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to the Police on Crime and Kindred Matters" regarding informants, or any contravention of the corresponding Metropolitan Police instructions on the subject. The examination of the circumstances surrounding the individual incidents with which Lennon was connected does not in my view give rise to the suspicion that he operated as an "agent provocateur" and concealed it from Special Branch officers.

111. It hardly needs to be said that having had the good fortune to secure the services of an informant who was accepted in Irish Republican extremist circles, Special Branch officers were prepared to go to considerable lengths to ensure his protection. It is the normal practice for Special Branch in its dealings with an informant in this category to assure him from the outset that should circumstances develop which would put him in personal physical danger, steps would be taken to safeguard him. As far as Lennon was concerned he did not specifically express fear for his personal safety. He did, of course, show some apprehension about his immediate return to Luton and this prompted the Special Branch officers during their last meeting with him to offer their help to get him a home so as to bring the family together. His future plans were so uncertain that the matter was left in abeyance.

112. The suggestion that Special Branch were directly or indirectly responsible for his death has not, in my opinion, any basis in fact. Having volunteered his services as an informant, Lennon in view of his background could hardly have failed to be aware of the inherent dangers he faced. Further he was, of course, at liberty to withdraw from the scene at any time he chose to do so.

113. The enquiry has not disclosed anything to support the contention that improper influences were brought to bear by Special Branch in connection with Lennon's arrest and trial at Birmingham. Their initial action was confined to confirming that Lennon was an informant and thereafter such other steps as were taken were conducted through official channels.

114. A brief comment should be made on the type of control exercised by Special Branch in operational matters of this kind. All dealings with informants are recorded in a highly classified document and scrutinised by senior officers who have the responsibility for control of these operations. From examination of the relevant file I am satisfied that this practice was followed in this case. I am equally satisfied that there is no evidence to support the allegations advanced by the N.C.C.L. of impropriety, pressure or blackmail.

115. Finally, the unanswered crucial question not only to this enquiry, but also to the murder investigation currently being conducted, is what happened to Lennon and with whom did he meet after he was last seen by the Special Branch officers on the early evening of 9th April 1974. It would be idle to speculate on this but, hopefully, the answer may be forthcoming when the murder is solved.

J. STARRITT,  
*Deputy Commissioner.*

26th April 1974.