

## The GLC Story Oral History Project

**Interviewee:** Tony Bunyan

**Interviewer:** Zakeera Suffee

**Date of interview:** March 2, 2017

**Location:** Hackney, London

**Transcribed by:** Zakeera Suffee

TB: My name is Tony Bunyan and I was Deputy Head, then Head of the Police Committee Support Unit, generally called the Police Monitoring and Research Unit

I was there from July 1981 until March 1986 when the GLC was shut down. I continued to have the same job as head of unit when the London Strategic Policy Unit which was the continuation of certain key research units, which went on for another two years: April '86 to March '88.

ZS: Reasons for talking to you Tony, and discovering that you worked in police monitoring, was to track the history of the police monitoring, from the officers to the progress on the ground. The shop fronts, people who were doing the monitoring themselves, and the boroughs where they took place. I want to see what has happened since and what came about. I hope to get your personal history of how you came to the GLC. How did you come to the GLC?

TB: This was the summer and the election was in May 1981, but before it in Brixton, and after in June, what was known as the 'riots' in quote, 'riots' not being a pejorative term, being a term to express people protesting at their condition and the way they were being treated by the police. The second of those occasions we actually monitored, I'll go back to this later, When I was working for State Research, we monitored the impact of the uprisings in 26 different cities. It didn't just happen in London. Different parts of London, happened again in Brixton after the earlier time of the year, it happened in Hackney where I live, at the same time people were rebelling in 26 different cities, Manchester, Bradford, Burley, Leeds, Cardiff.

There was a particular context to which the GLC election came through and Ken Livingstone went there with others like John McDonald. Ken was leader of the council, and John was Head of Finance and General Purposes Committee, which was a powerful committee. I had been working at state research for four years and needed to move on, partly because we ran out of money, but it carried on a few years after that. I applied for the job of the deputy head of the unit. I wasn't expecting to get it, because it was a rather grand and new thing. The old GLC was very stuffy and it was doing a job for people in London, but it was doing it in a rather stuffy way traditional way back to the old London county council. In fact, that is interesting where the boundaries of London were drawn. They were drawn up on the basis, when the met police was founded in 1829 they were drawn up on the basis of how far could a horse can travel in a day. Then they amended it. That's why is sort of a circle, but it's not a circle because of the different terrains that horses had go over. If you look at the GLC, GLA looks like then it is kind of a circle. And that was how they drew the boundaries of the old London county council.

So I applied and went for the interview. I didn't know either Paul Boateng who was the chair of the police committee which had just been set up. It was a new committee, there wasn't one on that issue, like there wasn't one on the race committee, economic union. All those three were new, and they came and said we want to do this. But of course, they just had the staff that had been there for the last 20 years, in a research department which was rather straight forward, believes in objective research. They decided and took the initiative and created certain extra committees because of the concerns they had already.

But there was a history before 81, and in 79 you had the death of Blair Peach at the hands of special patrol in Southall. What happened in 81 didn't come out of the blue, there was a history to it.

They advertised the job, I went for it, I didn't know Paul or Steve Bundred, who was the vice chair, who were both new councillors.

ZS: What were their names?

TB: Paul, solicitor with Bernberg Piece, he works in the office down in London Bridge.

So we were all new to it, in a sense. Most of the labour councillors were new, and they obviously had to do all the traditional functions, like housing, education, environmental, and those things that had to go on anyway regardless who was in control. They decided to try something different. At a personal level, I went for the interview, one of the others was rather ironically, Martin Kettle, who was lead writer on the guardian, and had been at the start of state research, around 81 just before this.

ZS: Did you work together?

TB: I was the coordinator, but I didn't have that title, on state research, because we ran it as a certain group. We were in the office two at a time, and others were doing it voluntarily. It was a bi monthly.

So I remember that I went back after the interview to a council meeting at the IRR, as I have been on the council since '72. During the meeting, after about an hour, the phone rang, Hazel went to the phone and picked it up. I went over to the phone, 'hello is that Tony Bunyan', yes, it was the same day as the interview, I had done it in the morning, I put my hand over the receiver and asked what do you think, and they said take it take it, then I said yes, that would be nice and good. What happens now? They will send a letter. And one duly arrived.

