

**RNI DE-CLASSIFIED**

proceedings or in a Public Inquiry, consequently once it was handed over they lost control of how it was handled. I believe their questioning of our need for certain information and assessing the consequences of providing it to us was part of their job. Special Branch had to protect both an ECHR Article 2 requirement and had an obligation to protect their CHIS from a health and safety perspective as well as a moral obligation.

18. I have been asked how Special Branch reached the decision on what material to pass over to the Murder Investigation Team [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I would have expected that in difficult circumstances they would have talked confidentially with Mr Port. In any case I would have imagined that they would have found some method of informing Mr Port.

19. I have been asked whether the request to undertake forensic checks on the surveillance cars caused tension between Special Branch and the Murder Investigation Team. I believe it did create tension. The Special Branch officers felt like they were under suspicion. We appreciated the need to take into account that most cars used on surveillance operations would have traces of explosives or firearms residue in them although I suspect that it was a cause of concern to Special Branch that we would jump to the wrong conclusions. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Certainly, if I were in their position I would not have wanted CID to have been given carte blanche access to methodology that could become compromised by indiscreet handling. When it came to the actual examination of the vehicles a senior officer from an English police force attached to the MIT and I organised and supervised the process. For all these reasons I can understand why it caused tension.

20. I am sure that Mr Port told me about his negotiations on this issue. I believe that Mr Port dealt directly with the Chief Constable in terms of organising our examination. I do not think that we would have been able to check vehicles in this way on other investigations. However, we were dealing with allegations of collusion so it was vitally important to investigate these issues. We adopted a straightforward and business-like approach and we