

# D-DAY FOR BORIS

Today he's set for No 10. So can he emulate his hero Churchill and turn Brexit into HIS finest hour?

STEPHEN GLOVER: PAGE 18



Carl Beech: The fantasist known as Nick

**Aided by police, 'Nick' destroyed lives with sex abuse lies. Now he's been convicted of peddling a monstrous fantasy - as Labour's deputy faces calls to quit for his part in a...**



Tom Watson: He has refused to apologise

# PERVERSION OF JUSTICE

**SCOTLAND Yard was in the dock last night for launching a VIP paedophile probe based on the serial lies of a fantasist.**

Carl Beech, also known as 'Nick',

By **Stephen Wright** and **Glen Keogh**

was convicted yesterday over outlandish allegations that led to a disastrous investigation in which homes were raided and lives ruined without a shred of evidence.

D-Day veteran Lord Bramall, 95, was

among the victims and endured a police search and interview under caution.

Railing at the Yard's 'incompetence', the field marshal said it was ridiculous that the officers involved had managed to retire without facing any disciplinary action. He added: 'The police contributed to the perversion of jus-

tice. They didn't go out to pervert the course of justice but the way they handled uncorroborated evidence lent more credibility to Beech's statements than they deserved.'

Labour's deputy leader Tom Watson also faced calls to quit after meeting

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Timeline of police fiasco

Met backs claim that VIP abuse ring killed three boys  
December 19, 2014

I'M VICTIM OF A WITCH HUNT, SAYS ABUSE PROBE EX-TORY MP  
August 26, 2015

VIP ABUSE INQUIRY IS STARTING TO UNRAVEL  
September 5

NICK: VICTIM OR FANTASIST?  
September 19

WHY DID MET LET WATSON TAKE OVER?  
October 12

Off the case, detective who said VIP abuse claims were 'credible'  
October 20

VIP ABUSE INQUIRY: WAR HERO CLEARED  
January 16, 2016

NOW SAY SORRY TO HOUNDED HERO  
January 18

HUMILIATION OF THE YARD  
March 22

NOW PUT VIP ABUSE FANTASIST IN DOCK  
November 9

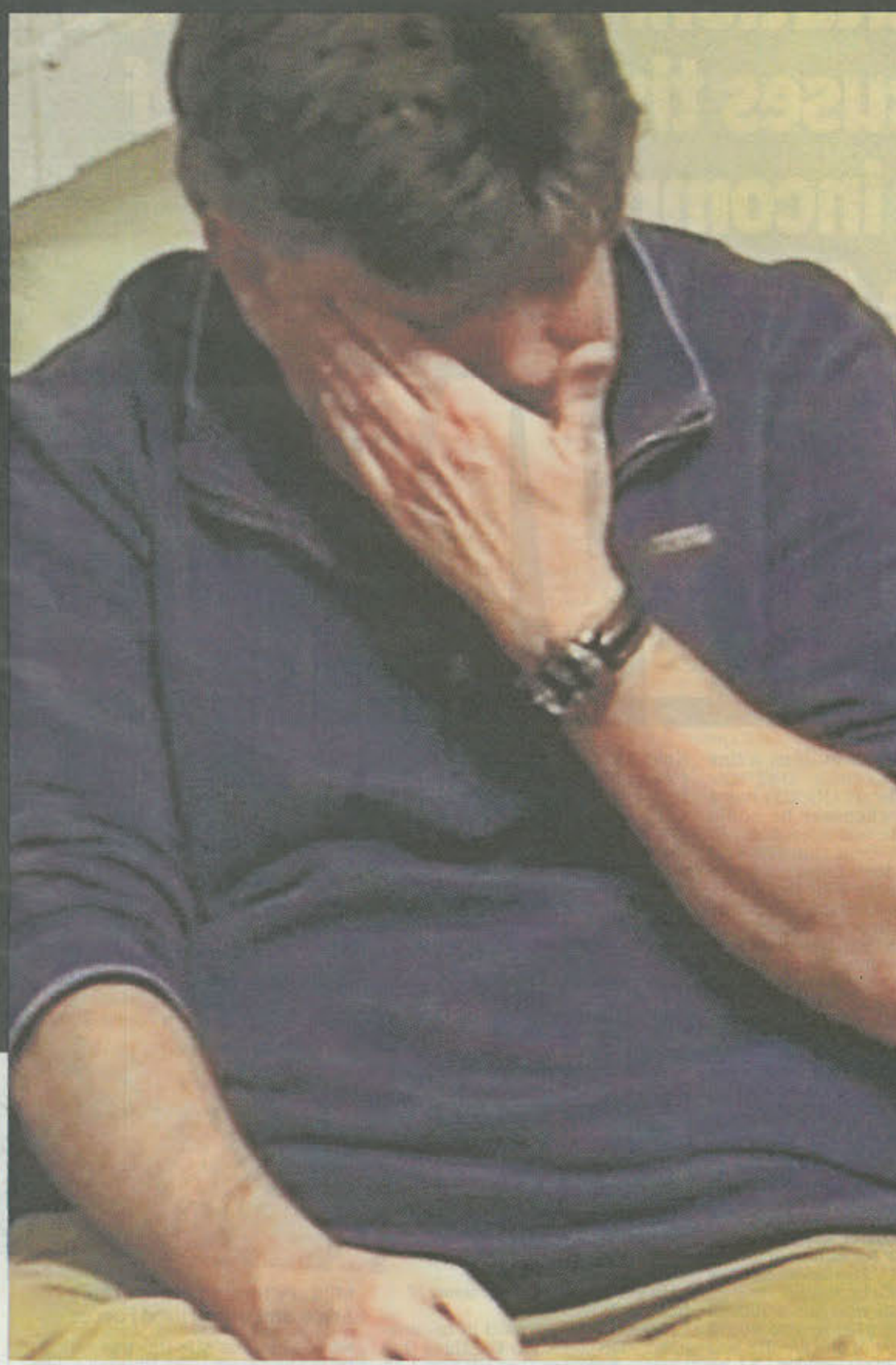
# INCREDIBLE AND UNTRUE

By Stephen Wright  
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

They infamously described his ludicrous claims as 'credible and true', and wasted 16 months and £2.5m trying to prove it. How COULD so many senior police be so gullible?



