



Stephen Lawrence

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Retired police chief admits authorising Stephen Lawrence witness recording

Ex-deputy assistant commissioner John Grieve says Duwayne Brooks meeting taped 'to protect integrity of witness evidence'

Press Association

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A retired senior **Metropolitan police** officer has admitted authorising secret recordings of a meeting between a friend of the murdered teenager Stephen Lawrence, his lawyers and detectives.

Police officers had wanted "an unassailable record of what transpired" in meetings in 1999 and 2000, the former deputy assistant commissioner John Grieve said.

Grieve, who was director of the racial and violent crimes taskforce between 1998 and 2002, told the BBC he deeply regretted any distress, dismay or alarm that his decision may have caused Brooks, or Lawrence's parents, Doreen and Neville.

Grieve said that at the time his team were trying to both solve Lawrence's murder and lead the Metropolitan police response to charges of institutional racism after the inquiry report into his death.

He denied that officers had sought to trick or deceive anyone involved in the meetings.

"Every member of our team was wholeheartedly committed to achieving long-overdue justice for Stephen, for his parents and for Duwayne Brooks as victims of a murderous, racist attack," he said. "Every action taken was aimed at prosecuting and convicting Stephen's murderers. Every decision made was based on the information available at the time and conducted within ethical, legal, necessary and proportionate frameworks. This included taking all measures necessary to protect the integrity of witness evidence."



📷 Duwayne Brooks, who witnessed the murder of his friend Stephen Lawrence in London in 1993. Photograph: John Stillwell/PA

Brooks met the deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg, at his Whitehall office on Friday to [discuss claims that the meetings were bugged](#). The claims affecting Brooks arose after the former undercover officer [Peter Francis told the Guardian](#) he had been told to find information to use to smear the Lawrence family.

Lawrence, 18, was waiting for a bus with Brooks when he was murdered in Eltham, south-east [London](#), in 1993.

Francis, who worked with Scotland Yard's former special demonstration squad, spoke out about tactics that he said were used by the secretive unit in the 1980s and 90s.

In the wake of his claims, the [Lawrence family called for a public inquiry](#) into the allegations, which the teenager's mother said made her feel "sick to the stomach".

Grieve added: "Duwayne was both a victim and witness of the attack in 1993. It could be argued that failing to protect the integrity of any evidence that may have come to light at this meeting - and hence failing to protect Duwayne himself as a potential witness - would have been a neglect of duty. The relevance of this was subsequently borne out at the later successful trial where he was called as a witness."

The Metropolitan police said that deputy assistant commissioner Fiona Taylor, who leads its Directorate of Professional Standards, wrote to Brooks on Friday.

"This letter confirms that DPS investigators had found documentation authorising the recording of one meeting in May 2000 and that we continued to look for the recording which this authorisation related to. This investigation continues," she said.

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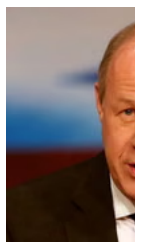
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