



## Brave Barbara's plea to Boris – end the dementia care scandal now!

SEE PAGE FOUR



# 'NICK': THE DAMNING DOCUMENT



Behind bars: 'Nick' fantasist Carl Beech

**EXCLUSIVE: Mail discovers police form used to authorise raid on VIP's home was riddled with falsehoods**

A FILE showing police should never have raided the home of Britain's greatest living soldier can be revealed today.

Detectives claimed in a secret search warrant application that

By **Stephen Wright**  
Associate News Editor

they had no reason to doubt VIP child abuse and murder claims made by the fantasist 'Nick'.

Signed by a detective sergeant, the document was presented to a judge who approved the raid in March

2015 on the home of Lord Bramall, a D-Day veteran and former head of the Armed Forces.

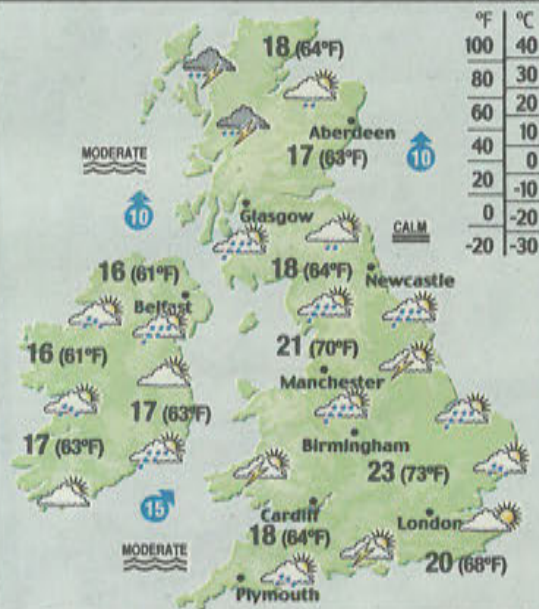
But an investigation by this newspaper has established that police were aware of at least eight factors that raised serious questions about the outlandish claims made by Nick,

**Turn to Page 2**



# Weather

Go to: [dailymail.co.uk/weather](http://dailymail.co.uk/weather) for UK and world 5 day forecast



## Summary: Showers

**UK TODAY:** Showers will spread eastwards through the course of today, some of which will be heavy, and some thundery in nature too. However, some spells of sunshine are expected from time to time. Max 23c.

## Today's weather

	9am	12noon	3pm	6pm	9pm
London	18c	21c	22c	21c	19c
Plymouth	17c	18c	19c	18c	16c
Cardiff	17c	19c	20c	19c	17c
B'ham	17c	18c	20c	20c	17c
M'chester	16c	19c	20c	20c	18c
Newcastle	16c	18c	19c	18c	16c
Glasgow	16c	16c	17c	17c	15c
Aberdeen	16c	18c	19c	17c	15c
Belfast	15c	17c	18c	17c	15c

## 5 day forecast

	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
London	22c	24c	22c	22c	22c
Plymouth	20c	20c	20c	19c	19c
Cardiff	21c	22c	22c	20c	20c
B'ham	21c	22c	21c	21c	20c
M'chester	19c	21c	21c	20c	18c
Newcastle	19c	19c	20c	20c	18c
Glasgow	18c	20c	19c	18c	17c
Aberdeen	17c	17c	16c	18c	16c
Belfast	19c	19c	20c	18c	17c

## Yesterday

	Sun	Rain	Temp	24 hours	Sun	Rain	Temp	
	(hrs)	(ins)	(min)	(max)	(hrs)	(ins)	(min)	
Edinburgh	3.7	0.01	13	21	3.7	0.01	13	21
Glasgow	5.2	0.20	14	20	5.2	0.20	14	20
Hull	4.4	0.11	16	23	4.4	0.11	16	23
Ipswich	3.3	0.08	14	25	3.3	0.08	14	25
Leeds	8.1	0.24	15	22	8.1	0.24	15	22
Lincoln	4.0	0.26	16	23	4.0	0.26	16	23
London	4.8	0.02	16	26	4.8	0.02	16	26
Manchester	6.6	0.08	16	22	6.6	0.08	16	22
Southampton	8.7	0.03	17	23	8.7	0.03	17	23
St Andrews	6.3	0.67	13	21	6.3	0.67	13	21
Stornoway	7.9	0.13	15	21	7.9	0.13	15	21

