

terms of reference were given to PSDB as follows:

“In the light of the police requirement for improved means of handling information during inquiries after a major incident (e.g. murder or a major disaster) to examine the feasibility of using computerised information retrieval systems for this purpose and to report on the costs, likely benefits and other aspects of any such use.”

351. It was not until 1979 that a critical appraisal was undertaken to identify the requirement for a computerised major incident facility which could be fully evaluated. The objectives of this were:

- (i) to examine critically the possible area where benefits can be derived from computerisation of a major incident room
- (ii) to suggest how the computer system should be integrated with the Major Incident Room itself and how indexing should be performed by a computer”.

352. There was therefore little progress made during the intervening five year period. Apparently some useful work was done between 1974 and 1977 but then three senior scientists left the department and only one junior scientist remained to carry on with the project. There should have been a higher priority afforded this much needed development programme especially since departmental staff must have been well aware of the enormous difficulties then being experienced in the Ripper Major Incident Room. Finally, I think it worthwhile to add a caveat about innovating new computerised systems of police records and it is simply this; the Service, whilst endeavouring to progress in this computer age, should be constantly aware of the dangers of being persuaded to adopt an extremely sophisticated solution to a problem where such sophistication has to await the advent of technological advance.

#### **(ix) The murder of Jacqueline Hill**

353. As there was a great deal of criticism surrounding the police action immediately following the last murder in the series, namely that of Jacqueline Hill, I decided to deal with this as a separate issue .

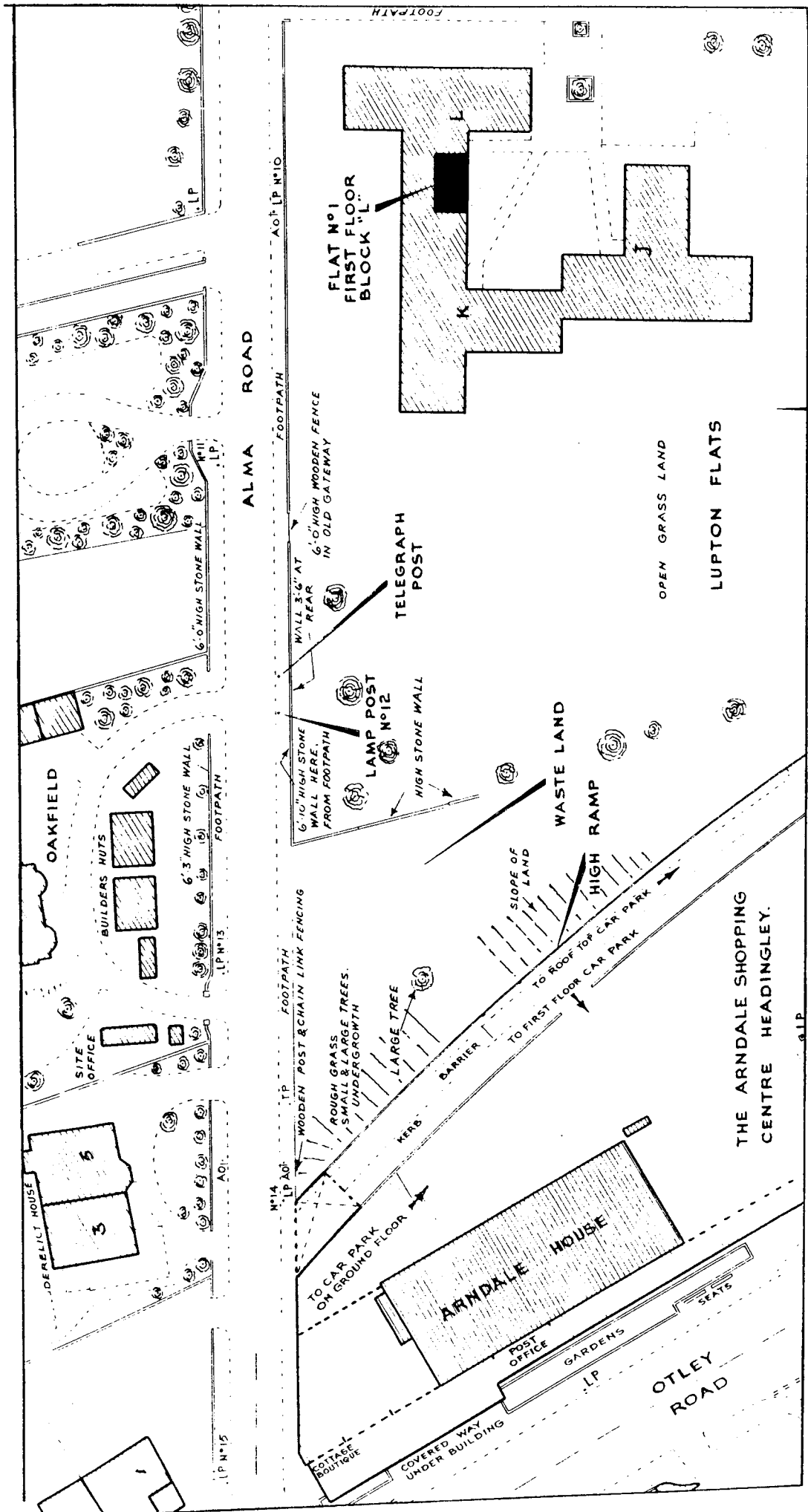
354. Between 9.15 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Monday 17th November 1980 Sutcliffe killed Miss Hill as she walked from a bus stop on the Otley Road towards the University Halls of Residence on Alma Road, Leeds (fig. 17). The initial attack took place on Alma Road opposite an unoccupied house called “Oakfield” and Miss Hill was then dragged on to waste ground at the rear of the Arndale Centre where additional injuries were inflicted to her body.

