

(4) The finding of a petrol bomb in a drain under one of the walkways on 2nd October.

(5) Reports on 4th October that postmen delivering mail to the estate were being subjected to harassment. The Post Office have been good enough to supply us a list of all incidents in N.17 during 1985, from which it appears that there were three unsuccessful attempts to get at postal vans around the estate, on 4th September, 5th September, and 2nd October.

3.70 Only the fourth of these incidents can fairly be said to have any relevance to the issue whether people on the Broadwater Farm Estate were preparing to riot prior to 6th October 1985. And that reference to a single petrol bomb is itself significant, in view of other rumours that were going about concerning petrol bombs. Cliff Ford, a sweeper on the estate, said that the police were going around collecting every little bottle they could find. He himself was asked by Sergeant Meynell to hand in any bottles, as they might be petrol bombs. But as he said to us:—

“I just saw bottles scattered in normal litter, and normal litter could be quite a lot of bottles. I can’t keep running up to a policeman with every little thing bottle I find.”

In the light of that, the finding of one petrol bomb on 2nd October, the day after the police operations, hardly suggests preparations for mass riot.

3.71 We have carefully examined the evidence presented in the Richards report. It was undoubtedly true that there were tensions between the police and members of the community in the week before 6th October. The police were fully entitled to take precautions. We recognise that police officers are exposed to physical dangers which the rest of us do not face, difficult decisions have to be made in order to reduce the risks to their safety. **However on the evidence before us, the tensions were in fact under control.**

There had been rumours of riots every summer since 1981. But there was in fact no riot after Handsworth, or after the shooting of Mrs Groce, or after the stop-and-search operation. During that operation, Youth Association workers told us that they were actively speaking to their members, telling them to keep calm and not be provoked. There was, as we have seen, little basis of hard fact for the rumour that was going round. We do not believe that a riot was being planned by members of the Broadwater Farm community.

Chapter 4

THE DEATH OF MRS JARRETT

INTRODUCTION

4.1 Mrs Cynthia Jarrett was born in June 1937 in Clarendon, Jamaica, and came to England in 1958 to join her husband. Mr and Mrs Jarrett lived in Tottenham for some 25 years, during which time they raised a family of five children. The family never lived on Broadwater Farm, but when the children were young they lived in Mount Pleasant Road and had many friends on the estate. Mrs Jarrett worked for National Plastics in Walthamstow for 11 years before being made redundant in 1983. She was grandmother to ten children, and often looked after the children of neighbours and friends. Her daughter Patricia remembers her as “loving and kind to everybody”. Mr Jarrett says with great affection: “Cynthia was very understandable and a lover of kids.” She was a deeply religious woman who attended the local Catholic church. She bore no ill-will towards the police.

4.2 The death of Mrs Jarrett was the subject of an inquest which lasted for seven days from 27th November to 4th December 1985. The police officers who were involved in the search of her house, and members of her family who were there, gave evidence and were represented by barristers. Many other witnesses were called. The Coroner gave a full summing up to the jury, instructing them as to the different verdicts which were open to them, depending on what view they took of the evidence. The jury of 12 people delivered a verdict of accidental death. This meant, following the Coroner’s direction, that they considered that Detective Constable Randall, while searching Mrs Jarrett’s home, had given her a push, but not deliberately, causing her to fall and contributing to her death through hypertensive heart disease.

4.3 We accept this verdict. It was the judgement of 12 citizens made at the end of a fairly conducted inquest, and we do not question it. Nor have we attempted to conduct a re-run of the inquest evidence; that would neither have been possible nor useful. Instead we have obtained the fullest possible notes of the inquest proceedings, and of the later court proceedings in which Floyd Jarrett was acquitted of assault. In this chapter we summarise the evidence given to the inquest and to the court, adding our own comments where appropriate, and we comment on the statement made by the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) at the end of their investigation of the circumstances surrounding Mrs Jarrett's death.

4.4 In obtaining material about the inquest we have had generous help from members of the Jarrett family and their solicitor. They had applied to the Coroner for a transcript of the inquest proceedings, which they were ready to put at our disposal. Regrettably, such a transcript has not been forthcoming from the Coroner's Court. It seems that shorthand notes were made by a shorthand writer whose fees were paid by the Metropolitan Police: transcripts cannot be made available to the Coroner without the consent of the police which has not been forthcoming. An official tape recording was also made, but no transcript from that could be completed in the time available to us. Accordingly we have relied on full notes which were taken both by Dave Leadbetter, who was there as a representative of the Inquest organisation, and by Tracey Blom, a barrister. They represent a very full though not verbatim record.

THE ARREST OF FLOYD JARRETT

4.5 Floyd Jarrett has been an active member of the Broadwater Farm Youth Association for many years. He had been on the trip to Jamaica. He lived in Enfield, having moved away from 25 Thorpe Road about six months before. The events of 5th October 1985 begin with the arrest of Floyd Jarrett, and the circumstances of that arrest are important. For the police, the suspicion which was said to attach to Floyd justified the decision to search his mother's home. For the family, the whole sequence of events beginning with the arrest of Floyd, was part of their complaint to the PCA.

4.6 Just before 1.00 pm on Saturday 5th October, Floyd Jarrett was driving with a friend along Roseberry Avenue, Tottenham, when he was stopped by uniformed police officers. The reason given later for

the stop was that one officer (PC Casey) had noticed that the car had an out-of-date tax disc, showing the expiry date 31st August 1985. PC Casey had radioed to officers in another police car (Sergeant Parsons and PC Allan) who had carried out the stop. PC Allan filled out a form which required the driver to report to a police station with his driving and insurance certificate. The incident would normally have ended there.

4.7 PC Casey then decided to connect to the Police National Computer to make a check upon the car number and the name of the driver. He was asked at the Magistrates Court why he had done this. Stephen Solley, counsel for Floyd Jarrett, asked him: "Would you have checked me out if I had been driving with a tax disc five weeks out of date?" The officer said no. Mr Solley asked if he could give any reason, other than that he was a Black man driving a flashy-looking car (a BMW Coupe). He could give no reason.