Met chief: Bernard Hogan-Howe was rewarded with a peerage



Tissue of lies: Carl Beech being interviewed by Operation Midland detectives in November 2014



Top job: Steve Rodhouse



Retired: Kenny McDonald

QUITE simply, it has rewritten the rule book for shambolic police investigations.

Diabolical would be a more appropriate word to describe Operation Midland - the £2.5million inquiry into an alleged murderous, VIP paedophile ring involving a former prime minister, ex home secretary, one-time armed forces chief and heads of the security services.

Haunted by police failings in the Jimmy Savile case, obsessed with the idea that any abuse allegations should automatically be believed and under ferocious pressure from the likes of Labour deputy leader Tom Watson, officers abandoned common sense.

But as the rudderless investigation descended into a black comedy, it appeared detectives were auditioning for a 21st century revival of the Keystone Cops.

Imagine the scenes at the North Yorkshire home of former home secretary Leon Brittan where, just six weeks after his death, a line of officers did a fingertip search of his garden looking for signs of 'disturbed earth'.

Detectives searching this property and his London house later took away dozens of items for further investigation - including a

### 'Fingertip search of his garden'

Teletubbies video. In an excruciating 100-minute police interview, D-Day veteran Lord Bramall was asked if he could swim, if he ordered his accuser to eat his vomit, whether he chose to molest him on Remembrance Days and if disgraced TV presenter Savile was an accomplice.

If that wasn't bad enough, police calmly carried out a follow-up interview shortly after his wife of 66 years had died. Within days of receiving Beech's allegations, it should have been clear they were the work of an attention-seeking fantasist.

But detectives on Operation Midland took 370 witness statements, launched 1,700 'actions' and produced 1,860 documents. The inquiry involved a minimum of 20 police officers full time.

In November 2012, Beech contacted Metropolitan Police officers on Operation Yewtree, the force's umbrella investigation into spiralling claims against Savile and other celebrities.

His complaint was referred to Wiltshire Police and Beech was interviewed the following month, when he gave more details of supposed abuse by Savile, his late stepfather and others.

He made no mention of VIPs, recollections were sketchy, and he struggled to answer basic questions. In May 2013, the Wiltshire probe was shelved due to insufficient evidence. A file saying so was returned to the Met.

After being snubbed by detec-

tives, Beech began blogging on the internet about his alleged child sex abuse. In August 2014 he appeared in silhouette and with a disguised voice in an obscure satellite TV documentary under a different name claiming he was abused by Savile. By the time the programme was broadcast, Beech was also in contact with Mark Conrad, a reporter from a hitherto unknown investigations website, Exaro. Beech now named Tory ex-MP Harvey Proctor as being among his tormentors. His growing allegations caught the eye of a detective from Scotland Yard's Operation Fairbank inquiry into alleged historic child sex abuse by politicians and other public figures. By now Beech was using the pseudonym 'Nick' and had a bombshell tale to tell: he said he had witnessed the sadistic murder of three boys by various high-

profile figures. In October 2014, Beech provided Detective Sergeant James Townly with a list of 12 alleged abusers, including Lord Bramall, Sir Edward Heath, Lord Brittan, Mr Proctor, Labour peer Lord (Greville) Janner, ex-M15 boss Sir Michael Hanley and ex-M16 chief Sir Maurice Oldfield. Police should not have taken such a list seriously - especially given Beech had made no mention of VIPs two years earlier. The decision to check against Wiltshire Police files was a major blunder. But they did take him seriously almost certainly as a consequence of a new policy directive issued in November 2014, when Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary Sir Tom Winsor stated that 'the presumption that a victim should always be believed should be institutionalised'. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Steve Rodhouse, perhaps smart-

ing from overseeing a bungled previous inquiry into Savile, formally opened an investigation and briefed senior officers, including Yard chief Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe and Assistant Commissioner Patricia Gallan. Within months of the probe commencing, a leading criminal psychologist was warning that Beech was very likely to be a fantasist. The basic detective's rule of 'assume nothing, check everything' was thrown out of the window in December 2014 when Detective Superintendent Kenny McDonald held a press conference at Scotland Yard to describe allegations made by 'Nick' as 'credible and true'. At that point officers hadn't interviewed a single suspect, didn't know who the alleged murder victims were, and hadn't found a body. Sources claim Yard chiefs were so concerned about 'under-

mining victim confidence' in the police that they decided against asking Beech for permission to look at his computers and electronic devices. Had they done so, they would have established very quickly that he had carried out internet research to identify his victims and fabricate his story, and downloaded appalling child porn including images of children being raped. It should not have taken long to establish that Heath and Mr Proctor were sworn enemies, yet Beech suggested that they were part of the same paedophile ring. The suggestion that Sir Michael kidnapped Beech's dog as a warning to comply with the abuse gang's wishes was similarly outlandish. Mr Proctor firmly believes that the fantasist effectively ended up running Operation Midland: calling the shots, putting pressure on

### Officers escape sanction

NOT one police officer will face misconduct proceedings over the disastrous £2.5million inquiry into Carl Beech's allegations.

