for prison report on Sanderson's condition at the time.

⁷⁷ See Appendix 18.

sequence in the hope that he would be encouraged by Guest's relatively lenient treatment to believe he would be treated similarly.⁷⁸

The trial in Middlesbrough Crown Court, which began in April 1988, lasted 5 weeks. Originally there were 23 charges. One of them was possessing a gun with the intention of endangering the life of David Gricewith! The charges were reduced to 13 and finally to 9. He pleaded not guilty to all of them and the trial basically came down to his word against that of the police. Plus they had his 'confessions'. Some of the offences dated back over a decade. For one of them, a 1977 charge of robbery, he had been casually looked at by the police at the time. His father-in-law and brother-in-law had alibied him but the police said they had destroyed the paperwork. The judge in the case, Mr Justice Stroyne, known as 'the policeman's friend', ruled that it didn't matter that the police evidence had been acquired in breach of the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) guidelines.⁷⁹

Sanderson chose not to refer to any of his covert activities at his trial. He had agreed to this with his superiors. On the one hand they threatened him with the Official Secrets Act were he to do so. On the other hand they played down the seriousness of his situation: if he was convicted, it would be a short sentence; if it was a long sentence he wouldn't have to serve it all; and he would be compensated.

He was in Durham gaol for two and a half years as a Category A prisoner, while on remand and after conviction. He was transferred to top security Full Sutton prison in August 1989.

Sanderson had not lodged an appeal immediately after his conviction because he simply had no money to pay lawyers to do so. When he tried to get permission to lodge an appeal outside the twenty eight day limit after the trial for doing so, this was refused.

As well as being imprisoned he was made criminally bankrupt and lost everything he had: half the value of his house (his wife retained half), the house he was building, his business, shares and vehicles.

With Sanderson locked-up, his wife began trying to get interest from the media. She contacted newspapers,⁸⁰ BBC's Rough Justice and Granada's World in Action without success. But she knew nothing of Sanderson's covert military activities and was merely writing on his instruction.

⁷⁸ See Appendix 16.

⁷⁹ See Appendix 3. In the case of Paul Guest, charged with the murder of Sgt. Speed, the judge ruled that the evidence acquired by the police which similarly breached those guidelines was inadmissible and the charge was dropped.

⁸⁰ See Appendix 11 for an example.

She also began a campaign to sue the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police for her wrongful arrest. In 1992 she was awarded a full legal aid certificate – i.e. unlimited funds – to pay for the action.⁸¹ But when the hearing began, the judge in the case issued a Public Interest Immunity (PII) certificate halting the process.⁸² Sanderson thinks this was done because if his wife had won her case it would have undermined his conviction: he had ‘confessed’ to protect her from hostile action by the police. The reasons given by the judge had little bearing on Mrs Sanderson’s claim that she was wrongfully arrested.⁸³

In Full Sutton prison Malcolm Tyerman was on the same wing as Sanderson. Even though he had pleaded guilty to everything he was charged with (none of which he had committed), Tyerman had received a 16 year sentence. But Tyerman was never asked to give evidence in court against anyone. He was not trusted to be convincing. Tyerman became a born again Christian and told the Church of England padre at Full Sutton that he had made it all up. He wrote a statement recanting it all in March 1990. Sanderson has a copy of the handwritten version. But because Tyerman was perceived as a flake, nothing he said was taken seriously.

Tyerman was last heard of at the Rampton psychiatric prison where Gary Murray interviewed him:⁸⁴

‘ . . . he remembered the events leading up to his conviction for armed robbery. He also was able to describe briefly events that he insisted were untruthfully presented or exaggerated by the prosecution, and he claimed that he was persuaded to admit to offences he and his associates had not committed. When questioned about the accidental shooting of team member 3 [Gricewith] by his own gun, he replied “That’s not true, the police shot him to keep him quiet”.’⁸⁵

In May 1991, the arms which had been moved from Sanderson’s business premises immediately after Gricewith’s death to another farm at Burley in Wharfedale, were discovered by that farm’s tenant.⁸⁶ Other arms finds

⁸¹ At that time a full legal aid certificate was only awarded for a civil action when a panel of three QCs, part of the Legal Aid Board, agreed that there was at least an 85% chance of the action’s success.