4.8 The computer check revealed that there was no trace of the car number UGX5OF, the number on the plates. But PC Casey observed that the number on the tax disc was different – WGX5OF – and he put a check through the computer on this number. This did check out with a BMW car with the right chassis number – the record showing that it had been sold a year before. Therefore it was not listed as a stolen car. Floyd Jarrett was waiting by the car while these steps were taken; he was not asked any questions about how he obtained the car. He explained that the number plates had always been like that, and it was apparent that they were very old and had not been recently fitted. On the basis of this information, PC Casey decided to arrest Floyd Jarrett for suspected theft of the motor vehicle.

4.9 At this point Floyd Jarrett made a run across the road. He was chased by the three officers and soon caught. The officers claimed that when they caught up with him, he struck two blows with his fist, the second of which hit PC Casey in the face. However, an independent witness, architect Ralph Harris, had witnessed the whole incident. He had seen the three officers run across the road and jump at Floyd Jarrett from behind. He had seen no punch to an officer's face, aimed or otherwise.

4.10 Floyd Jarrett was charged with assaulting PC Casey. On 13th

December 1985 he appeared at the Magistrates Court and was acquitted of the charge. The magistrates made an award of £350 costs against the police, which indicated their belief that the charge should have never been brought. In the course of the hearing the whole sequence of events leading to the arrest was closely examined. For example, the police officers had alleged that the engine number inside the car looked as if it might have been filed down, and that the chassis plate looked slightly curved. So the car was brought to court, and all present were able to see that neither the engine number nor the chassis plate had been tampered with in any way. Mr Solley in his closing speech to the magistrates said that this incident was a striking demonstration of the importance of our civil liberties and that a careless and prejudiced use of police powers had in this case set off a chain of events which had led to terrible consequences. The magistrates by their verdict appear to have agreed. The charge itself was a classic example of a "knock-on" charge such as we referred to earlier (3.5), where the arrested person is charged, not with anything relating to the supposed reason for his arrest, but for an incident alleged – in this case falsely – to have occurred as a result of the contact with the police.

4.11 At 1.25 pm on 5th October Floyd Jarrett arrived at the police station. He had given a false name and address. He said at the trial that he had failed his driving test and ought not to have been driving without L plates. But within a few hours his true identity had been discovered. There was an invoice in the car in the name of Mr Jarrett, and the police were able to check that name against a photograph which was on file at St. Ann's Police Station and which proved that the man in their custody was Floyd Jarrett, of 25 Thorpe Road, N.15. Sergeant Parsons and PC Casey returned to Tottenham police station with this information at 3.30 pm.

4.12 At that point there were no grounds for holding Floyd Jarrett any longer and he should have been released. There was no evidence whatever that the car was stolen; indeed the invoice showed that it had been in Mr Jarrett's possession since at least May, and the computer information showed that its last registered owner had sold it. The officer even checked to discover whether any crimes were known to have been committed by people using a blue BMW, but the answer was negative. The sequence of events involving Floyd Jarrett and the police should have ended.

THE DECISION TO SEARCH THE HOUSE.

4.13 At this point Detective Constable Michael Randall intervened in the case. DC Randall is a C.I.D officer, then aged 24. He had been based at Stoke Newington police station for some time, and had then moved to Tottenham. He was an officer against whom two complaints had been made in the summer of 1985, relating to his conduct of searches in the homes of Black people. The barrister appearing for the police at the inquest informed the Coroner that in one case there were no formal disciplinary proceedings but DC Randall had received "words of advice". In the other case the complainant was awaiting trial, so the complaint was still pending. The barrister said that he had received this information from Inspector Clarke, who was duty officer at Tottenham police station on 5th October.

4.14 DC Randall was officially off duty but had come into the police station at 4.15 pm to do paper work on a number of forthcoming Crown Court trials. According to his evidence, he heard about Floyd Jarrett being in custody, and went to his cell at 4.50 pm and Floyd Jarrett recognised him. Floyd Jarrett told us that he had never met DC Randall at all. The official custody record states not that Floyd Jarrett recognised DC Randall, but the opposite. He then took the decision that the Jarrett home should be searched. It was his decision, and it was approved by the duty officer, Inspector Clarke. He also decided that he should go on the search himself.

4.15 DC Randall claimed that "from dealing with many of the youths around the Tottenham area" he knew that Floyd Jarrett "was heavily involved in handling stolen goods". He had heard "other rumours from reliable sources" that he was "a major handler". It is impossible for us to know the exact nature and source of DC Randall's information; or to assess whether DC Randall had exaggerated the information which he had, in order to justify (after the event) the decision to search. His attitude to house searches, and to the evidence needed to justify one, can be gathered from an answer which he gave:—

"I believe that PC Casey had sufficient grounds from the time Floyd was arrested. He had given fake particulars. It looked as if the car plates might have been fakes."

We do not agree that suspicion about a car should justify the serious step of invading the home. It would be a speculation, instead of concretely based suspicion that there were stolen goods to be found in the home.

4.16 There are other worrying features about the search. The pro forma warrant for a search for stolen goods contains a space for the description of the goods to be inserted. The instruction on the warrant says: "Specify stolen goods". Yet on the warrant drawn up for 25 Thorpe Road, all that has been inserted are the words: "Diverse Goods". It would appear that the officers were very unsure about what they were looking for.

4.17 Secondly, when the search did take place it was conducted in a cursory manner, as if all that was intended was a speculative visit. There was one locked room in the house, which was in fact Patricia Jarrett's bedroom. It was normally kept locked, because her brother borrowed her tapes. No attempt was made to enter it. Sergeant Parsons said that he could see "from the reflection in the brass light switch" that it was not a store room. The Coroner intervened:—

Coroner: "In my experience the best way to keep you out would be to have a locked door!"