355. At 10 p.m. that night a 31 year old Iraqi student at Leeds University, Amin Moosa Hussain, was walking along Alma Road from Otley Road towards the Lupton Flats Halls of Residence when he found a lady’s handbag (fig. 18) on the footpath opposite “Oakfield”. Hussain found that the handbag contained a Barclaycard and a small amount of cash. He originally intended to take the handbag to the site office at Lupton Flats but when he found that the office was closed he took the handbag to the kitchen of the block where he lived and discussed it with two other students. As Hussain was not familiar with English customs and had an incomplete command of the language, one of the other students, Thomas Curtis, said that he would deal with the matter in the morning. Curtis intended to check with the site office the following morning and to report the matter to the police in the event of the bag being unclaimed.

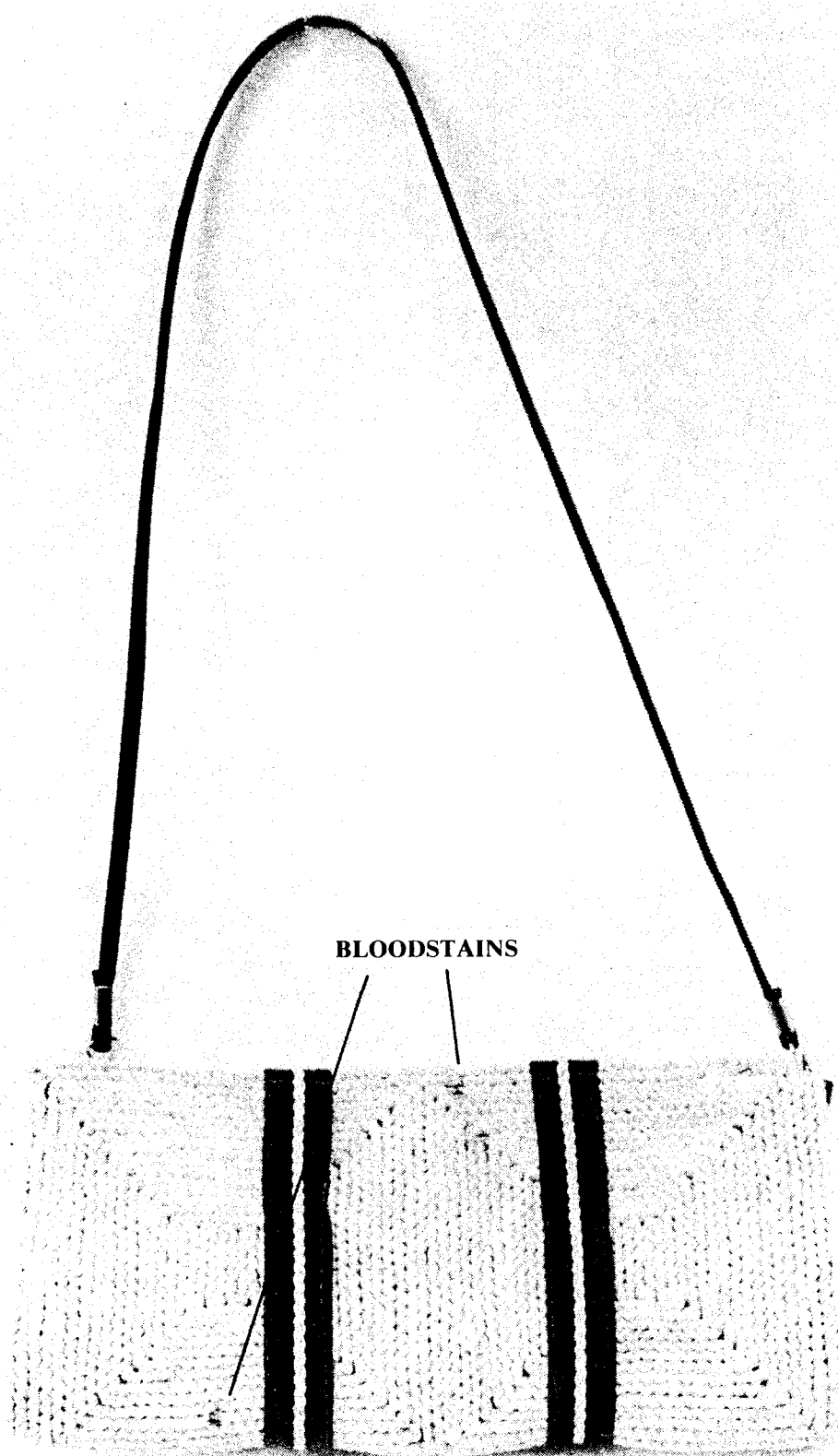
356. Shortly before midnight Hussain returned to the kitchen (where the handbag had been left) to prepare food. He examined the handbag again and for the first time noticed that there were spots of blood on it. Two other students then came into the kitchen and after Hussain had showed the handbag to them, one of them volunteered to take it to the “duty student”. There was then some further conversation in which a student with previous service as a Colonial police officer, Anthony Gosden, was involved. He suggested that in the light of the bloodspots on the handbag the police should be informed.

