

**BIRNBERG PEIRCE AND PARTNERS: PRESS RELEASE ON BEHALF OF WOMEN VICTIMS OF POLICE MISCONDUCT CONCERNING CPS DECISION NOT TO CHARGE ANY OFFICERS FROM MPS SPECIAL DEMONSTRATION SQUAD**  
**21 August 2014**

Eight women who were deceived into entering long term intimate sexual relationships with undercover officers have expressed their determination to continue their battle to expose the grave violations, combat the cover up and achieve justice and accountability, following the CPS decision today not to bring criminal charges.

One woman known as 'Laura' who provided a detailed statement to the police over three years ago about her relationship with Jim Boyling and his deception and abusive behaviour, has said she is considering seeking a review of the CPS decision. Other women within the group later met with officers from Operation Herne with a view to providing statements but withdrew from the process when they were told, in contrast to the investigation into Boyling, that the police would "Neither Deny Nor Confirm" whether the men they were in relationships with were undercover police officers.

'Laura' provided a detailed statement setting out how Jim Boyling, who was posing as an environmental activist, Jim Sutton, had convinced her he was a fellow spirit, using an arsenal of police resources and training to disguise his real identity and lure her into the relationship, subsequently having two children with him. She said today "They not only invaded my body, invaded my womb, they robbed my relationship to the world, my sense of safety, my sense of self, my ability to trust, years of my life and my children's childhoods." She added, "I entered this process not only for justice for myself and others, but to see an end to this practice now and in the future. We have not reached that point yet. I believe this practice is still continuing. If no officers are held to account, how can we have any confidence that it won't happen again and again"

Birnberg Peirce and Partners represent eight women who are seeking justice and accountability in respect of undercover officers who had long term intimate sexual relationships with undercover police officers. Five of those women had relationships with four officers who were operatives within the special demonstration squad.

The women recently achieved a partial victory in challenging the Met Police's claimed policy of Neither Confirm Nor Deny following a legal challenge which resulted in the court stating that the police could not sustain their position in respect of Jim Boyling and Bob Lambert-

An Amended Defence to civil proceedings very recently admitted that Boyling and Lambert did have the relationships that were alleged, but denied that these were "expressly authorised or tacitly acquiesced". It was suggested that these relationships were based on "genuine feelings of mutual attraction". But all the women say this response is utterly inappropriate and insulting. They say that their consent was undermined by the level of deception, not simply as to who these men were but as to the purpose of these relationships.

Operation Herne, in their second report published earlier this year, stated, "it would be inappropriate for such covertly deployed officers to engage in intimate sexual relationships with those they are employed to infiltrate and target. Such an activity can only be seen as an abject failure of deployment, a gross abuse of their role and as a police officer and an individual and organisational failing"

Harriet Wistrich, solicitor for the women stated, "in light of the very public acknowledgement of the "gross abuse of their role" it makes no sense to my clients that there can be no prosecution arising from the admitted activities of these police officers, particularly in the case where a credible complainant has already provided evidence to their inquiry. As usual, when it comes to prosecuting the police for criminal offences, there is a clear double standard. When a woman presenting as a man can be convicted of a sexual offence\* in an otherwise consensual sexual relationship why not a male police spy pretending to be an activist?"

The women all agree that "This isn't just lying about already having a wife (though all the officers did), this isn't even just about pretending to be the exact opposite of what they are. This is someone who is only in your life as a paid agent to undermine what matters most to you, a relationship controlled by an unseen committee of their superior officers. This is not informed consent. It is abuse."

\* *R v McNally* [2014] 2 WLR 200

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Note for editors/legal departments

\* 'Laura' and six of the eight women have anonymity orders and should not be identified