Parsons: "It depends on the search. This was intended, sir, to be a low key search, a search of someone's home. We didn't knock things down. We conducted a search of what we could see. We were satisfied that it was not a room full of stock."

Coroner: "This is the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard!"

4.18 All the evidence points to this being a speculative search which should never have taken place. If Floyd Jarrett was seriously suspected of being a "major handler", then a proper investigation should have been mounted on the basis of specific information if and when it was known. If, however, there were only vague rumours about him, then the search was unjustified, and it did not become justified because he was in police custody.

THE WARRANT

4.19 DC Randall said that the search warrant was typed by PC Casey at 4.50 pm and that PC Casey left around 5.00 pm to go to the home of a magistrate. PC Casey said that he and PC Allan had left around 5.00; that the warrant was signed by the magistrate Mr Gardiner at about 5.15 pm and that he returned to the police station about 5.30 pm. The magistrate lived in St. Paul's Road, about five minutes drive from the police station.

4.20 Inspector Clarke gave evidence of a quite different time scale. He said that he had authorised the search warrant at 3.45 pm; that PC Casey had shown him the typed warrant at 4.15 pm; and that PC Casey had left the police station to go to the magistrate at 4.50 pm and returned at 5.15 pm. He said that he had then seen the warrant and saw that it had been signed. He was challenged at the inquest about an earlier statement which he had made to the Essex police in which he said that he "agreed to issue the search warrant at 5.00 pm". In answer he said: "In police work times are not very significant". This is a curious statement for a police inspector to make.

4.21 Under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, which although not in force was being given a "trial run" at Tottenham police station at this time, there is a requirement for a custody record to be kept in relation to everyone detained at a police station, in which all matters relating to the case must be recorded. From 2.00 pm to 7.00 pm on 5th October the officer responsible for keeping that record was Sergeant Bowell. The first two lines of the second page of the custody record read as follows:—

"5.10.85. 5.15 pm. Search warrant obtained, declined to accompany police (signed) B132".

The date is in Sergeant Bowell's handwriting, but the time and the rest of the entry are in the handwriting of Sergeant Parsons. Sergeant Parsons had said in evidence that he had made the entry at 5.15 pm after PC Casey had returned with the signed warrant.

4.22 The Essex police, who had been investigating the circumstances of Mrs Jarrett's death under the supervision of the Police Complaints Authority, went to the magistrate on 7th October and took a statement from him. He said that he had signed the warrant for the search at 25 Thorpe Road between 6 pm and 6.30 pm. Assistant Chief Constable Simpson, who was in charge of the investigation, told his officers to go back to the magistrate and re-interview him. In his second interview on 8th October, Mr Gardiner said that he thought the time was between 5.30 pm and 6.15 pm. The magistrate gave evidence at the inquest, and said that he thought that he signed the warrant at about 5.45 pm. We have no notes of his evidence, but we understand that in cross examination he was extremely vague. A statement was also taken from the magistrate's mother, who said she put the arrival of the police at between 5 o'clock and 5.30 pm, because the cups of tea, which they usually take between 4.30 and 5

pm were still on the table. She was not called to give evidence at the inquest.

4.23 The search of 25 Thorpe Road began, according to the police, at 5.45 pm, although the family maintain that it was just before 5 o'clock, the officers left Thorpe Road at about 6.20 pm when the ambulance had gone. Did the officers then rush in a panic to the magistrate, knowing that they had no signed warrant and that the search had ended in tragedy? Or did they, as they claim, have a properly signed warrant before they went to 25 Thorpe Road?

4.24 The visit to the magistrate's house took two to three minutes (according to the officers) or about ten minutes (according to the magistrate). The range of possible times, according to the evidence, is:—

Approx. 5.00 pm	Inspector Clarke (said that PC Casey had left the station about 4.50 pm).
Approx. 5.05 pm	Sergeant Howell (made entry at 5.15 pm).
Approx. 5.05 pm	PC Allan (said they arrived at the magistrate's house at 5.00-5.15 pm).
Approx. 5.10 pm	DC Randall (said PC Casey left at about 5.00 pm).
Approx. 5.15 pm	PC Casey (evidence to the inquest).
5.30-6.15 pm	Mr Gardiner's second statement to the Essex police.
Approx. 5.45 pm	Mr Gardiner (evidence to the inquest).
6.00-6.30 pm	Mr Gardiner (first statement made to the Essex police).

4.25 There are a number of points which support the argument that no warrant was signed there until after the search was over:—

(1) The time which the magistrate gave when first asked about this matter two days after the event, as against the confused times by the officers.

(2) The entry in the custody record, which the Coroner had described as "peculiar". Every other entry in the record was made by Sergeant Howell; this one alone was made by Sergeant Parsons. Sergeant Howell himself, who was on duty as the custody officer, said in evidence that he had never seen the signed warrant.

(3) The fact that the usual practice of telephoning the magistrate before going around to his house was not followed. This was even more strange because Mr Gardiner was not normally called on to issue warrants out of court hours. The magistrate normally used had suffered a bereavement. PC Allan told the inquest that the name and address of Mr Gardiner were only given to himself and PC Casey by radio while they were in the car; and DC Randall said that it was he who had suggested the magistrate's name. All this suggests a hasty operation rather than one which had been properly arranged from the police station.

(4) PC Casey alone went into the magistrate's house. PC Allan, who was a probationary officer 14 weeks out of training school, stayed in the car. It would have been normal for PC Allan to accompany PC Casey in order to learn the procedure. But not, perhaps, if the search had already taken place, and the magistrate was being deceived.

(5) After returning to the police station DC Randall made an entry in the "premises searched record". He filled up everything except for one line — the name of the magistrate who granted the warrant. This was left blank. At the inquest it was put to him that this was because no warrant had by then been obtained. His reply was:—

"No. I did have the warrant in front of me. I cannot remember why I missed it out. I was going down the page filling the form in."

It seems to us extraordinary that DC Randall, who had himself suggested the magistrate's name, did not fill it in — unless there was still some uncertainty as to whether he had in fact signed the warrant.