⁸² The best documented use of PIIs to prevent/frustrate legal actions was in the case of Asil Nadir. See Martin Tancock, ‘SECRET JUSTICE : Public Interest Immunity Certificates (PIICs) and their use in the Asil Nadir trials’ in *Lobster* 66 at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster66/lob66-secret-justice-asil-nadir.pdf>>.

⁸³ See Appendix 4.

⁸⁴ Following the police’s script of the robbery gang led by Sanderson, Tyerman, unnamed, was ‘team member 2’. Sanderson was ‘team member 1’.

⁸⁵ Gary Murray, *Enemies of the State* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1993) p. 207.

⁸⁶ See Appendix 7.

followed.⁸⁷

Major Drew of the Army's Special Investigation Branch, with a policeman named Rhodes, came to see Sanderson in the first week of December 1991. They were interested in the weapons found at Burley in Wharfedale. Sanderson knew nothing: he had been out of the loop for five years.

No parole

Sanderson was recategorised from B to category C that month. But would he get parole after 5 years in early 1992? He had been a model prisoner and could expect excellent reports from the prison governors he had met. However to get parole you have to admit your guilt and atone and this he would not do. In November 1991 he got a letter – a couple of months premature – saying he wouldn't get parole. The same month he received a letter refusing him the chance to appeal against his conviction. Thus far he had not mentioned his activities with CCC. He had signed the Official Secrets Act and took that seriously. At these decisions Sanderson changed tack. He realised that all the talk by the men in suits of him getting released was false. Sanderson's wife wrote to Frank Cook MP, who brought in Chris Mullin MP and the MP for York, Hugh Bayley. Frank Cook first met Sanderson's wife, then met Sanderson himself and they began talking about the background to his conviction.

Sanderson was an assistant in the prison education department. Among the people Sanderson was helping with Open University work were IRA prisoners. One of them suggested he talk to Peter Smith who was tutoring at the prison. Sanderson began talking to and corresponding with Smith through his solicitor in 1990. Frank Cook MP had also talked to Smith about Sanderson. Finally, in 1991, with Peter Smith he wrote the first account of the events described in this essay. This was witnessed and signed by Labour MPs Frank Cook and Chris Mullin in February 1992, five years after his conviction.⁸⁸

Apparently in response to the involvement of the Labour MPs, the state embroiled him in the controversy surrounding the death of Hilda Murrell. A friend of Murrell's, Katriona (Trina) Guthrie, was a prison visitor at North Sea Camp prison, in Lincolnshire. Finbar Kelly, a drug dealer who had been in Full Sutton prison with Sanderson, had been transferred via Wellingborough to North Sea Camp prison. There he met Trina Guthrie and fed her the story about a four-strong robbery gang led by . . . Peter Sanderson, alleging that this gang had also murdered Murrell.⁸⁹ In her affidavit of June 1992 Guthrie

⁸⁷ See Appendix 10.

⁸⁸ See Appendix 8.

⁸⁹ Guthrie's affidavit, based on Kelly, was in Gary Murray, (see note 85) pp. 199-203 and is on-line at <<https://hildamurrell.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/trina-affidavit1.pdf>>.

says her contact with the unnamed inmate (Kelly) began in November 1991. With the excuse offered by Trina Guthrie's affidavit – in reality nothing more than prison gossip, at best – the police reopened the inquiry into the death of Hilda Murrell, investigating – or pretending to investigate – the robbery gang story fed to Guthrie by Kelly.⁹⁰ As long as this inquiry was (theoretically) on-going Sanderson's chances of getting parole were nil: a reference in his file to police interest in an on-going inquiry would prevent it.