Five officers were referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct over fears they failed in their 'duties and responsibilities'. But last night it confirmed that no one on Operation Midland or those who supervised it would face any disciplinary action.

In any event, three detectives retired before the inquiry concluded - including senior investigating officer Detective Superintendent Diane Tudway.

Two further officers, Det Supt Kenny McDonald, who described Beech as 'credible and true', and Deputy Assistant Commissioner Steve Rodhouse were cleared of misconduct in March 2017.

This was despite a scathing 2016 report into Operation Midland by retired High Court judge Sir Richard Henriques who identified 43 separate blunders.

However he absolved then Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe and his Assistant Commissioner Patricia Gallan, who had oversight of Operation Midland, of any blame.

Bizarrely, Mr McDonald's now infamous 'credible and true' comments, which critics said prejudiced Operation Midland, were not even examined by watchdogs. He retired with an estimated £250,000 pension pot weeks before the Beech trial.

Mr Rodhouse is now a £175,000-a-year director general at the National Crime Agency. Miss Gallan retired last year with an estimated £400,000 pension. Mrs Tudway was promoted to superintendent and retired on the eve of Beech's trial.

Detective Sergeant James Townly, who conducted around 20 hours of interviews with Beech, now works in counter-terrorism. Sir Bernard was given a peerage.

by Rebecca Hardy

# Aged 21, Lord Bramall led a platoon onto the Normandy beaches and rose to head our Armed Forces – only for the claims of a fantasist to shatter his reputation. Here, his furious son accuses the ex-Met chief of rank incompetence that saw the father he adores...

**A** FEW weeks ago, Field Marshal Lord Bramall, a man of impeccable character who has served this country with distinction in war and in peace, asked his son Nicolas: 'I'm not a bad chap, am I?'

'Dad puts on a very brave face but what he's going through internally – I'm not sure,' says Nicolas. 'There's been a lot of suffering and I don't think that should be underestimated.'

'Look, I don't want to make out Dad's a shrinking violet. He's not. He's as tough as they come, but the longer this monstrous business has gone on...' He shakes his head part in anger, part sadness.

I find it mind-boggling the police could have got it so wrong. They took the word of a complete fantasist and threw Dad – a man who's been a wonderful servant to this country – to the wolves without a single piece of evidence.

'I think this has affected him more the longer it's gone on. The very fact you've been so publicly accused of paedophilia, rape and torture when it's absolute rubbish is enough to finish anybody, isn't it? The trial has been particularly hard for him.'

Lord Bramall did not attend the ten-week trial, where Carl Beech, persisted in making outrageous slurs against the war hero, and which ended yesterday, with Beech being convicted of 12 counts of perverting the course of justice, and another of fraud.

For Lord Bramall was not well enough to endure appearing at the trial. When I met this delightful old soldier 18 months ago, he needed sticks to walk owing to a degenerative neurological condition. Now he is wheelchair bound.

'Our concern was that this might not be sorted before he dies. It has dragged on and on,' says Nicolas. 'We hoped Nick/Carl Beech, whatever his name is, would plead guilty. Instead he's had such a platform for his poison. It doesn't help a 95-year-old chap, does it? When we last saw Dad he was quite emotional.'

'He started going through the story all again: "The police came to the door. I greeted them. I thought it was a security issue, maybe a threat or something..."

Lord Bramall was having breakfast with his frail wife Avril, who was suffering with Alzheimer's disease, at his home in Hampshire when police knocked on his door on March 4, 2015.

More than 20 officers in white overalls spent ten hours examining every inch of the house, leaving with an old visitors' book and copies of two speeches Lord Bramall

had made, one to Sandhurst cadets and another about a fellow Army commander.

'They went behind every picture in the house – every picture. They ripped the place apart,' says Nicolas. 'There was a busload of police in white suits. My parents live right in the middle of the village. They weren't being subtle.'

'Most of the officers went down the pub for lunch and it wasn't long before the local paper got onto Dad.'

**H**OGAN-HOWE [Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe who was Met Commissioner at the time] actually came down to see Dad twice. He said from very early on he'd never really believed Dad had been involved, but the police were under such pressure, after the Jimmy Saville scandal, to show no-one was above the law.

'That was the key to this: it doesn't matter who they are or what they've achieved, we'll get them. They were absolutely seduced by the idea that they had a top-level paedophile ring.'

Nicolas's disgust is writ large upon his face. The very suggestion his father was involved in a VIP paedophile ring with, among other prominent men, former Prime Minister Sir Edward Heath, ex Tory MP Harvey Proctor, former head of MI5 Michael Hain, former head of MI6 Maurice Oldfield and

former Home Secretary Leon Brittan would be laughable, if it wasn't so downright devastating. 'The trouble with all allegations, particularly paedophilia, is it sticks, doesn't it? It's just such an overwhelmingly awful thing. 'Once it's out there you can't bring it back and people believe there can't be any smoke without fire. I've even had a few letters – nasty letters – from people saying he's as guilty as...' The sentence tails into a furious silence.

'The question I've always asked myself is this: here's this chap who has accused a prime minister, a home secretary, the head of the British armed forces, the head of MI5 and the head of MI6. 'Surely to God when this came up old Hogan-Howe or someone would have said, "Hang on a minute. Let's look at this bloke."

'If only for self-preservation you'd think they'd think, "Before we start raiding these houses, we really need to be certain that this chap is who he says he is."

'But they didn't make sure. They took his story and ran with it. Nobody thought to look on his computer, look into his life or interview his wife. They just couldn't wait to get stuck into Dad.'