(6) Finally, as we shall see, Patricia Jarrett stated clearly that no warrant was shown to her by any of the officers who came to her house.

4.26 On the other hand, the police would argue that there was no reason for them not to obtain a search warrant before carrying out the search, and that people are frequently vague and inaccurate about times. While we are unable to make a definite finding on this issue, there was at least a strong case against the officers that they carried out the search without a signed warrant. We return later to consider how the Police Complaints Authority dealt with this aspect of the case.

THE SEARCH

4.27 The police officers involved thought that the search might not be straightforward. Inspector Clarke said to PC Casey at a briefing meeting held before the officers left, that he hoped that "the search would not start any riots". A district support unit and an area car were provided to stand by in case there should be any trouble. The controller at the police station, PC Fletcher, said to the inquest that he had been asked by DC Randall to keep his radio open because he was going to search "a coloured family", and if there was any trouble he would want urgent back-up. In the circumstances, and given the rumours of trouble which the police were well aware of, it is strange that there was no liaison with more senior officers, or with the community liaison officer, about this search. The Chief Executive Roy Limb was angered by this failure to recognise the sensitive implications of Floyd Jarrett's arrest:-

"Floyd Jarrett was arrested about 1.00 pm on a Saturday. DC Randall knew that he was a founder member of the Broadwater Farm Youth Association. Everybody knows Floyd Jarrett. Yet he was held in custody for about four hours, and neither Couch nor any of the senior officers appeared to know anything about this. Here was a vital thing that happened and it didn't get to the senior policeman, so the matter could be handled in a sensitive way. That is one of the really worse features for me of the events."

When asked about this, Inspector Clarke said that "he did not consult Superintendent Stacey because of the distance from where we had expected trouble". DC Randall said that he "he didn't think community liaison came into it".

4.28 The four officers – DC Randall, Sergeant Parsons, PC Casey, and PC Allan – arrived at 25 Thorpe Road at around 5.45 pm. Sergeant Parsons was the senior officer in rank, but it is clear that DC Randall effectively took charge of the operation. He said to the others as they approached the door: "I'll do the talking". It is a quiet street. Across the road Mr Adams was sitting on his roof doing repairs. He saw the arrival of the police, and was curious. He saw them stop on the path as if discussing their tactics.

4.29 The officers had taken Floyd Jarrett's keys along with them. They had not booked the keys out with the custody officer Sergeant Howell, who confirmed that this should have been done. They used the keys to enter 25 Thorpe Road. There seems little doubt that they

did not knock at the door. Mr Adams did not hear any knock and nor did Patricia Jarrett inside the house. The officers claim that they knocked three times, but none of them remembered the distinctive horseshoe knocker on the door. DC Randall, who said that he did the knocking, said that the knocker was a lever on the letter-box.

4.30 Inside the house were Mrs Jarrett, Patricia Jarrett, with a grandchild of two and a neighbour's baby. Patricia Jarrett heard her mother say "Lord, Lord, there's some police in the house". When asked how they got in, Sergeant Parsons said that the front door had been left open. Mrs Jarrett and Patricia Jarrett knew that to be untrue; they would never leave the door open with young children in the house. Sergeant Parsons admitted to the inquest that he had told this untruth, "in order not to aggravate the situation". In our view the whole account of this entry into a private house – the use of the keys, the failure to knock, the lie about the open door – reveals a casual indifference on the part of the officers and constituted a shocking violation of the privacy of the Jarrett's home.

4.31 The house is on two floors. On the ground floor at the front was Mrs Jarrett's bedroom: half way back, a room which used to be Floyd's room; and at the back a dining room, with a kitchen attached. On the first floor at the front was a lounge; towards the back a locked room which was Patricia Jarrett's room; and at the back Michael Jarrett's room. On this floor there was also a bathroom. The officers after entering started to move through the various rooms. Patricia Jarrett told the inquest that she asked if they had a warrant, and was shown nothing. But DC Randall and PC Casey claimed that she had at one point taken the warrant and read every word out aloud – even the words "to each and all the constables of the Metropolitan Police Force" at the top of the warrant. The new law requires that a copy of the warrant be left with the householder, but even though the new law was having a trial run, this was not done. The officers said that they did not know about this requirement.

4.32 Patricia Jarrett said in evidence that the officers searched Floyd's old room. Then they searched Mrs Jarrett's room; Mrs Jarrett asked why they were searching it, as she only had her personal possessions there. (At one stage the officers tried to deny that her room was searched – until PC Allan admitted that he had searched it). They searched the lounge upstairs, and the laundry in the

bathroom. They searched Michael's bedroom, but made no effort to get into her locked room. She then described what happened when DC Randall moved towards the dining room:—

"He went into the dining room. My mother had put Jerome into the armchair and was standing in the doorway. He took his left arm, pushed her out of the way. She fell with one arm in the armchair and the rest of her body towards the armchair going towards the kitchen. I tried to help her up. When I had managed to get her to her feet DC Randall had come back into the dining room and passed over and went to the sideboard. I helped my mother to the chair. She was gasping for breath and gasping quite heavily. She asked me to phone for the emergency doctor as she was not feeling well. I took the telephone book and called the emergency answering service. I spoke to a woman who said that there was not a doctor available so I should dial 999 immediately and explain the symptoms of my mother. I did this and they told me there would be an ambulance."

The electronically timed record at the exchange showed that Patricia Jarrett's 999 call was made at 5.55 pm. It took two minutes for her to be connected, and the ambulance service received her call at 5.57 pm.

4.33 Patricia Jarrett described the push again in detail:—

"I saw Randall take his left arm and put it around my mother's shoulder and part of his body pushed her and she fell with her left arm out, breaking the small table."