## Moon and Sun

**MOON** rises: 12.21pm, sets: 11.31pm  
**Sun** rises London: 5.31am, sets: 8.40pm  
 Manchester rises: 5.32am, sets: 8.56pm  
**HIGH TIDE** London Bridge: 6.46pm  
 Liverpool: 4.01pm

**Extremes (24 hrs to 7pm y'day)**  
 Warmest: Heathrow, Greater London, 27c (81f). Coldest: Castlederg, Co Tyrone, 10c (50f). Wettest: Tyndrum, Stirlingshire, 1.42ins. Sunniest: Rhyf, Denbighshire, 11.7hrs.

## Europe forecast

	today	c/f	tomorrow	c/f
Amsterdam	fair	23/73	showers	21/70
Brussels	showers	22/72	showers	23/73
Frankfurt	thunder	27/81	thunder	23/73
Geneva	thunder	29/84	thunder	25/77
Lisbon	fair	28/82	fair	28/82
Madrid	sun	36/97	fair	31/88
Paris	thunder	24/75	fair	26/79
Rome	sun	30/86	sun	31/88

## Around the world yesterday

	weather	c/f	weather	c/f	weather	c/f		
Algiers	Fair	32/90	Florence	Sunny	31/88	New Delhi	Showers	35/95
Amsterdam	Cloudy	22/72	Geneva	Sunny	29/84	New York	Fair	29/84
Athens	Fair	30/86	Gibraltar	Sunny	28/82	Nice	Fair	27/81
Auckland	Fair	12/54	Guernsey	Fair	19/66	Oslo	Cloudy	16/61
Bahrain	Sunny	45/113	Helsinki	Fair	20/68	Palma	Sunny	31/88
Barcelona	Sunny	31/88	Hong Kong	Sunny	32/90	Paris	Fair	26/79
Basra	Sunny	45/113	Innsbruck	Fair	23/73	Perth	Showers	15/59
Beijing	Showers	28/82	Istanbul	Cloudy	27/81	Prague	Cloudy	27/81
Belrut	Fair	31/88	Jersey	Drizzle	20/68	Rhodes	Sunny	32/90
Belfast	Cloudy	16/61	Larnaca	Sunny	32/90	Riga	Fair	18/64
Belgrade	Fair	26/79	Las Palmas	Fair	26/79	Rome	Sunny	30/86
Berlin	Showers	23/73	Lisbon	Sunny	27/81	Singapore	Drizzle	31/88
Biarritz	Cloudy	23/73	London	Fair	25/77	Stockholm	Cloudy	21/70
Brisbane	Fair	21/70	Los Angeles	Fair	22/72	Strasbourg	Sunny	28/82
Brussels	Sunny	22/72	Luxor	Sunny	40/104	Sydney	Fair	19/66
Bucharest	Fair	25/77	Madrid	Sunny	33/91	Tangier	Sunny	26/79
Budapest	Fair	27/81	Malaga	Sunny	28/82	Tel Aviv	Sunny	32/90
Chagen	Fair	21/70	Malta	Sunny	30/86	Tenerife	Sunny	27/81
Cairo	Sunny	34/93	Melbourne	Cloudy	14/57	Tokyo	Sunny	33/91
Cape Town	Cloudy	15/59	Mexico City	Fair	22/72	Toronto	Fair	24/75
Casablanca	Sunny	24/75	Miami	Showers	33/91	Tunis	Sunny	36/97
Corfu	Sunny	32/90	Milan	Sunny	30/86	Vancouver	Sunny	22/72
Dubai	Sunny	38/100	Montreal	Fair	22/72	Venice	Sunny	27/81
Dublin	Fair	19/66	Moscow	Cloudy	13/55	Vienna	Sunny	27/81
Dubrovnik	Sunny	27/81	Mumbai	Thunder	29/84	Warsaw	Fair	21/70
Faro	Sunny	25/77	Nairobi	Sunny	24/75	Wellington	Sunny	9/48