357. A 999 call was made and received in the West Yorkshire Eastern Area control room in Leeds

FIGURE 17 SCENE OF THE MURDER OF JACQUELINE HILL



**FIGURE 18**  
**JAQUELINE HILL'S HANDBAG**



where the message was automatically recorded and timed. The call was received at 12.03 a.m. The details of the telephone call were recorded on a message form under the heading "Found handbag with blood on it". The message was immediately referred to Ireland Wood Police Station.

358. At Ireland Wood the message was received by Policewoman Denham who made out a message form under the heading "Found handbag covered in blood". She then passed the information by radio to Constables Hardisty and Burrough who were working in an incident car. Incident car crews throughout West Yorkshire are required to take initial action in connection with 999 and other emergency calls and to hand on protracted incidents to other officers directed to the scene. The two constables arrived at Lupton Flats at 12 minutes past midnight. At about this time Sergeant Ward read the message form in the Ireland Wood control room and passed the remark "This will be the Ripper's 13th victim". He took no further action in connection with the message.

359. On their arrival at Lupton Flats Constables Hardisty and Burrough went to the kitchen in 'H' block where the handbag had been left and examined it. Hussain, who had to be sent for, explained where and how he had found it. He was then given a receipt for it. There was discussion between the students and the police officers and at some stage the suggestion was made that the owner of the handbag should be traced by means of a telephone call to the Barclaycard Centre with which one of the students was familiar, having worked there. The officers declined to act on this suggestion. Constable Hardisty accompanied one of the students to the site agent's office with a view to checking student records but they were unable to gain entry to it.

360. Whilst this was happening Constable Burrough had been shown where the handbag had been found and when he was joined by Constable Hardisty the two officers searched the grounds of "Oakfield" otherwise referred to as No. 7 Alma Road. The officers said that the reason for searching this area was that they were aware that in the murder of Marguerite Walls at Pudsey the body had been concealed in the grounds of a large house.

361. At 12.30 a.m. the officers were called on radio and instructed to deal with a burglar alarm call. They were engaged on various calls throughout the night and went off duty at 6.10 a.m. on the 18th November having arrived at the Police Station too late for the ordinary de-briefing parade. It is worth mentioning that between 10 p.m. on the 17th and 6 a.m. on the 18th November, 90 burglar alarm calls were received in Leeds of which only three were genuine.

362. Constable Burrough completed a found property report in connection with the handbag but omitted to mention that there were bloodstains on it. The bag was thus dealt with as found property and no special significance was attached to it.

363. The body of Jacqueline Hill was found at 10 a.m. on the waste ground behind the Arndale Centre almost opposite No. 7 Alma Road. Hussain reported the finding of the handbag to the incident post which was set up in Alma Road and Detective Superintendent Finlay who was dealing with the murder, obtained the handbag from Ireland Wood Police Station and subsequently identified it as the property of Jacqueline Hill.

364. Following an internal inquiry by the West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police into the handbag incident, Constables Hardisty and Burrough were seen by the Deputy Chief Constable and given advice about their handling of the case. Sergeant Ward was also seen by the Deputy Chief Constable and officially admonished for his failure to take effective action.

365. The crucial question arising from this incident is whether, had the two police officers attached more importance to it, and had they continued their search and found Jacqueline Hill's body, she might have still been alive and capable of being saved? The answer to this question must lie with the pathologist, Professor Gee.