Patricia's account continued as follows: Mrs Jarrett was sitting at the dining room table. After Patricia telephoned the ambulance, her mother asked for her tablets on top of the fridge in the kitchen. DC Randall was still in the dining room. He had been looking in the drawers of the sideboard, and while Patricia was telephoning for an ambulance he was looking at the hi-fi and the television. Patricia gave tablets and some water to her mother, who asked for some underclothes to be packed. She went into the garden to collect some clothes from the line. When she came back she noticed that her mother's breathing had become laboured. She asked her: "What's the matter mum?" She then heard a voice in the passage which she recognised as her brother Michael's. Michael asked the officers why they were there, and asked his mother if she felt all right. He asked one of the officers if he had a warrant and received no reply. DC

Randall then left the dining room and went upstairs. He had not shown any concern, but simply continued with the search. Michael followed him upstairs, where they were looking into the loft of the house.

4.34 Patricia's evidence continues:—

"The officer left the dining room and went upstairs. My mother was breathing hard. She tumbled sideways out of the dining room chair, lying on her side. I rushed over and started talking to her. I then saw a uniformed officer and my brother Michael standing at the bottom of the stairs. Michael said Floyd does not live here, and he wanted them to leave the house. I then showed the officer out. We made it quite clear to them that Floyd did not live there, we felt it was in our rights to ask them to leave. They did so. Michael and I rushed back into the dining room. I knelt down at my mother's side. Michael rushed out of the house. I put my ear to her mouth to see if I could feel any breath. I felt for her pulse but did not feel any pulse. I blocked her nose, opened her mouth and gave mouth to mouth resuscitation. Nothing was happening. She looked up at me, her eyes keeled over, her head slumped back and she was completely still. I ran from the house screaming into the street."

4.35 Michael Jarrett had left the house in order to see if a nurse who lived at number 12 was at home. She was not, but Michael used the phone there to ring for an ambulance. His 999 call was electronically timed at 6.00 pm. He was connected to the ambulance service at 6.01 pm. As they waited for the ambulance to arrive the police remained outside. Inspector Clarke arrived, having been alerted by a message from DC Randall. DC Randall said that he had first-aid experience, and that the family should let him come in and help. Michael Jarrett persuaded Patricia to let DC Randall in. For a time he tried mouth to mouth resuscitation, and an airway device was brought in from one of the police cars. But when a mirror was put to Mrs Jarrett's mouth, there was no mist on the glass. At 6.11 pm the ambulance arrived, and Mrs Jarrett was lifted into it. The ambulance left at 6.20 pm and reached North Middlesex Hospital at 6.35 pm where it was certified that Mrs Jarrett was dead on arrival.

4.36 At the inquest, the four officers gave an account which conflicted with that of Patricia in major respects. The main thrust of their evidence was that Patricia Jarrett had been abusive almost from

the start, shouting and swearing obscenities at the officers; that Michael Jarrett had joined in the abuse after he arrived; and that there had been no contact of any kind, accidental or deliberate, between DC Randall and Mrs Jarrett. The case put by the barrister representing the four police officers at the inquest was that Mrs Jarrett suffered stress:—

“Not by misbehaviour on the part of the police, but by the anti-police attitude of the children.”

4.37 At the inquest this central allegation effectively fell to the ground. It was contradicted by evidence from Inspector Clarke that he received a message at 5.55 pm from DC Randall, made after he had searched Floyd Jarrett's former room, that “we are in the house and the search is under way. There are no problems”. As a result of this message, Inspector Clarke radioed the area car and told it to go away. It was contradicted by Mr Adams, who heard no sounds of any shouting from inside the house. It was contradicted by the evidence of the electronically timed calls showing that Patricia Jarrett was on the phone seeking assistance for about two minutes. DC Randall claims not to have seen this. He said only that Patricia tapped out a number, slammed the telephone down and went on swearing. It was contradicted by further evidence from Mr Adams, who heard DC Randall making another radio call after being told to leave the house. He heard DC Randall say these words:—

“The search was quiet but I must warn you the lady of the house has collapsed.”

4.38 At one point, while PC Allan was giving evidence, the Coroner made a telling intervention. PC Allan had said that he had not seen Patricia Jarrett pick up the phone or make a call, but she was just shouting and swearing. Counsel representing the Jarrett family then told the officer of the evidence of the electrically timed calls, and the Coroner said:—

“It is quite obvious that their statements are contrary to the facts. Members of the Jury, the purpose of learned Counsel's questions, which he is fully entitled to ask, is to go to the credit of the police officers. It may not bear directly on the death but I am allowing it because it is important for you to be able to assess the truthfulness of the witness.”

THE MEDICAL EVIDENCE

4.39 Mrs Jarrett, who was 48 years old, was suffering from a very severe heart disease. She had had treatment for high blood pressure, but her family had no idea of her heart condition. Evidence about the cause of her death was given to the inquest by a leading heart specialist, Dr Somerville. He said that as a result of the disease, death might have been triggered off by physical activity or an emotional upset. There would be a sudden increase in the heart rate, accompanied by an alteration of the rhythm of the heartbeat. This would reduce the effectiveness of the heart and could lead to the lungs becoming water-logged. The strain, whether physical or emotional, would release adrenalin, and this would cause the acceleration of the heart rate. Once that train of events had been precipitated, it would be impossible to halt.

4.40 Dr Somerville was questioned at length as to the severity of the emotional or physical upset which would be needed to set these fatal events in motion. It was pointed out that Mrs Jarrett had led a normal and active life, and had survived a number of family difficulties including troubles that some of her children had had with the police. Dr Somerville agreed that if the police officers had simply gone into one room and then left, it was unlikely that death would have been caused. He said that the sudden arrival of the police in her hallway would be likely to cause pumping of adrenalin. But a push by the police followed by a fall would have been “an important precipitating factor” on top of the emotional stress aroused by the arrival of the police. The Coroner summed up the medical evidence to the jury in this way:—

“If there were this continuous emotional stress, Dr Somerville has reminded us that a fall or push would make an important contribution to continuing stress. It would, indeed, be an important contributory factor in the chain of events. This is because the humiliation and indignity consequent on a push or fall would be an added precipitating factor in a heart already under strain from emotion.