A thoroughly likeable man who shares his father's sense of humour and passion for cricket, Nicolas, 66, loves his father 'hugely'.

It is why he is speaking now. 'I've agonised how best to support him. I feel angry about it. I'm his son. I feel I should stand up and be

counted. We need to draw a line under this business. Dad was always there for us [Nicolas has a sister, Sara] whenever he could possibly be. He was a hard act to follow, but the great thing he said to me was, "I don't mind what you do Nick, but try to do it well."

Nicolas is a successful landscape gardener and lives in Dorset with his second wife, Pip. The past four years have, he says, 'been hell' for his father and hugely upsetting for his family, which includes Nicolas's son Alexander, 40 – a talented fashion photographer who photographed Princess Eugenie's wedding last year – and his 38-year-old daughter Charlotte, who between them have five children.

When the police were rummaging through Dad's house, they actually said to my sister, who was there, "Are you happy for him to see your grandchildren?" Nicolas looks truly outraged, as well he should. 'This is a man who has achieved just about everything you could possibly achieve in one life. He was captain of the Eton [cricket] XI, he was a boxer, a very good artist – he had two pictures in the Royal Academy at the age of 16.'

He landed in Normandy at the age of 21 in charge of a platoon, was wounded twice. He fought his way through Holland towards Berlin, won the Military Cross. He got to the top of the forces, was made a

Knights of the Garter. He had a lovely wife, never let his kids down. There was never a whiff of scandal – not men, women, boys or corruption. He's just been a wonderful public servant.

'But he's been dragged through four years of hell because the police are basically incompetent. 'That's the bottom line. They were totally incompetent. 'They overreacted and got it spectacularly wrong and Dad and other people – Dad's family, Lady Brittan [Lord Brittan's widow] – had to pay the price.'

Alexander, who's particularly close to his grandfather, would like to see Nick 'take a long walk off a short pier.'

Nicolas adds: 'I've often said to Dad, "Aren't you p\*\*\*\*d off with Nick?" He always replies: "No, it's the Met. They've made a complete arse of the whole thing."

He's tried to keep his sense of humour but... 'Nicolas leans forward in his armchair. 'Do you know the thing that hugely bothers Dad? When he's dead his great-grandchildren will Google him – or "goggle" him as he puts it – and all of this will come up. This is what really upsets him. In future years, when people do military research, there'll be all this stuff about these heinous crimes. You can't get rid of it, can you? It's there for ever.' Nicolas was at

work when his wife Pip was called by a distressed Lord Bramall that March morning. 'He was upset,' she says today. 'He said the police had raided his house, and were there now. They were going through everything and he wasn't allowed to move. He said he'd been accused of something involving a minor 40 years ago but they wouldn't say what it was.'

Mum was very confused. It was so unpleasant for her. 'As police went through the house, she was sort of shunted from one room to another. 'She knew something was wrong, but wasn't quite sure what it was. It affected her quite badly. Do you remember she used to say, "What have I done, what have I done?"' Pip turns to her husband who

allegations are out there to stand up and show your face. He didn't want to cause embarrassment to anybody.'

So much so Lord Bramall offered not to attend that June's high-profile Order of the Garter service where recipients of this, the oldest British order of chivalry, gather at Windsor for lunch with the Queen, followed by a service at St George's chapel.

'He was encouraged to go and I think the Queen was very glad he went. Dad's never shied away. He's always looked people in the eye. 'All his peers have been very supportive. His aides-de-camp went en masse to the police and said, "This is ridiculous." A lot of them appeared in court. They had gatekeepers at his office at the barracks signing people in and out. 'The thought of a major bringing his son to the commander of the British Armed Forces and saying, "Help yourself. I'll pick him up in a couple of hours," was ridiculous.'

A second police interview took place in July 2015 at Lord Bramall's home. By now, his wife of 66 years was terribly ill. He worried about missing a moment of the precious time they had left together. As it was, she sadly died before that interview.

'I believe this whole thing very much affected her,' says Pip. 'She sensed all this chaos and all these changes around her when what she needed was a quiet predictable life. 'They were devoted to each other. To have died with all this going

on...' Pip is truly distressed by her mother-in-law's suffering. It was ten months before officers leading the now utterly discredited Operation Midland finally told Lord Bramall there was 'insufficient evidence' to charge him.

'There was never evidence of any form,' says Nicolas. 'Nothing. Just this man's word and the police fell for it hook, line and sinker, but they wouldn't put their hands in the air, say "We've got it wrong" and clear Dad's name.'

'An apology did eventually come [in October, 18 months after the raid], but it was fairly mealy-mouthed. I was always saying to Dad, "This is awful." I was perhaps more indignant than him in the beginning. He'd say, "If you've landed on the beaches of Normandy, you've been through worse than this." But I don't think he'd say that now.'

'Since the trial began he's endured a bombardment of unpleasant accusations – rape, torture, paedophilia. Nick's persisted in the accusations against Dad in a lot of detail. 'It makes me so angry. 'Dad's achieved just about everything any man could possibly achieve in life. It should be his sort of pipe and slipper time to relax and be proud of all he's done. 'Instead, he now gets quite watery-eyed and keeps saying, "I'm not a bad chap, am I?"

'Dad? A bad chap? Nicolas repeats disbelievingly. 'He's a good guy.' He is.

Lord Bramall's lawyer badgered the Metropolitan Police for details of the accusations against him. Shamefully, he was kept waiting until April 30, almost two months after that first traumatic raid, and was then interviewed under caution by a detective constable. The allegations were so preposterous – paedophilia, torture, rape – he ended up banging the table.