Because things were changing, people started getting in touch. Paul said to meet us. Martin Ennals, works in Liberty, died a bit after the end of the GLC of cancer - he was actually serving his notice at another job in Geneva, so they said right, you're deputy, we need to find some staff for you. It was literally like that. They got a budget, they had only been in May and in June and this was the beginning of July, and they said you need an admin officer, so I had to find one, Judy Ware. Then they had to recruit two lawyers and three researchers.

The researcher jobs were interesting. Here I was (not on the payroll despite two or three weeks going by), I knew I got the job, We are advertising.

I remember being at the top of the building, on my own with 346 applications, because people were excited. So I sat in this room and i went through all of them. I whittled them down to 40, then 20, and took them to Paul and Steve. That's how things worked, they wanted to work closely to the officers. They were chair and vice chair. So I said, well, these are the people I've whittled it down to. We then got that down to probably about 5, and I can't remember who did the interviews on that one. I think I did it with someone from the research department. Because they still wanted to keep a handle on it. I was the

new political appointee in quotes rough in, and they were the traditional staff in terms of research. We were meant to be doing research at that stage, we didn't technically talk about monitoring. We had little battles, I don't remember his name, but he was head of that section, but Paul had made it clear that if there was any dispute, I was to have final say on who would get the job.

So we appointed three researchers, two lawyers - Courtney Griffiths and Louise Christian. They left later but others came in. So there we had a minimal staff of Martin wasn't there yet, Judy was there, we'd appointed two lawyers and three researchers and they all had different levels of notice. Judy and I went to look for offices, we found splendid ones for 6 months, then we moved upstairs and we were across from the race unit. I know Herman quite well

We were right at the top in the right hand corner was the police unit. I can look and say that was where I was working. Slowly, things came together. I do remember very early on being contacted by John Carr, before payroll, he was the labour chair of the star committee they were very concerned if they were being bugged or not. It was an atmosphere, Thatcher's in power, 79, Callahan in the election, we had private armies in the 70s and general sense of that. I managed to find someone who was an expert, and they were pleased. It was informal in a sense but had to be done quickly. Eventually we ended up with 24 staff, which sounds like a lot, but race unit was 70 and economic unit 150, 200. We were the smallest of the new units, which in a sense was a strength because we could hold staff meetings with 24 people. They wouldn't always come, but it is a manageable number. If you have 100 you couldn't possibly. Ours was hierarchical in terms of decision, but if you have 100 then there is a lot more devolution and sub units etc. So that was quite good about it. We got a system, Martin had a secretary.

ZS: What made you want to apply for the job?

TB: I'm trying to think why. In my own history, I had been to drama school at a very exciting time, I spent a couple of years with ABC telly in Twickenham. I then became the National Youth Officer for the Young Liberals. (Which was quite radical at that time). Radical in the country. Anti-apartheid, Revolutionary socialist student's association, then I started the 'agit prop' column in Time Out in 1969.

'Agit prop' came about because I got to know Sheila Rowbothom and John Hoyland, at a 'happening' in Upper Street Islington. We got talking and chatting, it was street theatre, print workshops, lino cuts, was happening, what I was into and John was actually trying to map where all the left groups, the bookshop, how do you give the people on the ground some voice or focus. John used to have a card index of where the groups were. London and national. I remember seeing Tony Elliott in Princedale Road, and suggested to him. Dennis the daws, and all the left alternative were based there. I got paid two pound a week and did a column a week.

Agitation propaganda. It came historically from somewhere else. When Agit Prop bookshop and other things came out. Just after Time Out went weekly, Tony asked me if I wanted to be news editor with a guy called David May. He was local, and I was more political background. So yet after two years, I was news editors of Time Out. In which time we got into investigative journalism, covering trials. We were breaking news, breaking ground. In a sense, whilst working for IRR, and for State Research publishing

stuff on policing and race. I had the background. I think that's why they chose the combination. Martin who was well known person in the field, and I was the person who was on top of it.