“Mrs Jarrett could have died at home, or while she was out. Dr Somerville said that she was a candidate for death at any time. Obviously we must accept that, but, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, she didn't die at any time, she died then.”

THE VERDICT OF THE JURY

4.41 In an inquest, the parties who are represented have no opportunity to address the jury about the verdict which they would wish the jury to return. The only guidance they get is from the Coroner. The Coroner in this case, Dr David Paul, told the jury that four verdicts were open to them:—

- (1) *Unlawful killing*. To bring in such a verdict, the jury would have to be sure that the police officers were either intentionally or recklessly threatening harm or causing harm which caused Mrs Jarrett's death: or that they were deliberately doing something (in this case pushing) that all reasonable people would realise would subject a person to a risk of being harmed, and which did in fact cause death. The Coroner told the jury that if they were satisfied that Mrs Jarrett was pushed so that she fell, they would be entitled on the basis of Dr Somerville's evidence to find that the fall caused the death.
- (2) If the jury was satisfied that there was a push, but were not sure that the push was a deliberate act, but was merely a consequence of someone going through a narrow place and brushing Mrs Jarrett aside, the proper verdict would be *accidental death*.
- (3) If the jury were sure that there was no fall, but that the fatal chain of events was started solely by the emotional stress surrounding the search, then the proper verdict would be that death occurred from *natural causes*.
- (4) Finally, if the jury were not sure that they could return one of these three verdicts, then they would be entitled to return an *open verdict*.

4.42 The jury returned an unanimous verdict of *accidental death*. The Jarrett family said in a statement through their solicitor:—

"The verdict of the jury is a vindication of our complaint against the police officers who arrived at our house on 5th October. Our mother died as a result of a push by a detective during a careless and callous search by four police officers who during the inquest had been forced to admit to lying, to numerous breaches of their code of conduct and to total inconsistency between the ambulance records and their fabricated story. We expect that apart from any other action, the officers concerned will be severely disciplined."

4.43 This was a case which demonstrated the value of inquest proceedings in throwing light on the circumstances of a tragic and controversial death. The Jarrett family were well represented by barristers and by a solicitor who, since legal aid is not available for inquest proceedings, gave their services without a fee. The evidence of all the witnesses — the family, the police, and other witnesses — was fully tested in cross-examination. The Coroner, according to many who were present, conducted the proceedings fairly and impartially. The jury were given a range of verdicts which fitted the various possible theories of the cause of death. The evidence had raised a number of serious questions about the propriety of police actions on 5th October. The verdict not only underlined these questions, but showed also that the jury believed that DC Randall at least had been lying in a central aspect of his evidence. We must now compare the investigation made at the inquest with the investigation made into the same matters under the supervision of the Police Complaints Authority.

THE POLICE COMPLAINTS AUTHORITY

4.44 The Police Complaints Authority began to function in January 1985. It was a new body set up by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. Its letterhead proclaims that it is "the Independent Police Complaints Authority — the public's impartial representative in the investigation of complaints against the police". Under the law it does not investigate complaints itself; it supervises the investigation of complaints, the investigation itself being carried out by police officers. Normally the P.C.A becomes involved because of a complaint; but there is an exceptional procedure whereby a chief officer of police may refer a matter to the P.C.A because of its gravity, even though there has not been a complaint, if the matter appears to indicate that a police officer may have committed a criminal offence or an offence against discipline. This was the power which was invoked on the evening of 5th October 1985. It is significant that the Commissioner, in invoking this power, must have considered that the officers involved may have committed a criminal offence or an offence against discipline, but did not even so suspend those officers from duty. We return to this question of suspension in the next chapter.

4.45 The investigation was carried out by Assistant Chief Constable Simpson of the Essex police. In correspondence with Bernard Carnell, solicitor for the Jarrett family, he sought to clarify the extent of the

complaints which they wished to raise. Mr Carnell made it clear that the family were complaining not only about events inside the home – the push of DC Randall against Mrs Jarrett, the insensitive behaviour of the four officers, and their failure to produce a warrant – but also about the whole basis upon which the decision to carry out the search was made, the means by which the officers gained access to the house, and the entire sequence of events that caused the officers to stop and detain Floyd Jarrett in the first place.

4.46 The “independent” status of this investigation came under severe attack during the inquest itself. Patricia Jarrett and other members of the Jarrett family had provided signed statements to the Essex police in confidence for the purpose of the investigation. But during the course of Patricia Jarrett’s evidence at the inquest, the barrister representing the four officers began to suggest that something said by her in her evidence was at variance in her statement to the Essex police. It became apparent that this barrister had received copies of these confidential statements. The barristers acting for the Jarrett family protested at this breach of confidence and secured, as a matter of fairness, that the statement made by the four officers should be disclosed to them. It transpired that A.C.C. Simpson of the Essex police had passed the statements to the Commissioner, without consulting the P.C.A. and without imposing any limitations upon their use by the Commissioner. The P.C.A. issued a press statement stating that they were disturbed to learn that the statement had been used by the Metropolitan Police without their consent.

4.47 The reason given for the handing over of the statements was that the Commissioner as the disciplinary authority, was entitled to see them. That is no doubt the case at the end of an investigation, but this investigation was still in progress. We are most concerned, both that the statements were given to the Commissioner at that stage, and that the Commissioner saw fit to supply them to the solicitor who represented those very officers whose conduct was being investigated.

4.48 When an investigation has been completed, the investigating officer submits a report to the P.C.A. The P.C.A. must make a statement as to whether the investigation was not conducted to their satisfaction, and the case is then considered by the chief officer of police for the area, who decides whether or not to refer the case to

the Director of Public Prosecutions for criminal charges, or whether to refer disciplinary charges. The P.C.A. also has the duty to consider the question of criminal or disciplinary charges, and they have the power to direct that the case be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, and to recommend to the Chief Officer of Police (or if he is unwilling, direct him), to prefer specified disciplinary charges. They are precluded from publishing any information which they have received except in the form of a summary statement.