# KUROSU

EVERY day in the Mail you can play Kurosu, the most addictive brainteaser since Sudoku. There are only two rules:

- 1: Fill in each space with either a nought or a cross so there are no more than two consecutive noughts or crosses in any row or column. Important note: diagonals don't count.
- 2: Each row and column must contain three noughts and three crosses.

Today's difficulty rating ★★☆☆

	X				X
		X			
			X		
		X		O	X
	O				O
O	O		X		

PLAY more Kurosu and 26 addictive puzzles like them every day on your smartphone or tablet with Mail Plus, your Mail newspaper on your screen. Get a FREE trial today at [dailymailplus.co.uk](http://dailymailplus.co.uk)  
Solution on Puzzles & Prizes back page.

## Continued from Page One

whose real name is Carl Beech. A key factor was that despite extensive efforts police found no evidence to back up Beech's claim to have suffered physical abuse and injury and to have been absent from school.

Yet officers told district judge Howard Riddle that the 51-year-old former nurse was a 'consistent' and 'credible' witness.

In the document, which has been seen by the Daily Mail, Judge Riddle wrote that he was assured the implications for the application for the proposed raid had been 'considered at DAC level'.

This was a reference to Steve Rodhouse, a deputy assistant commissioner with Metropolitan Police and 'gold commander' of the bungled £2.5million investigation.

The revelations about the warrants for raids on the homes of Lord Bramall, former home secretary Lord Brittan and ex Tory MP Harvey Proctor, will pile pressure on Home Secretary Priti Patel to order a fresh inquiry into the fiasco.

Last week she demanded a full explanation of the police watchdog's decision to clear three Operation Midland officers.

Two more senior officers - including Mr Rodhouse - were controversially exonerated two years ago.

Victims of Beech's lies, and their families, are furious that no police officer has been held to account over the Met's disastrous investigation.

Today the Daily Mail can also reveal that a rookie worker at the Independent Office for Police Conduct, who was in her late 20s, was the 'lead investigator' during the two-year probe that cleared the three officers of misconduct last month.

The latest developments come a week after a former High Court judge said that police broke the law with Operation Midland.

In an astonishing intervention, Sir Richard Henriques told the Daily Mail that officers used false evidence to obtain the search warrants and should now face a criminal investigation.

He said that detectives did not have the right to search the properties because their description of Beech as a consistent witness was false, effectively fooling a judge into granting the warrants.

He also alleged that the 'course of justice was perverted with shocking consequences', saying he found it astonishing that no officer has been brought to book.

In 2016 Sir Richard wrote a scathing report for Scotland Yard about Operation Midland. It identified 43 blunders, was heavily redacted and has never been fully made public.

In the wake of the Mail's revelations last week, a string of distinguished law enforcement figures - including former Met chief Lord Ste-

# EIGHT reasons why police raids should never have taken place

**1** Despite extensive inquiries into Beech's background, police had found no evidence of physical abuse, injury or proof that he had been absent from school as he had alleged.

**2** No witnesses had come forward despite extensive media coverage.

**3** There was no record of the supposed hit and run murder of a school friend called Scott in south west London in 1979, as Beech had claimed.

**4** Officers on Operation Midland had traced seven out of eight boys called Scott from Beech's primary school, while the last one was known to have moved to Australia (and could not have been killed).

**5** Police had concluded that a supposed witness to the abuse called 'Fred' was either unwilling to engage or was an invention of Beech. It later turned out that 'Fred' was a bogus witness created by the fantasist.