Beech alleged his stepfather Major Ray Beech sexually abused him and took him to Lord Bramall's office in Erskine Barracks, Wiltshire, in 1976 when he was in charge of the UK land forces. 'Some of the abuse was supposed to have taken place at a pool party, so Dad was asked if he could swim. He said he jolly nearly had to at Normandy. 'The interview was conducted by a detective constable. You'd think interviewing a Field Marshal you'd get one of your heavyweights in, wouldn't you? 'The questions were so banal. Dad ran rings round him. At one point, Dad said something like, "Did he tell you I was circumcised?" "The detective constable looked at his notes, saw nothing there, so asked, "Are you?" Dad said, "I'm not telling you," Nicolas chuckles, but in truth there has been little to laugh about in the past four years. 'You've met Dad. He's not someone who would run away from the sound of a gun, but when you're accused of heinous crimes like that, it's a very lonely place,' he says. 'It takes a lot of courage when all these



Military legend: He led the Army and our Armed Forces

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Incredulous: Lord Bramall during his police interview

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Supportive: Nicolas with his parents Edwin and Avril Bramall – whose lives were broken apart by the false claims



Long career: In the Home Guard at 17

# THROWN TO THE WOLVES

# Labour No 2 told: Quit as MP for your smearing of the innocent



TOM Watson was last night told to quit as an MP as he was accused of fuelling a 'moral panic' and a climate of Establishment hysteria over child sex abuse.

The Labour deputy leader met Carl Beech in his Westminster office just months before he made his outlandish claims to Scotland Yard in late 2014.

The following year Mr Watson personally met a Metropolitan Police detective sergeant to discuss Beech's fantastical claims following an initial phone discussion, it can now be revealed.

Last night, Mr Watson was slammed by victims of Beech's lies and accused of furthering his own career by making political capital out of their misery.

Daniel Janner QC, son of the late Labour peer Greville Janner, called on Mr Watson to resign and criticised him for taking the 'moral high ground' against anti-Semitism in the Labour Party, having helped smear innocent men as paedophiles.

Former MP Harvey Proctor, who Beech accused of murdering a child, called on Mr Watson to apologise.

But, in a 1,400 word statement last night, Mr Watson refused to apologise to victims of Beech's allegations and sought to defend himself, saying it was not his role to judge whether victims' stories were true. Referring to Beech by the pseudonym he was using at the time of their meeting, he said: 'I

By Glen Keogh

encouraged every person that came to me to take their story to the police and that is what I did with Nick.'

Mr Watson's direct role in the Beech case began in 2014 when he welcomed the former health worker to Westminster, knowing he had made allegations, including the murder of a child by members of an Establishment paedophile ring.

The pair spoke 'at length'. Mr Watson would later be described by Beech as being part of a 'little group', alongside a journalist from the now-disgraced investigative news website Exaro and

**Hysteria: Watson is accused of fuelling a moral panic**

In 2012, as the row over the late Jimmy Savile's paedophile crimes raged, he intervened during Prime Minister's Questions with the headline-grabbing statement that there is 'clear intelligence suggesting a powerful paedophile network linked to Parliament and No 10'.

Mr Watson had been contacted by self-styled abuse 'whistleblower' Peter McKelvie - also part of Beech's 'little group' - who said he had evidence of a paedophile ring.

On his own admission, the Labour MP now found himself receiving an 'avalanche' of historic child sex abuse complaints from alleged victims.

Months before meeting Beech, Mr Watson spoke to a woman who said she had been abused by the former home secretary Lord Brittan. Mr Watson wrote to Alison Saunders, the Director of Public Prosecutions, complaining that the peer had not been interviewed by Scotland Yard

over an alleged 1967 attack. In fact, police had already concluded there were no substance to the allegations made by a woman known as 'Jane', a Labour activist suffering from mental health issues.

When Lord Brittan died in early 2015 under a cloud of accusations, Mr Watson traduced the former peer when he could no longer defend himself.

Repeating an unsubstantiated quote from a 'survivor', he wrote that Lord Brittan was 'as close to evil as a human being could get in my view'.

There was never any evidence to back up the claims and Mr Watson apologised to Lady Brittan in late 2015. He later admitted he had let his self-appointed status as child abuse campaigner take over his life.

Last night barrister Mr Janner, added: 'His motive was personal political advancement riding on a bandwagon of public frenzy which he had whipped up.'

## 'Whipped up a public frenzy'

a retired social worker, who helped him 'put my information out there'.

Shortly after this, Beech contacted the Metropolitan Police with his lurid claims.

The MP initially retained a degree of scepticism. He said: 'What I'm certain of is that he's not delusional. He is either telling the truth, or he's made up a meticulous and elaborate story. It's not for me to judge.'

His role, he would later say, was to offer 'Nick' 'a degree of protection' to make his allegations. Mr Watson had been basking in the praise he received for helping to expose the tabloid phone-hacking scandal which ultimately led to the closure of the News of the World.

## Defiance of the pair who 'peddled lies'



'Masquerade': Mark Watts (left) and Mark Conrad

JOURNALISTS behind the disgraced investigations website that peddled paedophile fantasist Carl Beech's lies should be prosecuted, one of his victims said last night.

Harvey Proctor called for an investigation into the senior figures behind Exaro, including Mark Watts, the site's former editor-in-chief, and Mark Conrad, a reporter who accompanied Beech to his police interview after showing him 42 images of potential 'abusers'.

Exaro - now defunct - produced a string of 'exclusives' on the existence of a paedophile ring operating in Westminster, largely based on

the testimony of Beech. Mr Proctor said: 'Mark Watts and Mark Conrad [were] masquerading as journalists... they reported manufactured and manipulated information.'

Yesterday Mr Watts insisted that Beech's convictions were unsafe.