4.49 On 14th April 1986, four months after the end of the inquest, the P.C.A. published a news release and attached to it their summary statement about the investigation into the death of Mrs Jarrett. But the news release stated that no criminal charges had been preferred by the Director of Public Prosecutions, and no disciplinary charges were recommended by the Metropolitan Police. It stated that the P.C.A. agreed with that recommendation. They said that the investigation conducted by Assistant Chief Constable Simpson had been comprehensive and “a model of speed and thoroughness”. The summary statement of the P.C.A. is for the most part a recital of the different versions of the offence given by the witnesses at the inquest. But there are two passages where the P.C.A. appear to give their own interpretation of the material which was before them. The first passage concerns their comment on the inquest verdict:—

“The jury tended to accept neither party’s version completely but implied, in accordance with directions given by the Coroner, that DC Randall did not push Mrs Jarrett but in all probability inadvertently brushed past her causing her to lose her balance.”

4.50 This was a serious misreading of the jury’s verdict. It is incorrect to say that the jury “tended to accept neither party’s version completely”. On the essential issue of whether DC Randall pushed Mrs Jarrett, they accepted Patricia Jarrett’s evidence and rejected that of DC Randall, who totally denied that he had any kind of physical contact with Mrs Jarrett. On the further question, was the push deliberate or unintentional, the jury decided that they could not be sure that it was intentional. This was not a rejection of Patricia Jarrett’s evidence. Patricia Jarrett could only tell the jury what she saw DC Randall do; whether what he did was deliberate was a matter for the jury. Further, the words “inadvertently brushed past” made much too light of the action for which, on the jury’s verdict, DC Randall was responsible. An officer carrying out a search has a duty

to treat members of the household being searched with care. A pushing or brushing aside of a large woman standing in a doorway even if it was not intentional, was an act of carelessness and grave discourtesy, and as such, in our view, a serious departure from the standards which the public are entitled to expect from police officers.

4.51 Secondly, the P.C.A. reviewed the evidence relating to the search warrant and the time of the visit to the magistrate, and concluded:—

“The police officers claim they were in Thorpe Road from 17.45 until just after 18.20, when the ambulance left and this is corroborated by evidence given by an ambulance officer. It would have been very difficult for the police officers to leave Thorpe Road at 18.20, return to Tottenham Police Station, type out the warrant and then go to Mr Gardiner’s house by 18.30 and get the warrant signed, remembering that 18.30 is the latest time by which Mr Gardiner is prepared to admit signing the warrant.”

We are to assume that on the basis of this reasoning the P.C.A. are satisfied that a warrant was duly obtained. We do not find it convincing. In the first place, the officers may well have typed up a warrant before leaving the police station, but had decided for some reason to get it signed later on. Secondly, there was time after 6.20 pm for the officers to rush at speed to the magistrate’s house. Thirdly, and perhaps most important, this reasoning does not confront the basic problem that the magistrate, when first asked about the time on 7th October, estimated it to be between 6 and 6.30 pm, — a full hour after the police officers claimed to have visited him.

4.52 We are bound to say that the P.C.A., in agreeing that there should be no disciplinary charges preferred against any of the officers, have failed lamentably to grapple with the real issues raised by the events of the 5th October. Let us recall what the evidence of the inquest and the Magistrates Court hearing revealed:—

- (1) That the officers who first stopped Floyd Jarrett made computer checks on his car, apparently for no other reason than he was a young Black man.
- (2) That they arrested him and took him into custody on a suspicion that his car was stolen which had little if any reasonable basis.
- (3) That they made a charge against him of assault which was found to be false.
- (4) That they embarked upon a search of his family’s home which

appears on the evidence to have been entirely speculative.

- (5) That a number of features in the evidence indicated strongly that the search was carried out without having obtained a warrant signed by a magistrate.
- (6) That the officers took Floyd Jarrett’s keys out of his property without the authorisation of the custody officer.
- (7) That they used those keys to enter 25 Thorpe Road without having alerted the occupants by knocking on the door.
- (8) That one of the officers lied to the occupants of the house in saying he found the door open.
- (9) That distress was caused to Mrs Jarrett both by the sudden intrusion of the officers and by a quite unnecessary search of her bedroom.
- (10) That one of the officers conducted himself so carelessly as to push past Mrs Jarrett as she stood in the doorway and cause her to fall.
- (11) That this push and fall, coupled perhaps with other upsetting features of the search caused her death before it would naturally have occurred.
- (12) That after Mrs Jarrett fell and was clearly unwell the officer present expressed no concern but merely continued his search.
- (13) That after the event the officers told lies about the behaviour of the Jarrett family and covered up their own misconduct.

4.53 The offences for which police officers may be disciplined are contained in the Discipline Code, which is part of the Police (Discipline) Regulations 1985. It includes the following offences:—

- Abuse of authority, “which offence is committed where a member of a police force treats any person with whom he may be brought into contact in the execution of his duty in an oppressive manner and, without prejudice to the foregoing, in particular where he:—
 - (a) without good and sufficient cause conducts a search, or requires a person to submit to any test or procedure, or makes an arrest; or
 - (b) uses any unnecessary violence towards any prisoner or any other person with whom he may be brought into contact in the execution of his duty, or improperly threatens any such person with violence; or
 - (c) is abusive or uncivil to any member of the public.”
- Discreditable conduct, “which offence is committed where a member of a police force acts in a disorderly manner or any manner

prejudicial to discipline or reasonably likely to bring discredit on the reputation of the force or of the police service.”

● Racially discriminating behaviour, “which offence is committed (without prejudice to the commission of any other offence) where a member of a police force:—

(a) while on duty, on the grounds of another person’s colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, acts towards that other person in any such way as is mentioned in abuse of authority (above); or

(b) in any other way, on any of those grounds, treats improperly a person with whom he may be brought into contact while on duty.”