What I have left out was in 76/77 I wrote a book called Political Policing in Britain. Hardback printed once, and paperback printed three times. Important piece of work. They knew I was a part of those things and had written a book. So I was a good person as a deputy. I remember a cutting in the Evening Standard, main story - look at the GLC - they have appointed Martin Nettles, who have been running radical left organisations, he'll get £xxx a year, and his deputy is even worse, Tony Bunyan who wrote that book.

Brought us back, and yes it was the most fun ever in my life, it turned out to be the time I did the most in my life. I saved money because I didn't want to get used to living on too much.

Then as you walk around, you would bump into Hilary Wainwright, John Hoyland. All old friends had gone to work mainly in the economic unit. There were other friends going in. We didn't meet to discuss it, we just did it. It's partly because the 70s, you have to see it as the high point and ending of the period of hope.

We had all come through 67,68, Hilary I knew from 65. We had all come through that period of hope, out of Vietnam, out of extra parliamentary movement, out of the women's movement, black movement emerging, gay movement emerging, and a sense of internationalism. Not just being narrow Englanders, we were European and Internationalists. That was a period of hope. Things were possible. Another world is possible.

ZS: So the GLC was?

TB: GLC was in a sense was an opportunity to move into the biggest local authority in the country and with some exciting people and new ideas to bring people in and actually try and make a difference, to use that horrible term. We didn't use that term at the time. I'm sure Tony Blair invented that. So everything was possible.

We did have to do, and quite quickly, Martin and I, the chair decided on the appointments, but we had to go on on four or five days equal opportunities training. It wasn't just training in policy, but also in recruitment and the two goes on together. Martin and I went on different days. There we were with people from housing and from economics and education, from different parts of the GLC. So it was interesting for us to meet people in this vast organisation, 22,000 who had different jobs and perceptions. Most of whom we were in favour, some were doubtful and I thought this is what should be happening. Early achievements was to set the standards on equal opportunities. This became much more of a standard through local government and has stayed ever since.

ZS: Did this affect who you employed?

T: In terms of recruitment, it was defining a procedure - you had to have people who themselves had already been equal opportunities trained. Everything had to be written down, make sure everyone has the information. We do the same in Statewatch now, three of us who work here worked in local government. When Nadine was here it was four. There was a procedure and there was a way of scoring. If there was three on a panel you would individually look through. It was scored against the essential and desirable criteria. You would come together and agree to get it to five. When you do the interview you start again, evaluate the criteria and where the person scores. So it was introducing something, formalising something, turning an idea into a practice. Which was good.

By this time, you're getting into '82, budgets starting to appear, you got the staff there. So the staff in a sense, in a small unit, had have definite say along the chair and vice chair, we all got on well, about what we should be doing. Obviously, we were to monitor the London Police, how were we going to do that?

ZS: Had there been anything like that before?

TB: No. Historically way back there had been individual protest movements, NCCL or Liberty, but nothing like it before in local government. So, the question of what we want to do? Lawyers were advising and writing and writing, legal aspects of what the police were doing, their reaction. The researchers were looking at the background, in the end we had to produce commissioned reports which could be on issues, or on grant making, two kinds of grant making. To local monitoring groups, and for research.

Monitoring turned out it was the most important, but we did give money for research. It was allowed under section 127 or 132 of local government act. A little-known power which meant you could spend money on things nothing else covered. That was used by the whole of the Labour administration to spend money on things they wanted. The committees had not existed before.

We were going to do research, because I had come from that background, state research - I said we need a way of reporting, so people around London can be provided news. We made Policing London, which was bi-monthly. It was a bulletin.