**6** There was no identity for 'boy 3', who was supposedly strangled to death by Harvey Proctor.

**7** Officers on Operation Midland had access to an interview he had conducted with Wiltshire Police in 2012, where he made no mention of VIP child sex abuse, torture and murder.

**8** In blogs on the internet, before he went to the Met in 2014, he did not mention murders by high-profile figures.

## PERVERSION OF JUSTICE

## INCREDIBLE AND UNTRUE

From the Mail, July 23

## 'NICK' POLICE SEARCHES BROKE LAW

July 30

## NOW TURN FULL FORCE OF LAW ON 'NICK' POLICE

July 31

# WARRANT FOR DISGRACE

SEE PAGES 6-9

vens, and former director of public prosecutions Lord Macdonald, have called for an unredacted version of the dossier to be released.

Sir Richard's broadside at the Met and police watchdogs came days after vicar's son Beech was jailed for 18 years for telling a string of lies about alleged VIP child sex abuse and serial murders.

At his ten-week trial, jurors heard the fantasist told officers that he was used as a human dartboard by the former heads of MI5 and MI6, that his dog was kidnapped by a spy chief, and that the pae-

dophile ring shot dead his horse. The court also heard that Beech is now a convicted paedophile after child porn offences came to light when an independent police force, at Sir Richard's behest, started investigating him on suspicion of making false claims about a deadly Establishment paedophile ring.

In the wake of his convictions, Scotland Yard chiefs faced intense criticism over staggering incompetence in 16-month investigation launched on the word of a pathological liar.

But shortly after Beech was

found guilty, the Independent Office for Police Conduct announced the three officers accused of misconduct over search warrant applications had been cleared.

The watchdog said the officers, led by senior investigating officer detective chief inspector Diane Tudway, acted 'with due diligence and in good faith at the time'.

But Sir Richard told this newspaper the finding was 'in conflict' with his review of Operation Midland in 2016.

Following Beech's convictions, Met Deputy Commissioner Sir Stephen House said he believed all five officers probed by police watchdog over Operation Midland 'worked in good faith'.

They cooperated fully with both the Henriques Review and the Independent Office for Police Conduct investigations, he added.

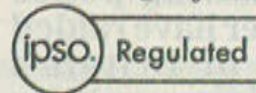
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# WARRANT FOR DISGRACE

## In shocking detail, shameful document police submitted to authorise raid that ruined life of war hero Lord Bramall



By **Stephen Wright**  
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

THE secret court document seen by the Daily Mail – which blows open the ‘Nick’ search warrants scandal – was part of a two-stage process which gave police permission to raid the home of Britain’s greatest living soldier, Field Marshal Lord Bramall.

The first involved a detective completing a confidential form and the second involved three murder squad officers going before court to get official permission to storm his house.

The document sets out the astonishing nature of the claims and reveals that police even sought to rely on an independent consultant to back up their star witness’s allegations.

It also shows that when asked if there was anything that might undermine their request for a search warrant, the Met simply answered N/A – not applicable. In fact, police were aware of several factors that raised questions about the claims made by Nick, real name Carl Beech.

Before detectives could raid the home of the former head of the Armed Forces, now 95, in March 2015, an officer had to com-

### ‘To the best of my knowledge’

plete a standard ‘Application for Search Warrant’ form (Criminal Procedure Rules, rule 6.30: section 8, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984). The document includes nine sections which need to be filled out by police, and a final one – to be signed by the presiding judge – granting them authority to execute the warrant.

Police had to answer a series of questions about the offence(s) under investigation, background details of the case and why officers believed crimes had been committed, the material being sought by police and the premises officers were seeking to search.

Critically the officer signing the warrant – in this case Detective Sergeant Eric Sword – was asked under section eight (‘duty of disclosure’) whether there is ‘anything of which you are aware that might reasonably be considered capable of undermining any of the grounds of this application, or which for some other reason might affect the court’s decision?’.