● Neglect of duty, “which offence is committed where a member of a police force, without good and sufficient cause:—

(a) neglects or omits to attend to or carry out with due promptitude and diligence anything which it is his duty as a member of a police force to attend to or carry out, or

(b) fails properly to account for, or to make a prompt and true return of, any money or property received by him in the course of his duty.”

● Falsehood or prevarication, “which offence is committed where a member of a police force knowingly or through neglect makes any false, misleading or inaccurate oral or written statement or entry in any record or document made, kept or required for police purposes.”

● Being an accessory to a disciplinary offence, “which offence is committed where a member of a police force incites, connives at or is knowingly an accessory to any offence against discipline.”

4.54 In our opinion the P.C.A. failed to act as an independent or impartial authority in two major respects. First, it disregarded the verdict of the jury. There had been two conflicting cases argued at the inquest on behalf of the family and the police officers. The jury had found against the officers on the central question of the push, and by implication cast severe doubt on all the other claims of the officers which were in dispute. By recommending no action, the P.C.A. appeared to put itself above the jury. Secondly, the P.C.A. specifically failed to exercise its powers to recommend, and if necessary direct, that disciplinary charges be preferred. The 13 matters raised above, if proved, would constitute one or more of the offences in the Disciplinary Code. Given these failures in one of the

P.C.A.’s first major investigations, it is not surprising if confidence in the new machinery is low.

THE EVENING OF 5TH OCTOBER

4.55 At 7 o’clock, Floyd Jarrett was released. He told us that an officer told him, on the way out of the police station, that his mother had had a stroke. He did not even know that there had been a search of his mother’s home. He went to the hospital and then later on to Broadwater Farm. Martha Osamor was telephoned, and she went with Floyd and Dolly Kiffin to 25 Thorpe Road. Many community leaders called at the home during the evening in an immediate reaction of sympathy and respect.

4.56 Chief Superintendent Stainsby, who was acting as chief officer at Tottenham Police Station as Chief Superintendent Couch was away on that day, called at 25 Thorpe Road and expressed sympathy to the family. He told them that an independent investigation would be carried out by an officer from another force. Martha Osamor described the meeting:—

“The family were still very, very angry and a lot of questions were asked. Some of the questions were: How did they get into the house? He said he doesn’t know. Did they have a warrant? He said he doesn’t know. Where are they now, are they still working? He doesn’t know. He is going to find out.”

It was also confirmed at the inquest that Patricia Jarrett on that evening was saying to Chief Superintendent Stainsby that her mother had been pushed by DC Randall.

4.57 It is all the more surprising that on the evening of 5th October the following statement was issued by the Metropolitan Police:—

“Mrs Jarrett was initially very co-operative. But, towards the end of the search, another of her sons arrived home and began strongly objecting to the presence of the police. She collapsed and the officers were physically shoved out of the house. Eventually they persuaded the occupants to let them back in, and one of the officers trained in first aid, administered mouth to mouth resuscitation without success.”

This account is clearly designed to put the officers in the best possible light and the Jarrett family in the worst. Far from maintaining a neutral position while investigations continued, the higher authorities of the Metropolitan Police took a partisan position from the outset.

They appeared to pre-empt and influence the "independent" investigation before it had even begun. The statement led directly to a report in the *Mail on Sunday* on the 6th October which appeared to put the police story beyond doubt:—

"Scotland Yard confirmed that 49-year-old Mrs Cynthia Jarrett became ill after she was in a struggle with officers who visited her home following the arrest of her son."

We consider that it was quite wrong for an official statement to be put out which stated the police view alone of an event which was known to be disputed and which was under investigation by another force.

4.58 Late that night after midnight, members of the Jarrett family and a number of friends went down to Tottenham Police Station to demand more information. They again saw Chief Superintendent Stainsby. After a lot of pressure he went away and produced a copy of the warrant. Mr Jarrett could see at once that it was not a warrant which could have been taken on the search, because it was a clean, uncreased piece of paper. But the original warrant was not produced, and they could obtain no more answers. Martha Osamor said of the visit:—

"For them to behave in such an insensitive way, for him to keep repeating to us what he has already said, meant that a lot of people who were there felt they were treating us as if we hadn't got any sense at all."

4.59 While they were inside the police station they heard the sound of smashing glass. People in a small demonstration outside had thrown some stones at the police station windows. The Jarrett family and the community leaders present were able to persuade them to stop and go home. George Martin, of the West Indian Leadership Council, was one of those there. Before he left he said these words to the Chief Superintendent:—

"This is no longer a family matter. It's gone beyond that. It has now become a community matter, and I think that it is important that somebody of some importance makes a statement."

Chapter 5

OCTOBER 6 – WHAT HAPPENED?

Reactions to the Tragedy

5.1 The news of Mrs Jarrett's death spread quickly. Some learned about it during the night at a party, some the next morning. People were stunned:—

"Just hearing the news on the radio about Mrs Jarrett, it made something just turn over inside of me."

"On the Sunday morning I picked up this newspaper and I read it. And while I was sitting there...my hands were shaking with the paper, because I personally know Mrs Jarrett and I know all of her family because I've been to school with them."

The younger people reacted to what they had heard in the light of their own experience, and they thought of their own mothers. Stafford Scott spoke for the feeling of many:—

"Because it has happened before – police officers have taken away people's keys and entered their homes without alerting the people inside – it was easy for people to believe it had happened in this instance. Because people have seen police manhandling members of their families whilst raiding, it was easy to believe in this instance. So what was actually taking place was a lot of emotional transferral. They wasn't thinking just in terms of Floyd Jarrett's mother died today, they were thinking in terms that it could very easily have been my mother. So people were feeling very sickened by what had happened. People were very upset."

Youth worker Harry Adams saw the death against the shooting of Stephen Waldorf and the subsequent acquittal of the police officers, and the shooting of the child John Shorthouse in Birmingham:—

"If they could stand by and watch them damage White people in that way, what they could get away with with us? People watched that and watched it very carefully. Now when Mrs Jarrett died, that was the end. As far as we were concerned they had overstepped the mark – not overstepped it, they had run it completely out of existence."