We were going to write reports. We did one in the Scarman inquiry, which came out of the riots of 1981. We were saying what was good and what was bad about Scarman - and what needed to be developed. We had a concept of community policing which was different to what it became later. It was co-opted in a Thatcher way. Our community was a different kind of police force, and was more accountable to people on the ground. We did a report on police complaints system, the Irish community later, we did quite regular reports. Committee reports on issues, every time we gave a grant we put it through committee. You would see the group, lawyers would look at it. The finance people would have to look it. They are one of the traditional departments.

And then the monitoring groups was the most contentious. The idea - you only had Southall monitoring group with Suresh Grover, who is now the London monitoring group. And I am certain that at that time, Newham monitoring group. These already existed before the grants.

Southall might not have used that name at the time. I can dig that out in my history of the 70s. They were models in a sense, what could be done by local people organising taking police to account. On the spot legal advice. People could go and help, learn facts if something happened. People would organise protests - you had a shop front office. The whole idea was that you had two to four five staff depending on the borough history. 20 out of 32 had groups.

The story is worth telling, was very early on autumn or may after 82. Spring 82. We had some grant come in - I can't remember - could have been a monitoring group. The legal people, Mr Fitzpatrick, Head of Legal Service, a big department, and the finance people weren't sure they liked it very much. First monitoring group. They threw lots of objections, notes came back to - can't remember why this happened - it must have happened early on. Did notes come back to Martin, but no, they came to me, must have been 1981 - they said they couldn't approve it. I rang up Paul Boateng, who said I could call at any time, and I said they are not happy with this, they said we can't do it. Right Tony I want them all in my office at 4 o'clock. This was just after lunch. So I duly appear in my informal clothing, I didn't have the red jacket and tie for meetings, how did Tony get his red tie, I was in my shirt and pull over. I was smart, but there was this long line of suited men, most of them I didn't know from Adam. I stayed at the head of the queue, Paul arrived and they weren't allowed to go into the room before he came, that was the etiquette. Paul sat down, we filed in, I sat at one, Paul the other. Right Tony, what's the problem. The following is the problem, I was instructed, drawn papers, lawyers looking through it but these people have given this reason and that reason why we can't do it. Mainly finance and legal.

Paul listened, right Tony, yes. He looked at the people and said 'what's your problem' one or two tried to defend their position but they were told that they didn't have any financial or legal grounds to stop it going to committee. It must have been in that autumn. One minute you don't know what you are doing in the world, then you get a job, work there before payroll, and then hire people and then telling people what to do.

We were laying down a marker to say we weren't daft. We had people who had done the homework, and we done it proper. We weren't going to do it for reasons that didn't make sense. After that we cleared it, and other units had to do the same thing a bit later than us, because they were trying to block what they were doing.

ZS: How long after did the first couple of monitoring groups start?

TB: They were there before. We were funding Runnymede trust, they wanted to do a project, or the race unit depending on the subject. If it was policing it was us, if it was race it would be Herman's unit. Through 82, 83, things were really quite exciting. We were doing lots of work, and Policing London coming out. 84 was the police bill where we famously produced a hip hop video with the title Kill the Bill, which got passed the legal department! We had our tongue in cheek.

But of course, by now you could hold meetings - not only was this happening, but also, this is also important. We were funding the monitoring groups, the Labour boroughs were setting up police committees. So you have a structure, the GLC unit at the top, monitoring groups independent

community, at the same time, progressive Labour councils - Liberals too - setting up committees at the borough level. I think we were very similar, about 20, 24 boroughs. Might have been a bit less. 15, 16. Beginning to get an infrastructure created. Things would be happening in a Camden Unit, police committee and they seceded to Martin Kettle at the policing unit. By the second third year you were beginning to get more done at the ground than at the top.

Boroughs weren't controlling the monitoring group, monitoring groups were independently funded by GLC. They would work together but not under their control.

These things just happened. It wasn't until 84-85 and the row over the London transport affairs, Thatcher tried to put us out. GLC wanted a flat fare, Tories said no, you have to charge by the distance travelled. That issue was chosen by Thatcher to say, right we are going to get rid of the GLC.

ZS: Had there been a lot of things leading up to that.