In March 1992 Sanderson was visited by more men in suits. They wanted his wife to drop her legal action for wrongful arrest, telling him that if she did so all would be well, he would get out soon. But the letter from the parole board five months earlier, denying him parole, had disillusioned him. MPs Cook and Bayley began trying to find out who the men in suits were.⁹¹ Why was a convicted armed robber being questioned by these men? The prison governor first denied they had visited, then claimed he'd lost the paperwork, and finally said they were from Manchester police. Manchester police denied it was them. This correspondence dragged on for more than 2 years, beyond Sanderson's move to Leyhill prison.

In Full Sutton he had been reclassified as a category D prisoner – the lowest risk category – in August 1992. Sanderson was then offered a transfer to Leyhill open prison but opted to stay at Full Sutton until after Christmas. He was working with a prison organisation called the Listeners – something like the Samaritans – and didn't want to abandon a couple of the prisoners he was helping before getting them through the Christmas period.

He was transferred to Leyhill in Gloucestershire, January 1993. Leyhill is an open prison and the inmates are allowed out on day release.

A new inquiry into the Murrell case was announced in June 1993, apparently prompted by Gary Murray's book⁹² which reproduced Trina Guthrie's

affidavit. Chief Inspector Peter Herbert, who was in charge of that inquiry, came to interview Sanderson in Leyhill. He agreed that the Guthrie/Murray story was nonsense and told him the inquiry would terminate if Sanderson would admit he had invented the robbery gang story. This he declined to do.⁹³

⁹⁰ This story was recycled in Judith Cook (see note 47). Cook writes on p. 151 that Sanderson was 'charged with thirteen offences' – which is false; and 'pleaded guilty to twelve' – which is also false. He pleaded 'not guilty' to all the 9 charges laid against him.

⁹¹ See Appendix 9.

⁹² See note 85.

⁹³ Sanderson as inventor of the robbery gang link to the Murrell case is also in a Judith Cook piece which is on-line. See <<https://tinyurl.com/y427etyv>> or

Sanderson's application for parole was refused in 1993 and again in 1994. After which the prison governor, Mr Beetlestone, told Sanderson he would appeal on his behalf. Early in 1995 he was told he would be getting out before Easter. Chief Inspector Rhodes, who had visited Sanderson in prison with Major Drew of the Army's Special Investigation Branch, became his handler when he left prison. Rhodes introduced himself as the new Demeter. There was talk of compensation for his years in prison. Eventually he received £27,500 – a derisory amount for 8 years in jail. How did they pay him? He was given a birth certificate in the name of William Walton. With this he obtained a new passport. He then went to the Isle of Man and opened an account there at Barclays under the Walton name. He received a bank card and was able to withdraw the money when needed.

He tried to make a living in Bristol in property development, was under capitalised, didn't make enough money and decided to go back to York. There he was steered by his handler, Chief Inspector Rhodes, to tender for the maintenance and security contract of an industrial site, Hessay, in York, formerly owned by the Ministry of Defence.⁹⁴ (Sanderson had known the last CO of the site, Capt. John Gilham.) He got the contract. On the site was a firing range used by the police firearms team. Sanderson managed it. To use their firing range, the police had to collect the key from a convicted armed robber! When this was all up and running he returned to the property business and began local contract work in the area on the side of the Hessay job.

And there, for the purposes of this essay, the story concludes.

Conclusions

What were the authorities trying to achieve by locking Sanderson away? Top of their list was bolstering the story of Gricewith-the-robber killing Sgt. Speed and injuring PC Thorpe. That Gricewith had done the shootings on the orders of his military superiors had to be buried. Also pressing for the powers-that-be was the fact that Sanderson's farm buildings at Boston Spa had been used to store weapons being collected by elements within the British military for the Protestant paramilitaries in Northern Ireland.⁹⁵ It certainly was not *official* UK

<<https://conwayhall.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ETHICAL-RECORD-NOVEMBER-1994.pdf>> p. 10.

⁹⁴ See Appendix 20.