366. As a result of the post mortem examination the Professor was able to say that the principal injuries sustained by Jacqueline Hill were four depressed fractures to the skull including one circular fracture  $1\frac{3}{8}$ " diameter depressed below the surrounding skull by approximately  $\frac{7}{16}$ ". In addition to the four fractures there was a rectangular hole  $\frac{3}{8}$ "  $\times$   $\frac{1}{8}$ " through the back of the right eye socket resulting from a stab wound through the eye. There was bruising and laceration on the

brain surface in consequence of the bone injuries. Jacqueline Hill had also been stabbed on the left side of the front of the chest, the wound extending into the body for a distance of 4½". There were numerous bruises and abrasions to the body. Professor Gee concluded that the cause of death was a combination of the head injuries and the two stab wounds. He believed that the head injuries played a major part but that the stab wound of the chest which caused collapse of a lung and bleeding into the chest cavity was a contributory cause. The Professor concluded that although the injuries were severe they might not have proved immediately fatal and that death probably occurred "somewhere during the middle of the night of the 17th/18th November 1980." Professor Gee has since narrowed his estimate of the time of death and now believes that it occurred around midnight. He believes that, had Miss Hill's body been found immediately after the attack, there was a possibility that she might have survived since her injuries were not much more serious than those inflicted on Maureen Long who survived a similar attack in 1977.

367. It is unfortunate that the Iraqi student, Hussain, did not make immediate contact with the police on finding the handbag. He cannot, however, be criticised in the light of his unfamiliarity with the country and its language and it is true to say that the only reason why the police were eventually called was that he noticed the blood spots when he re-examined the handbag in the kitchen. Unfortunately of course, events at the Lupton Flats involved a crucial passage of time so that by the time the 999 call was made for the police assistance the probability is that Jacqueline Hill was dead or at least very close to death. It is Professor Gee's conclusion that had the police officers continued their search and found Miss Hill's body at about 12.15 a.m. there was no likelihood that even if still alive, she could then have survived.

368. Even so, I consider that on the facts disclosed the police officers who dealt with this incident, which was at a time when the local police believed there were two separate undetected series of murders (the Ripper series and the Walls/Bandara crimes), did not display the standards of professionalism which the public is entitled to expect even in a city such as Leeds where the work of incident car crews can be extremely busy and demanding. Although the bloodstains on the handbag (visible in figure 18) are small, the officers appear to have treated the call as one which related to found property rather than to the possibility of a serious crime. Although they did search the grounds of "Oakfield", this search must have been fairly hurried since they were not at the scene for more than 18 minutes in all.

369. In practical terms, bearing in mind Professor Gee's conclusion that at that stage the chance of preserving Jacqueline Hill's life was remote, it is also true to say that the earlier finding of the body would have made almost no difference to the conduct of the police inquiry. Members of the public and particularly the relatives of victims of serious assaults are, however, entitled to expect that police officers, as agents of a caring service, will make a careful and professional assessment of the incidents to which they are called and take a correct line of action rather than the line of least resistance. It is unfortunate that, conditioned by publicity about the Panda system and personal radios, the general public has come to expect a higher level of "fire brigade" policing than the Service can sometimes properly provide. For the police officers who undertake incident car and Panda car patrols in cities like Leeds this means that they are frequently directed to incidents which do not call for immediate action and are sometimes initiated so that a person requesting assistance can avoid the trouble of making a personal visit to a Police Station. This unnaturally high expectation of police response has had the effect of conditioning police officers to regard the bulk of calls for assistance as trivial and routine rather than serious and demanding. I do not offer this as an excuse for the police failure during this case, but merely as a background against which that failure must be seen.

370. In retrospect it must be said that the principal result of this failure was the serious damage which it did to public confidence in police action generally. This loss of confidence was clearly felt within the West Yorkshire Force, especially having regard to the continuing criticism thereafter from all sections of the media. However, at least it led to the setting up of the external Advisory Team and a new command structure in the investigating team which, in turn, gave a much needed impetus to the inquiry.