Mr Conrad, a friend of Labour deputy leader Tom Watson, was interviewed by Northumbria Police at his home over three days earlier this year regarding his dealings with Beech.

He admitted he had doubts about Beech's allegations, but insisted: 'I have nothing to apologise for.' Exaro closed down in 2016.

ONE prominent individual was conspicuous by his absence when the paedophile con-artist formerly known only as 'Nick' was convicted at Newcastle Crown Court of perverting the course of justice by making false and malicious allegations of sex crimes and murder against a series of high-profile public figures.

We would never have heard of the man whose real name is Carl Beech had it not been for Labour's deputy leader Tom Watson, the self-appointed Nonce Finder General. I have maintained all along that Watson should have been in the dock alongside Beech.

Seven years ago he embarked on a vicious vendetta, smearing Conservative politicians and other Establishment figures as kiddie-fiddlers and serial rapists, without a single shred of hard evidence.

Watson was Beech's enabler and cheerleader, using this evil fantasist's farrago of fabrications as a nuclear weapon in his seek-and-destroy mission, defaming leading Tories by accusing them of some of the most disgusting crimes imaginable.

His disgraceful behaviour has ruined the lives of distinguished public servants and their families. Watson's victims included not just former Tory treasurer Lord McAlpine but ex-Home Secretary Leon Brittan and the war hero Lord Bramall, ex-head of the Armed Forces.

In 2012, two years before he discovered 'Nick', Watson hid behind Parliamentary privilege to claim there was a 'powerful paedophile network linked to Parliament and No 10'.

Watson made wild, unsubstantiated allegations of sex abuse at a North Wales children's home, which sparked a media frenzy and emboldened soppy Sally Bercow, the Speaker's wife, to name Lord McAlpine on Twitter as one of the guilty men.

McAlpine was wholly innocent and successfully sought redress for defamation from Bercow and broadcasters stupid enough to repeat and embellish these false allegations.

HE WAS not in the best of health when these vile accusations surfaced and died just over a year later. Who can tell whether this disgraceful assault on his reputation hastened his death?

While Watson hadn't named McAlpine, he might just as well have led a torch-lit procession along Whitehall, burning effigies of top Tories.

That's why I dubbed him The Nonce Finder General.

The McAlpine scandal didn't, however, give him pause for thought. Soon he was back in the saddle, flaming torch in hand, widening the scope of his Inquisition.

Watson wrote to the then Prime Minister David Cameron, suggesting that organised abuse of children may have taken place in Downing Street during the Thatcher years.

Menacingly, he charged that anyone counselling caution about these claims was a 'friend of the paedophile'.

It was a classic case of trying to attribute guilt by association.

When Nick fell into his lap in 2014, Watson worked closely with a so-called (now discredited and defunct) 'news' agency, one of whose reporters conveniently showed Nick pictures of prominent figures to help him identify his 'abusers'.

Watson badgered the police and the Crown Prosecution Service to investigate. Brittan and others had their homes raided and were interviewed under caution, though never charged.

According to the Labour-supporting Sunday Mirror, Watson said he had been in contact with someone who alleged a former 'top minister' in Margaret Thatcher's government had 'regularly abused boys'. After Brittan died, without



# LITTLEJOHN

richard.littlejohn@dailymail.co.uk

Labour's Deputy championed the cause of fantasist 'Nick' — the malignant mud-slinger behind a vicious vendetta. LITTLEJOHN'S withering verdict...

# NOW PUT WATSON IN THE DOCK

his name having been cleared (even though Scotland Yard had concluded months earlier that he was entirely innocent), Watson continued to repeat allegations that the former Home Secretary was guilty of multiple child rapes.

He also claimed to have spoken to a man and a woman who said they had been raped by Brittan. My suspicions were aroused when it was revealed that the woman in question was a Labour activist with mental health problems.

At one stage the Yard, still smarting from their failure to nick Jimmy Savile while he was still alive, appeared to be taking their marching orders directly from Watson. Under the Home Secre-

tary Theresa May's favourite Plod, Commissioner Bernard Hyphen-Howe, the police set up the heavy-handed, over-zealous, ruinously expensive Operation Midland, which mounted dawn raids, dragged the reputations of innocent men through the mud and left their families distraught.

Midland was eventually wound up ignominiously without a single arrest being made.

The Met even declared that the most lurid, and indeed ludicrous, allegations were both 'credible and true' — despite Nick's claims being a pack of lies.

This shameful miscarriage of justice was egged on by a credulous Mother Theresa herself. She

pronounced Watson's allegations as 'just the tip of the iceberg' and ordered a full-scale Paedos In High Places public inquiry be established. This is still lumbering on and could last for many more years, costing at least £100 million.

In the process, innocent civilians became collateral damage — none more so than a young couple who had the misfortune to live in the same property as former Tory MP Harvey Proctor, another Conservative figure who found himself in the frame. During a police raid on Proctor, they were told that if they

didn't vacate the premises immediately, their three-month old daughter would be taken into care. The Old Bill had even taken along a social worker with a child's car seat.

I'm not going to name them again, because they've suffered enough. But everyone involved in this witch hunt should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

All of this madness, all this tyranny, all this outrageous abuse of police power, all this waste of taxpayers' money, all this misery inflicted on blameless men and their families, can be laid at the

door of Watson. Yet the man himself has never been called to account, and even after yesterday's verdict on Nick, remains shamelessly unrepentant.

Incredibly, he is now being touted in the political world as the saviour of the Labour Party, a voice of moderation prepared to take on Jeremy Corbyn and his cohort of anti-Semites.