T: A lot of things upsetting them, but what they got, told the GLC couldn't do we did it, etc. They didn't like police units or whatever. When the demonstration happened in Wapping, 83-84 Print worker strike - I had our office contact the police so I could watch the police videos to see what was happening. Which is interesting. You had that authority.

I wanted to see, yes, if they were doing anything naughty. What was it they were basing their actions on, people were rioting, or was it the police?

Later on in 84-5 I was the person sent up by the GLC to monitor and liaise with the striking miners in Derbyshire and Yorkshire. Came back and wrote two reports. GLC were doing other things, organising convoys to take up food and lorries. Our particular job was to say what was happening on the policing end. I was based in Leeds. Borrowed a car to drive around.

The other important thing, I kept my NUJ membership, as I was still working on policing London. The rule was, providing the NUJ fee was higher than my ....

If I could show my press card than the GLC, it didn't stop anything happening to you, not that it did to me. But it gave authority. I didn't have to be as the lefty GLC, I was there as a journalist.

ZS: For the years in the unit for, when there were things that were found out by local groups on what the police had done, how did that get back to you?

TB: Myself and Martin, and Louise Christian, Courtney and researchers we shared those out among the staff, so we each had three projects and couple of monitoring groups to look after. We wanted to link research with what was happening at the ground. This came out of practice. One of mine was Hackney as I lived in Hackney. Everybody had two or three which reported back to me or Martin. We didn't need reporting back unless there was a problem. We would hear about it because they sent stuff in. Policing was one of the subjects in the committee, they opened up the County Hall for community groups to do things - concerts etc. This was a new kind of local government - not just police monitoring



but around the whole culture of the place. You have some things which you have, I was known as Chief Officer, there they called it superior officer. I was entitled to things - I could get a car to pick me up. I only used it once, as I had to work in Ealing and then had a meeting in London. This is nonsense, I'll just get a taxi and claim it. When Martin left to start International Alert and I became head. Sheila became my secretary, she was lovely, we got on well together. I said I want to do things a bit differently, because I wasn't used to having a secretary - but it was their job so I asked them to go through training. For when GLC came to an end, it was possible it was coming to an end. 84-85, defo by the end of 85 things were being wound down. Short period of time really, 81-85 the last 6 months was the run down.

The story of why Tony has a red tie. Went into one committee, finance - it was a funny committee, it wasn't finance and general purpose, it was general affairs committee. I gave a report on something and the guy in the chair was an old-fashioned Labour person, he looked at me. Mr Bunyan, I thought police officers wore ties and suits. I just looked at him, didn't know what to say. So I bought a red tie and only used it to go to that committee. I've still got it.

There was an element, small element in the Labour group, from the old Labour in those terms, which didn't go along with it, but had to.

ZS: People in Labour?

TB: One or two, it wasn't many. They would chair one committee and other. But that was all managed. And there was two or three Liberals there. A Liberal there who, I can't remember his name, who I had known previously, when I was nat student, he was a progressive liberal. We represented Twickenham - some things he would support what we were doing, and some Tories, then the odd Labour person wouldn't. You always had to be sure what committee things would go through.

I remember the end of the GLC Ken gave a little party. I wasn't invited to the GLC jamboree but Ken was there, I said, I didn't see much of you in police. He said well you did such a good job, you didn't need me there. Other committees partly because the subject matter or Tories being stroppy he had to spend more time. But it was a compliment.

Another time, I went to police college to speak a couple of times. Once GLC once after. I became advisor to the Association Met Authority.

ZS: What did that entail?

TB: AMA was a local government organisation, of all the big cities – London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Newcastle - all the big urban cities had a committee called association of metropolitan police authorities. Metropolitan counties they were called. That was good because I was able to get a national picture. I could see all the papers and what was going through. It was useful, I did that even as LSPU [London Strategic Policy Unit], and then the two years in Haringey, to being advisor.

ZS: What issues?

TB: Home offices circulars, which we weren't getting at the GLC, it was another source of info and experience. When you got to the miners' strike, I had some understanding and could find out what was happening. Contacts in different cities, find out who was going to Derby coal field. I was seeing another side of local government, in that sense. Some of it was boring, but it was also interesting.