#### **(x) Command, Control and Resources**

371. In the same way that homicides and other grave crimes frequently require the establishment of a Major Incident Room to service the unusually high level of inquiry activity, the investigation

of such crimes also calls for the use of different skills by the senior investigating officer. Following the example which I used in the section of my report which deals with the function of the Major Incident Room, the individual detective making inquiries about a case of burglary is well aware of the limits which his own availability and other commitments will impose on that inquiry. He does not, therefore, need to make any other calculations about the need for and allocation of resources but can concentrate on direct inquiries until he is either successful or he reaches the point where the inquiry is closed because no further leads are available which offer some prospect of success. For the senior investigating officer in a homicide or other serious crime inquiry, however, questions about resource requirement and availability and "management" under a variety of headings are likely to be very important. The investigation of homicide frequently requires the slenderest of clues to be pursued by quite large groups of police officers, as in the Ripper inquiry when 53,000 vehicles were to be seen in an attempt to identify the one which left the tracks at the scene of the Richardson murder. The management and control of such inquiries, particularly when they involve a series of similar crimes, calls for the use of a range of skills which are otherwise not frequently required and which, as a result, are not always well developed in senior police officers. The attributes traditionally required of a senior detective, for instance, have included professional expertise, a sound knowledge of criminal law and practice and a capacity for assembling evidence in a complicated criminal case into a file which is of a standard acceptable to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Quite clearly a number of additional attributes and skills are also required but over the years these have been pre-eminent as qualifications for advancement to senior detective level. The fact that a senior detective is well qualified in these terms does not automatically mean that he is a good manager in the widest sense or that he is conscious of the wide variety of management concepts which are relevant to a large inquiry. It is equally true of senior officers in uniform that the duties they normally have to perform do not require them to exercise the sort of management which is often required of senior industrial and commercial managers.

372. There has been a significant change in the management style of the British Police Service during the past decade. The change has been brought about by improved training and selection and by a gradual change in the attitudes of senior supervisors, away from the traditional and often autocratic style and towards a more thoughtful and democratic approach to leadership. Nevertheless, traditional attitudes often die hard and there remain within the Police Service senior detectives and senior uniformed officers who, because of the lack of training or of receptiveness to it, or because of lack of opportunities to practice management in the wider sense, are inadequately equipped to handle situations outside the ordinary day to day requirements of their practical positions. I shall touch upon this further when I discuss the training implications arising from my review later in the report.

373. To meet the needs of a crime inquiry like the Ripper investigation the senior investigating officer should, in addition to having the professional skills of the senior detective to which I referred earlier, be a skilled manager in industrial and commercial terms. The idea that a senior "Marks & Spencer" manager might have done a creditable job in the overall control of the Ripper inquiry conveniently overlooks a number of very important issues but nevertheless contains important grains of truth. The control of investigations into 13 murders and 7 serious assaults during a six year period clearly called for unusual leadership qualities and an understanding of such aspects of management as morale, motivation, delegation, communication, training, welfare, cost benefit analysis, etc. Even if the officer placed in command of the inquiry was not personally skilled in the use of such concepts he should have recognised their importance and ensured that his management team contained people who did understand and were able to use their skills in a practical way. The West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police is not without able men whose training and experience well qualifies them to fill supporting management posts of this sort within a major inquiry.

374. From the excellent opportunity we have had of reviewing the protracted police investigation in detail it is clear that there should have been appointed, to head the investigation, a senior investigating officer who could recognise the problems likely to flow from his decisions and use the skills available within the force to overcome them. A comparison can, for instance, be made between the launch of the sponsored publicity campaign on the letters and tape aspect and the launch of a new product by a commercial company. A commercial manager making plans for the launch of a new product would have to be assured that all his wholesale and retail trade outlets were fully stocked to meet the demand for the product before he put his major advertising

campaign into effect. Senior officers of the West Yorkshire force did not obtain such assurances about their capacity to meet the likely response before they allowed the £1 million publicity campaign to be mounted.

375. The senior detectives of West Yorkshire were and are probably no better and no worse than those in other forces. They were, however, not well equipped in management terms to control an inquiry of the size and scale which the Ripper inquiry proved to be. In particular they lacked the flexibility of mind which was required to identify failures in existing systems and to take rapid corrective action. The failures to identify and correct the problems of the Major Incident Room and the damage which was being done to the inquiry by the absence of proper media relations are cases in point.