Ever since Watson shed an entire forest of timber and bought a new wardrobe — something which, I'm told, generally happens when formerly married men take up with a woman half their age — some sections of the media have been carrying laudatory profiles of him, apparently oblivious to his previous.

His opportunist public criticism of Labour's endemic anti-Semitism is at odds with the fact that Leon Brittan, one of his principal targets, was one of this country's most prominent Jewish politicians.

And he seems not to have been troubled by the fact that the false allegations against Brittan first surfaced in the 1980s and were discredited by none other than Left-wing investigative journalist Paul Foot, who maintained they were motivated by, er, anti-Semitism in the security services.

Then there was Watson's bromance with anti-Press campaigner Max Mosley, son of Fascist leader Oswald Mosley, who gave Watson a £540,000 donation — money Watson refused to return even after the Mail exposed his benefactor's dubious, racist past.

**T**HIS is also a man who wants to shackle our Free Press, bringing it under State control, yet has no compunction about using his own position and Parliamentary privilege to peddle false allegations of hideous crimes against his political opponents.

It's also forgotten — or conveniently overlooked — that while Watson refuses to accept the legitimate result of the EU referendum in which 'only' 52 per cent voted Leave (and is leading demands for a second People's Vote), he was elected as Labour's deputy leader with just a cigarette paper-slim 50.7 per cent share of the vote.

I haven't heard anyone suggesting that particular vote should be re-run, least of all Watson himself.

So we can add ocean-going hypocrite to the list of charges against him.

All this explains why, unlike the Boys In The Bubble, I'm not buying in to the reinvention and sanitisation of slimline Tommy Watson, the previously obese MP who once spent so much of his parliamentary expenses on food at Marks & Sparks they gave him a free pizza wheel.

I stand by my earlier assessment of Watson as mad, bad and dangerous, a malignant mud-slinger, utterly unfit for high office, who conspired to exploit a fantasist to promote his ghastly politically-motivated crusade.

We now know that 'Nick', aka Carl Beech, is himself a serial paedophile, guilty of the very crimes which he falsely accused other, innocent men of committing.

Of course, the great irony in all this is that the one nonce the Nonce Finder General failed to expose was Nick the Nonce, sitting right under his nose.

LITTLEJOHN'S COLUMN RETURNS ON FRIDAY

## Don't let disloyalty destroy the new PM

BY the time you read this column, or very soon afterwards, we will know the identity of the United Kingdom's next Prime Minister, bringing to an end a protracted Tory leadership contest.

And it's no exaggeration to say his mission is the most daunting of any Downing Street incomer since at least 1979 – arguably since 1940.

The country is angry, fractious, and deeply divided over Brexit – some because it hasn't happened yet, others because it's happening at all.

Theresa May tried valiantly to heal the schism, with a withdrawal deal that was both pragmatic and honourable.

Ultimately it was savaged in the Commons, bringing her premiership to a humiliating end. She deserved better.

So can her replacement succeed where she failed, or will he also be broken on the Brexit wheel?

The omens aren't encouraging.

Overwhelming favourite Boris Johnson has pledged to take Britain out of the EU by October 31, with or without a deal.

But how? He has little or no working majority and militant forces are ranged against him on all fronts.

In Brussels, they say there can be no re-opening of the withdrawal agreement, and no change to the Irish backstop – the rock on which Mrs May's deal floundered.

Yet the intransigence of the EU may prove a minor obstacle compared with the backstabbing and wrecking tactics of MPs at home. And not just from opposition parties.

Already several Tory ministers are threatening to resign if Mr Johnson wins, in protest at his declaration that No Deal must remain on the table.

Some will see this as a principled stand. Others as an act of treachery.

The party membership has just selected its new leader, but before he's even in place, the rebels are trashing their decision.

Outgoing Foreign Office minister Alan Duncan even called for a no confidence vote in his own government. Could there be more flagrant disloyalty?

If the party is to move forward – indeed to survive at all – it must strive at every level to find consensus.

Let's assume that Mr Johnson has indeed won. Yes, he's gaffe-prone and sometimes appears anything but the *homme sérieux* Britain needs at this critical time.

But for all his flaws, he is a remarkable individual – clever, engaging and deeply patriotic. Is it just possible that he could solve the backstop conundrum and untie the Brexit knot?

The Irish are beginning to fret about No Deal and may be ready to compromise. Perhaps Mr Johnson can pull off a miracle.

One thing is certain, however. Without the full support of his party, he is doomed to fail. The rebels must take a long hard look at themselves and ask whether they really want the likely consequences of that failure – Prime Minister Corbyn and Chancellor McDonnell – on their conscience.

## A grotesque fiction

EXPLOITING the moral panic that followed the Jimmy Savile scandal, Carl Beech concocted a grotesque fiction about a supposed VIP child-sex ring.

It was promoted by a now defunct news website, fuelled by the BBC, swallowed whole by a pathetically gullible Scotland Yard and manipulated for political motives by Labour's deputy leader Tom Watson.

Of those maliciously accused, Lord Brittan was hounded to his grave, and elderly Field Marshal Lord Bramall had his home ransacked and his good name smeared.

Beech is now bound for prison, where he belongs. But why has no one else – no police officer, no accomplice or accessory, and certainly not Mr Watson – been punished for allowing this outrage to happen?

If we are to learn from this appalling miscarriage of justice, the guilty must be held to account.

# Just like his hero Churchill, Boris is rickety, feckless and gaffe-prone. But this could also be HIS finest hour



by Stephen Glover

**T**ODAY, barring accidents, Boris Johnson will be pronounced the winner of the Tory leadership contest. Tomorrow afternoon, he will be driven to Buckingham Palace, where he will kiss hands with the Queen. He will be Prime Minister.