And so through them I would often manage to obtain, and I still have them in the archive in May Day rooms, the miners' strike GLC archive, I would get the printouts of which police support units - normal policemen being sent on pub order - being sent to Derbyshire, I acquired a list of who was sending what. Now that could have been useful in court. If one hits you over the head it could be so many people. But if you knew when and where, you could narrow it down.

It was exciting. It was exciting. GLC was exciting. LSPU was partly exciting. Then I went to Haringey police support unit 88, without the backing of London borough or GLC, police committees were being shut down.

Outside of London they were the police authority. These people on the AMA were the chairs of the policing authorities in all the major cities in England. They were in charge of big budgets themselves. Provided that police could run efficiency, etc. they weren't meant to have power on policy. Margaret made it very clear about police racism, she did it nicely and reasonably, and began to have influence on what the police could do. To have someone articulate to come out and tell the police what they were doing wrong. Certainly in Manchester - the only other out of London metropolitan authority or borough which had a police committee, which Steve Wright was head of. In 1984, Leon Brittan came there and there was a demonstration. There had been a big riot, there had been arrests so they set up an inquiry panel. I was on that with John Plat Mills. Lovely man. Died in the early 1990s, he was a QC and chaired the panel. We did a report into the Leon Brittan visit in Manchester, which was important and got attention.

ZS: 20 out of the 32 had police monitoring groups. Would that include the shop fronts?

TB: Yeah it was all in the budget. Some were bigger than others. Depending on the local need and local history. They all had a minimum of two people, some had four. They might have gone off and got money from somewhere else. Local borough could also give them money.

Z: Were many local groups using them?

TB: Yes, they were very active. They had to send in reports, they were all real. And they were doing everyday work helping people who would come in., This happened to me, my son. They were not lawyers but had local lawyer to represent people. They created an extended local structure of people who could help. In the 60s and 70s you had concept I can't remember how many there were, called law centres. Funded by local government. Law centres movement.

ZS: What were they doing?

TB: Giving legal advice to people on every subject. Pension benefits, social benefits everything. It was broad. It was a more radical citizen's advice bureau. More political with a small p. Not saying that citizen's advice couldn't do it, but there was that sense. Who was funded and why and what the funding was for. When it came to the shop fronts, it would be funding for the rent. It would be rent. The rent would have to be reasonable. The finance department would look at it and say it's reasonable, that's too posh. It didn't happen very often.

ZS: What happened after the GLC, with the policing units and monitoring groups?

TB: Some of them continued to get support from local council. Most had to shut down because they didn't have the money.

ZS: Are there any groups that continued without the funding, on their own backs?

TB: Lot of local groups, Hackney legal defence campaign, had different names, lots of local individual names where people had been harassed by police virtually every week. Campaigns - where there was a strength they continued on a voluntary basis. There was a bit of money, also in community centres, there were more places you could meet for free. So, they would continue on just a little bit of money. They didn't have an employee, but they were local campaigns in the traditional sense. They were outlived, but they still exist, it still happens. You have cases where that has been happening, before and after the GLC.

ZS: How did the committees, how did they work? The committees in the GLC?

TB: All items of finance and most items of policy had to go through the committee. The policy often involved - it could just be policy document, or it could have financial implications. Or it could be, every year we had an annual budget. We had to sometimes say we wanted to grow a bit. Or we want to do this can we have money. Because we weren't big we tended to get what asked for. We weren't asking for millions and millions. The last year we were on four million quid, which is a lot. We would ask for 500,000 which sounds like a lot but wasn't.

We would just say we would want to expand this. Police Bill coming up and we need to deal with this, give us money. We're funding monitoring, staff etc, and we didn't have money for a campaign. Policing London was free to Londoners. Think of this, having ability to put adverts into local and national newspaper, if you want a copy to policing London, just send your name and address, and you'll get a copy free every two months. 25,000 were circulated. That's a lot. Some were taking multiple copies to put into book shops and other things.