376. There were other command and control problems which stemmed from this lack of ability in the sphere of management. So far as the leadership of the inquiry is concerned and starting at the highest level, the decision to appoint a different senior investigating officer for each new crime in the series can now be seen to have been unwise. The intention was to bring new minds to focus on crimes in the series in an attempt to ensure that no possibility was overlooked. In practice the proliferation of senior investigating officers added to the complexity of the situation and, as Commander Nevill correctly identified, resulted in the "tendency for officers not to take executive decisions for fear (and this is putting it bluntly) of treading on the toes of other officers of equivalent rank who had previously been involved in the investigation". Commander Nevill recommended the appointment of a single detective chief superintendent to be in overall charge of the inquiry and to be divorced from any other responsibilities within the force. Such an appointment would not have precluded the appointment of an incident officer to control the basic inquiry functions of each new crime but would have done much to have ensured continuity of approach. The decision that Assistant Chief Constable Oldfield should, in addition to his routine responsibilities, take charge of the overall inquiry and at the same time act as senior inquiry officer in the MacDonald murder was also a mistake. It would have been perfectly proper for Mr. Oldfield to have assumed responsibility for the whole series but to attempt to take personal command of routine investigations of the MacDonald, Long, Rytka and Whitaker cases was clearly inconsistent with his wider responsibilities. Once committed to these tasks Mr. Oldfield's working days started in the morning in his office in Wakefield where he dealt with his ordinary responsibilities as Assistant Chief Constable (Crime) which involved the supervision of all C.I.D. operations within the force area. He would then often travel to the Incident Room covering the current murder, frequently returning to his Wakefield office late at night to clear his paperwork. Once the amalgamated Incident Room at Millgarth had been opened after the Rytka murder he also visited it during the day so that his return to his Wakefield office was still further delayed. That this situation led to the breakdown of Mr. Oldfield's health is not at all surprising and the fact that he was allowed to work to this extent is clearly a reflection, not only on his own judgement, but on that of his Chief Constable who should have seen that his senior detective was overloaded and have made arrangements for him to be relieved of his routine responsibilities. The appointment of an Acting Assistant Chief Constable would not have caused any difficulty in a force of West Yorkshire's size and indeed, took place in connection with the appointment of the external Advisory Team in November, 1980.

377. Equally important in connection with leadership was the Chief Constable's failure to take positive action when Mr. Oldfield had to stop work as a result of illness. An Acting Assistant Chief Constable should have been appointed at that stage and clear directions should have been given about ultimate responsibility for the Ripper inquiry. In practice, Detective Chief Superintendent Hobson, who was Mr. Oldfield's deputy, took over the responsibility for C.I.D. matters within the force and, by implication, for the Ripper inquiry. However, Mr. Oldfield had undoubtedly suggested to the Chief Constable that Detective Superintendent Holland should take charge of the Ripper inquiry and this, in effect, is what happened, at least until the appointment of Chief Superintendent Gilrain as the investigating officer for the Leach murder. It was then clearly inconsistent that a Chief Superintendent should be in charge of an individual murder whilst a Superintendent was in charge of the whole series and this situation was remedied on the 20th December 1979 when Chief Superintendent Gilrain was placed in overall command of the Ripper series with Superintendent Holland as his deputy. Although I have not been able to clarify the situation fully, there is an inference that during the period between the 6th August 1979 when Mr. Oldfield started his period of sick leave and the 20th December 1979 when Chief Superintendent

Gilrain was formally placed in charge of the Ripper series, Mr. Oldfield continued to direct the Ripper inquiry from his sick-bed using Superintendent Holland as his intermediary. This was clearly most unsatisfactory and it is perhaps not surprising that it was during this period that the all important "Special Notice" authorising elimination on accent and blood group was prepared and issued to all forces on Superintendent Holland's authority. Chief Superintendent Gilrain's early attempts to qualify the categoric authority for elimination demonstrate quite clearly that although he was the senior investigating officer of the most recent murder, he was not consulted about the "Special Notice" in advance of the publication of it.

378. Once the Ripper crimes had been identified as a series situation then the appointment of a senior investigating officer for the whole series with no other responsibilities outside the co-ordinated investigation would clearly have been advantageous. Such an officer would still have needed an unusual combination of management skills, or the appreciation of the need for them and willingness to use them in other people, but would have had a better chance of maintaining control of the inquiry than did Mr. Oldfield or those who deputised for him whilst he was on sick leave.

379. The second major failure in the management of the inquiry as a whole was that no proper arrangements were made for the delegation of authority to subordinate commanders to deal with different facets of it. Commander Nevill again identified this weakness during his visit when he referred to the fact that individual senior investigating officers and the officer in charge of the investigation as a whole were having to read a great deal of trivial material which did not require their level of skill and understanding. In his report to the Chief Constable he said, "It was disturbing to find that the officer in charge of the case was having to deal with a vast amount of non-relevant paper, much of which we thought could have been settled at a much lower level of command. The present system imposes an enormous workload on such an officer and we would, therefore, propose that there should be established a filter system at a lower level in order that only relevant statements, actions and letters are personally seen by the investigating officer." This lack of arrangement for formal delegation of subordinate functions meant that a number of senior officers were overworked whilst some of their subordinates were underworked and under-utilised in terms of authority and responsibility. Although it may sound incongruous, the health and well-being of an officer in charge of such an onerous investigation demanded that he should take at least one day off each week to enable him to "recharge his batteries" and maintain himself in good physical and mental condition. Although a senior officer in such a position should have expected to work hard, the requirement that he should regularly work a 12 or 16 hour day could not be justified on a long term basis. Failure to make arrangements for the delegation of subordinate inquiries such as the "Tracking Inquiry", the "Cross Area Sighting" inquiry and the "Letters and Tape" inquiry meant that the initiative of junior officers was often stifled and the progress of the inquiry slowed up because of the need for the senior investigating officer to be kept permanently in touch with developments. The "Tracking Inquiry", for instance, was clearly a case which could have been delegated to a competent detective superintendent or detective chief inspector to run in its entirety, only referring to the senior investigating officer when he had positive information to report. Not only was this not done but arrangements for the control of the inquiry (and others similar to it) did not provide the senior investigating officer with information about its progress in terms of the number of actions completed in comparison with the total number which the inquiry involved. Ideally the senior investigating officer would not have required such detail but should have been given brief progress reports by the officer to whom the inquiry had been delegated, with an estimated completion date and an indication of future manpower requirements. Such action was not taken and the senior investigating officer attempted to control and direct the subordinate inquiries at the same time as he handled the important aspects of more recent crimes. We should not be surprised therefore that the inquiries were inconclusive and that they were often abandoned before conclusion and without proper consideration of their potential.