Like his hero, Winston Churchill, he has lived all his adult life yearning for this prize. Like his hero, he has been written off countless times. And, like his hero, he assumes power at a critical moment in our history.

The dangers are obviously not as great as they were when Churchill became PM on May 10, 1940, with the humiliating evacuation of Dunkirk and the capitulation of France, Britain's main ally, only weeks away. But they are bad enough.

## Flawed

Britain is divided and isolated. We are being driven mad by Brexit. One might almost say that, although Churchill's task in 1940 was enormous, at least he knew what he had to do. It is hard to see how any politician can lead us out of the mess we're now in and bring our country together again.

Can Boris save us? Or will he be driven ignominiously out of No 10 in months, even weeks? Like many, I ask myself these questions constantly. And I must admit – again, I suspect, like many people – that there is no easy answer. But I hope.

One way to weigh Boris's weaknesses and strengths is to strip away the layers of gilt that have been lovingly applied to the figure of Churchill and to see the magnificent wartime leader for the flawed human being he was.

I don't suggest that Boris is remotely equal to his hero. But when considering our new Prime Minister's failings (which have been catalogued by his many detractors), it is comforting to recall that Churchill also came to the highest office bearing a long charge sheet.

He had been responsible for

the Dardanelles fiasco in World War I, in which nearly 50,000 Allied lives were lost. His stint as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Twenties was a near disaster.

Always his judgment was being impugned: over his bigoted opposition to virtual home rule in India in the Thirties, and his rash championing of Edward VIII during the 1936 abdication crisis when public opinion was firmly against the King marrying American divorcee Wallis Simpson.

It's true that, by 1940, Churchill's political career stretched back over four decades, whereas Boris's has been much briefer, and so he has had less scope for political gaffes. Still, he managed to pack in quite a few during his two-year spell as Foreign Secretary.

In his biography of Winston Churchill, Boris describes the great man as 'eccentric' and 'over the top' – words that could as well be used of himself. 'Rickety' would be another way of describing what they have in common.

Unlike Boris, Churchill had no appetite for extra-marital sex, but he drank much more prodigiously. He was far more feckless with money, though he earned even greater amounts as a newspaper columnist.

In May 1940, many in the parliamentary Tory Party regarded the country's new leader as flashy, unreliable and lacking in judgment. Rab Butler – then a junior minister and, much later, very nearly Prime Minister – described Churchill as 'the greatest adventurer of modern political history' and 'a half-breed American'.

Sound familiar? My point is that Churchill has been deified, and so his faults and all the rude things said and thought about him by members of his own party, as well as by Labour, have been airbrushed out. Might Boris also succeed despite being written off by

nearly half the country and *bien pensant* intellectuals?

There is another similarity. In May 1940, Winston Churchill was opposed by a knot of conspirators in his own party, such as Lord Halifax and Rab Butler, who wanted to put out feelers to Hitler via the Italian leader Benito Mussolini and sue for peace. His most deadly adversaries were on his own side.

And so it is with Boris. The Tory Party is in disarray. All discipline has broken down. Philip Hammond has petulantly said he will resign as Chancellor to avoid being sacked, while Boris-hating Sir Alan Duncan childishly quit his job as a Foreign Office minister in the midst of a worsening international crisis involving Iran. Where is duty?

Meanwhile, Iain Duncan Smith, who, in a couple of days, could be Deputy Prime Minister in a Johnson administration, publicly accuses the Government – and, by implication, Jeremy Hunt, Boris's rival and Foreign Secretary – of a 'major failure' over its Iran policy.

## Respect

Actually, the treachery within the Tory Party is even more rampant than it was in May 1940, when many MPs who were suspicious of Churchill at least showed a measure of respect for their new leader and were prepared to give him a chance.

Sir Alan Duncan has tried to table an emergency Commons motion on whether Johnson should become Prime Minister. Fortunately, he was rebuffed by Speaker John Bercow, who was sensible for once in his life.

Despite this setback, ultra Conservative Remainers (perhaps including erstwhile Eurosceptic Mr Hammond) may try to bring down Boris even before he starts talking to the EU.

An iron rule of politics is that voters abhor divided parties. A

decisive early vote of No Confidence in Boris is almost bound to precipitate a general election, in which the Tories would be viewed as a fractious rabble who failed to honour the Leave vote in the referendum.

One difference between then and now: in May 1940, Churchill formed a coalition with Clement Attlee's Labour Party, whereas Boris will confront Jeremy Corbyn, whose only concern is to achieve power so that he can unleash his Marxist experiment on Britain.

## Ambition

Does our new Prime Minister have the political guile, force of personality and greatness of spirit to see off these threats and find his way through a bewildering maze to reach a reasonable accommodation with Brussels?

It is certainly a tall order. So it would be even for Winston Churchill, who, after all, proved himself a disappointing peacetime leader after he was returned to office in 1951.

But Boris, facing as he does the most perilous state of affairs that has bedevilled any prime minister since Churchill in 1940, can reasonably take comfort in the knowledge that his hero was prematurely written off by critics later forced to eat their words.

Maybe he will rise above the pygmies planning to bring him down. For all his faults, he has one striking advantage that he definitely shares with the wartime leader. He has craved the highest office in the land since he was a child.

All-encompassing ambition is rare, even in leading politicians. It amounts almost to a mystical sense of personal destiny. Churchill certainly had it. He wrote later of that moment in May 1940: 'I felt as if I were walking with destiny, and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial.'

Such rare men are difficult to stop. Is Boris one of them? I don't know. But it seems to me his obsessively wanting to lead our country probably constitutes the best hope we have that he will make a decent job of it.