ZS: What kind of information is in there?

TB: We have them in the basement, we have to find it. We have to reserve one set. I have one set at home, but there must be another set here somewhere.

[Break 59.23]

It really was exciting and busy. And it was a good thing that it happened. It served as an example. When people talk today about how can we do this again. I think we have to remember the biggest problem was there was a major authority, and political will to create the budget to fund the groups to make the unit. There is only two ways you have money to do this again - institutional power local regional government, or you've got funding coming from foundations, trusts. There is a third way, crowd funding, but it's small. If you haven't got money going into community based things, coming from national local government, then there's a problem.

ZS: One last question: how you felt personally about the GLC- did it affect your political leanings? How it encouraged...

TB: I think it was symbiotic, if that's the right term. This was a period I was looking at the British state, from 1970 from time out through to 1990 I was looking at the British state. So, and its pre-internet period. So, you're much more dependent on getting photocopies of things. And things being leaked in a different kind of way. So I had been doing that, so the GLC had fitted the same pattern. I was a journalist, I had written a book, I did some teaching, then I had a chance to bring those ideas to a different level. I always remember the irony, was Mr Dunning, the chief honcho on the officer's side. Used to have these weekly monthly meetings with all the heads of unit, I never used to go I thought they were boring. He took me for lunch two or three times. Mr Dunning thinks you might benefit from management training. Unilever have this course... When I was at school, I was chosen to be fast tracked to be executive directive by Unilever, and I walked away from that after a year, it drove me, I had to do it, following my dad, he worked for Shell, straight forward shirt and tie, and I went to drama school. Had done that year there, and young liberal management I had a bit of management experience, not a lot. So I sometimes thought it was unfortunate I was good at management and finance. Because it meant I was getting frustrated about not doing hands on work on the subject matter. I said someone has to do this job to let other people do it. General it was fine, in a sense I thought I had less time to do the research.

ZS: What would you have liked?

TB: Just to have more time to do what I had been doing before. I had moved off the track. So I left Haringey and started Statewatch. Just to get back into the subject matter. It was a logical progression. Haringey was two years, and I needed perhaps - one of the things for example, when GLC was abolished, I had to make sure that everyone who wanted a job in our unit, got a job in LSPU. London strategic policy unit 86-88. I had to make sure I could fight for a budget - 300 people instead of 22,000. So its research activist side of the GLC. Only 300 people, because we were the smallest unit, we kept all 24 people. There was other units that went from 300 to X. But because we were small, mostly everybody who wanted a job could come and get a job. And then of course, when the LSPU was abolished, I had to make sure that all those who wanted to get a job in the Boroughs could get a job, and I was the last person to get a job, I got one in Haringey. That was an important thing to do, people who had worked

hard were loyal and whatever, to provide them with something, and some went off to do other things. The majority got jobs in council.

ZS: If something like the GLC would come back now, and would reinvigorate a policing unit, what advice would you give those people?

TB: If there was the political will to do it, which was matched by the funders to do it, then that is precisely the point to which the GLC would become relevant. I can't see it happening. It might never happen. But when it does happen, people will need to look backwards, if they are wise, to learn from us. That is why the London Met archive, has all the committee minutes. What it doesn't have, all the research files and everything else, as they weren't considered valuable. We have some with us. At the end of LSPU we had ten four door filing cabinets, and I wanted to buy them, to take them to Statewatch. I bought them from Camden, before Haringey, they said ten filing cabinets were £160. What about the content? That didn't have value, so I bought the cabinets to keep the contents.

ZS: Where are those files now?

TB: We had to lose a lot of them when we moved from Stoke Newington to here. There was a lot of stuff, and what do you give priority to? The pamphlets, the books, etc. Some are still downstairs in the basement. There comes a time when...

If you haven't got room, and other things take priority well then, that's it. You shut your eyes and say 'well'. I've got a set of the Policing London's, and the publications. I might donate them to May Day Rooms.

ZS: Thank you Tony.