⁹⁵ Sanderson was told by his superior 'Captain Holland' (Hodgkinson) that some of the arms were being collected by an alliance of serving and former members of the Parachute Regiment who called themselves Parabellum. (Hodgkinson was a Para and a member of Parabellum.) The group had formed after the 1979 Warrenpoint ambush of a group of Paras by the IRA which

government policy to arm the Protestant paramilitaries in the struggle with the IRA. However, since the British state had been covertly collaborating with the Loyalist paramilitaries from the early years of the conflict, that they also began covertly arming them will surprise no-one who has read about the war in Northern Ireland. And since Sanderson knew about all this he had to be discredited. Being wrongly convicted and imprisoned – as was done to Colin Wallace – would do the job.

The plan to smear the striking miners by having an act of terrorism attributed to them was preposterous and unnecessary: the miners had no chance of winning the strike. I remember reading about the so-called Ridley plan for coal⁹⁶ – Nicholas Ridley's 1978 document describing how to defeat the next miners' strike – in the early weeks of the strike and realising that the NUM would lose: the government had planned for it this time. But the strike dragged on, with enthusiastic support from the fringe left groups – the Socialist Workers Party, Militant Tendency *et al* – but reluctant support from the rest of the labour movement and Labour Party. Their support was half-hearted because the strike had been called without a ballot of NUM members and the British labour movement are nothing if not proceduralists. The strike didn't even have the support of the Communist Party of Great Britain.⁹⁷

But this is not how it seemed to the communist conspiracy theorists of the Resistance and Psychological Operations Committee. In the document he wrote while in prison, Sanderson gave an account of the RPCO's thinking at the time:

'By late October 1984, a critical stage had been reached in the Miners' Strike. Signs of international financial and moral support for the miners had emerged, alongside the danger of N.A.C.O.D.S. joining the NUM. October also saw moves to divide the union membership by cash payments and other inducements to return to work. On the last day of October the talks scheduled to take place between the parties at ACAS collapsed.

This was the day chosen to stage an outrage against a member of the police service. This murder was conceived as a means by which public opinion could be significantly influenced in favour of law and order and, by

killed 16 members of the regiment and two others. It was the biggest loss of life in the British Army since WW2. Hodgkinson was convicted of theft in 1991. See Appendix 6.

Other weapons were found in this period. See Appendix 10.

⁹⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ridley_Plan>

⁹⁷ MI5's own website tells us this. See <<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/the-threat-of-subversion>>.

inference, the Government itself, and away from sympathy for the striking miners, their families and ultimately their cause

The vilification of the two branch officials held on murder charges was seen as a method of spreading disaffection within the rank and file membership of the N.U.M., and other supporters, leading to splits between the moderate and militant factions, who hitherto had displayed remarkable resolve to continue strike action.'

So the UK did have a botched version of the 'strategy of tension' in operation in parts of Europe at the time.⁹⁸

Those who died in this episode were:

Police Constable D. Haigh (killed by Barry Prudom on 17 June 1982)
Mr G. Lockett (killed by Barry Prudom on 24 June 1982)
Police Sergeant D. Winter (killed by Barry Prudom on 28 June 1982)
Barry Prudom (killed [by the SAS?] on 4 July 1982)
Police Sergeant J. Speed (killed by David Gricewith on 31 October 1984)
David Gricewith (firearm incident 12 February 1987)
Peter Jardine (cause of death unknown, 4 May 1987).

Those injured were:

Police Constable K. Oliver (wounded by Barry Prudom 24 June 1982)
Mrs S. Lockett (wounded by Barry Prudom 24 June 1982)
Police Constable J. Thorpe (wounded by David Gricewith on 31 October 1984).

Those wrongfully convicted as part of the cover-up were:

Peter Sanderson (fifteen year sentence), Paul Guest (seven years), Adrienne Robinson (two years) and Malcolm Tyerman (sixteen years).

The Soviet Union, whose apparent threat to Britain justified all this, collapsed five years after the miners' strike.

⁹⁸ Most lethally in Italy and, less well known, in Belgium. On the latter, see for example, <https://wikispooks.com/wiki/Brabant_Massacres>.