380. The motivation of detectives as individuals and in groups clearly posed problems as the inquiry developed. The disciplinary action taken against a number of detectives who concocted false statements during one of the motor car inquiries rather than continue with the interminable round of interviews of vehicle owners is a clear indication that both motivation and morale had failed to attract the management attention which they so obviously required. It is unlikely that the detectives who were disciplined were by nature lazy or dishonest and it would seem that their malpractice was prompted by a lack of confidence in the tasks they were undertaking. As I have mentioned earlier, the commencement of an inquiry in which 53,000 vehicles were to be examined



in the hope that one would bear a combination of tyres which could be linked with a scene of crime was a daunting prospect. It is now known that the target figure might have been appreciably reduced by the application of more skilful analysis but the fact that the inquiry was attempted without due regard to the motivation and morale problems which it was likely to involve is a further indication of lack of consciousness of management and leadership concepts within the West Yorkshire senior detectives. Protracted vehicle inquiries involving thousands of actions clearly called for the very highest standards of briefing and debriefing and for the adoption of measures calculated to promote and maintain morale within the inquiry teams. A senior inquiry officer who was not bogged down in the detail of the case might, for instance, have personally joined in the actual conduct of these inquiries from time to time as a demonstration to his officers of their importance and his willingness to expose himself to the monotony with which they were involved. He would certainly have given frequent encouragement to his teams and emphasised that the successful conclusion of this aspect of the operation was undoubtedly important. There is no evidence that such measures were taken in West Yorkshire and the failure of a number of potentially profitable lines of inquiry might well have been due to the poor morale and motivation of inquiry teams. There is evidence that at the start of some of the special lines of inquiry, such as the joint £5 note operation, inquiry teams were given imaginative briefings on all aspects of the operation. It would seem, however, from discussions we have had with various personnel that such briefings were the exception rather than the rule. In fairness, it should be borne in mind that the inquiry as a whole lasted for six years and individual lines of inquiry were running for months rather than days or weeks. Whilst it is relatively easy to maintain a very high level of morale and commitment for a short term operation it is very much more difficult to maintain it over a protracted period, more particularly when there is no evidence that any of the efforts which are being made are proving successful. The morale of members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary during the worst period of sectarian violence when the force was clearly failing in its primary duty to protect life and property is a case in point. Only when manpower, organisation, systems and techniques had developed to the extent that significant numbers of terrorists could be arrested and prosecuted to conviction did morale return to an acceptable level. The available evidence supports the contention that the morale of any group depends upon the extent to which the group identifies the task to which it is committed as valid and likely to be productive and the extent to which they believe that between them they have the skill, experience and resources to bring the task to a successful conclusion. This proposition was clearly not met in many aspects of the Ripper inquiry.

381. Another important aspect of the management of the Ripper case was the failure to plan the introduction of each new line of inquiry. This is the area where the "Marks & Spencer" manager would probably have been at an advantage. Lack of familiarity with profit and loss accounting and of balancing needs with resources clearly led West Yorkshire's senior officers to embark on new lines of inquiry without making any valid assessment of their likely impact on the overall situation. In the vehicle "Tracking Inquiry", for instance, it would clearly have been advantageous for a detailed analysis to be made of the manpower requirement and probable duration of the inquiry in the light of the fact that 53,000 vehicles had to be traced. This assessment, providing a conclusion in terms of man/weeks, months or years could then have been used as a basis for calculating the inquiry strength required to complete the inquiry within a realistic time scale bearing in mind the decline in motivation and morale which was likely to occur if the inquiry were allowed to continue for too long a period. There can be a tendency for officers investigating a case of homicide to adopt a line of inquiry in spite of its manpower implications, in the knowledge of the fact that although they might incur public criticism for not pursuing an inquiry which held even a remote prospect of success they would be unlikely to be criticised for mounting an inquiry which proved to be unsuccessful. A probable example of this is the fact that the West Yorkshire police decided to go public on the letters and tape at a time when all the outside inquiry teams attached to the Major Incident Room had been withdrawn to deal with the public response to the Whitaker murder. It was clearly pointless to launch publicly a new line of inquiry which would inevitably produce a large number of actions in the Major Incident Room at a time when existing actions were not being processed because there was no one to deal with them. It is equally true that the "Mark II Cortina" inquiry launched after the attack on Long and the "Farina" inquiry started after the murder of Rytka could only be staffed if other existing lines of inquiry were abandoned or curtailed. The conflict between various lines of inquiry was a factor which jeopardised some of those which, with hindsight, clearly held the best prospects of success. The fact that Sutcliffe was not interviewed until 29th July 1979 in connection with the important "Triple Area Sighting" of his motor car in February of that year is a case in point.

382. The decision to mount major lines of inquiry within a police investigation of a serious crime is clearly a case for proper planning, assessment of impact, reporting and control and can probably best be dealt with by delegating the function to a competent officer once the decision has been taken to go ahead. The abrupt curtailment of an agreed line of inquiry such as the "Tracking Inquiry" (at a time when Sutcliffe had not been seen) clearly reflects that at the time the decision was taken to go ahead, senior officers had little confidence that there was a worthwhile prospect of success. Had this not been the case the inquiry must have been continued until all 53,000 vehicles had been seen.

383. The final important aspect affecting command and control of the inquiry is that there were notable failures to make proper arrangements for the welfare of the officers who were involved. The two most telling examples involve both of the jointly mounted £5 note inquiries. In Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the first £5 note inquiry, for example, the Greater Manchester officers who were involved travelled daily from the Greater Manchester area to West Yorkshire where they worked a 12 hour day on the inquiry. This daily travelling commitment during the winter must have had some influence on the attitudes of the officers who were involved. The evidence which is available suggests that commitment can be maintained, even in conditions of some hardship, for a relatively short period when the prospects of success are considered to be high. The longer an inquiry continues, however, the more important matters of welfare become in the eyes of those who are involved so that, in the absence of proper welfare arrangements, neutral feelings may degenerate to active dissatisfaction and hostility. The situation was only slightly improved when the all important interviews with the 241 people in the second £5 note inquiry were started. During this inquiry the officers from Greater Manchester were accommodated in lodgings in Wakefield which were not up to the usual standard and were also required to provide their own evening meals. Given the importance of the inquiry, even as recognised at the time and without the benefit of hindsight (that one of the 241 people had been the initial recipient of the Jordan £5 note), nothing should have been spared to ensure that it was successful. All senior detectives have to contemplate that the strength of their efforts is that of the weakest link in their organisation so that a whole inquiry may be jeopardised by the lack of ability and unhelpful attitude of a single detective involved in it. Although the second £5 note inquiry can be said to have failed more because of the failure of the Millgarth Incident Room to record Sutcliffe's previous involvement in the case than for any other cause, the attitudes of the officers who interviewed him, particularly when some previous connection was discovered, were not sufficiently positive to result in a much deeper probe and possibly his arrest. There were, of course, a number of factors (including the letter and tape publicity) which undoubtedly affected the attitudes of officers engaged in the investigation, but the occasional lack of attention to welfare may well have added to the general malaise at important times.

384. The inevitable conclusion about the command and control of the overall operation is that at the individual level the vast majority of officers involved in the Ripper investigation worked diligently and conscientiously to detect the crimes. Relatives of some of the victims have commented on this outstanding commitment and said how determined the officers dealing with their particular case were to bring the criminal to justice as quickly as possible. What was lacking was not individual application, some of which led to illness and domestic disharmony, but the management capacity which would have ensured that the workload was distributed so as to capitalise on the individual skills of as many officers as possible and so that no inquiry was attempted in the absence of the resources which would have enabled it to be brought to a conclusion within a satisfactory timescale. This judgement, however, needs to be viewed in line with the unprecedented nature of the protracted Ripper investigation as illustrated, for example, by the schedule of manpower commitment by the West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police alone at fig. 19 and the statistics of inquiry involvement within West Yorkshire and the North East of England at fig. 20. Even in the light of such statistical information there are clearly lessons for the future in the spheres of command, control and resource allocation and I will refer to these in Part IV of my report.

#### **(b) Sutcliffe's Immediate Associates**

##### **(i) Trevor Birdsall**

385. During the trial of Peter William Sutcliffe the witness who probably attracted the greatest attention from the media and others was Trevor Birdsall so much so that I have decided that the facts surrounding Birdsall warrant a separate heading in this part of my report.