It adds: ‘Include anything that reasonably might call into question the credibility of the information you have received and explain why you have decided that that information still can be relied upon.’

This is a crucial section because judges are warned that they must exercise their power ‘with great care and caution’ and must not allow police to engage in ‘a fishing expedition’.

In this box, the Met said ‘N/A’



Grotesque allegations: Lord Bramall

and Mr Sword, now retired from the force, signed a declaration in section nine saying that ‘to the best of my knowledge and belief’... ‘the content of this application is true’.

After filling in the form on February 27, 2015, detectives went before Westminster Magistrates’ Court in central London on March 2, 2015 to answer questions about the search warrant application.

District judge Howard Riddle ruled that the search of Lord Bramall’s home could go ahead after hearing that the ‘victim’ (Carl Beech) was ‘consistent’ and ‘credible’ and that a Met Deputy Assistant Commissioner had ‘consid-

ered’ the application. Two days later on March 4, 2015, police raided Lord Bramall’s home in Surrey as raids took place at homes of the recently deceased Lord Brittan, and former MP Harvey Proctor.

At the top of the search warrant application the Met says of Beech: ‘His account has remained consistent and he is felt to be a credible witness who is telling the truth.’

Approving the request to raid Lord Bramall’s home, Judge Riddle said: ‘I am satisfied that the police are fully aware of the sensitivities and the need for a proportionate approach. This has been considered at DAC level.’



Persuaded: Judge Howard Riddle

Here we set out the key passages of the application by the Met to search Lord Bramall’s home – and, alongside them, the devastating evidence that undermines the police claims

### Nick the liar

IN his 1,200 word statement last week, former High Court judge Sir Richard Henriques insisted that Beech had ‘not been consistent’, dating back to when the fantasist had first made claims of historic child sex abuse to Wiltshire Police in 2012.

Therefore he WAS known to police.

Sir Richard said: ‘His allegations made to the Wiltshire Police in 2012 were fundamentally inconsistent with those made to the Metropolitan Police in 2014 and with Beech’s blogs also published in 2014.’

‘The identities of subsequent named alleged rapists were inconsistent. The alleged locations were inconsistent, persons allegedly present were inconsistent, the alleged accompanying acts of violence were inconsistent.’

### Passing the buck

THIS suggests that police were already seeking to pass the buck over who was giving credibility to Beech.

The ‘independent counsellor’ is Beech’s counsellor, Vicki Paterson, to whom he gave a body map detailing dozens of alleged injuries. The warrant then reveals her verdict was rubberstamped by another ‘consultant’, Dr Elly Hanson.

Neither Ms Paterson or Dr Hanson would have had access to his medical records to corroborate his story.

Did Scotland Yard overstate the importance of the pair’s professional views to bolster their case?

### No evidence

SIR Richard was damning of police on this issue.

He argues powerfully that there was no compelling evidence to suggest that Beech had ever been injured in this way, or absent from school.

Crucially, he says that, at the time of the warrant being applied for, there was no evidence that any of the three children cited here had indeed been murdered.

### APPLICATION FOR SEARCH WARRANT

(Criminal Procedure Rules, rule 6.30; Section 8, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984)

Application to: **District Judge Howard Riddle**  
at Westminster Magistrates Court

This is an application by: **DS Eric Sword, Westminster Court**

**1. The offence(s) under investigation** The victim in this matter has been interviewed at length by experienced officers from the child abuse investigative team. His account has remained consistent and he is felt to be a credible witness who is telling the truth.

Enquiries made relating to the victim find nothing to suggest any links to those that he accuses, suggesting his allegations are malicious. The victim is not known to police.

Prior to police involvement these allegations were detailed to an independent counsellor by the victim who also supports his account as being credible. At the request of police a qualified consultant Dr Elly Hanson was asked to give an opinion if the counsellor was able to make an accurate judgement of the victim’s credibility. Dr Hanson (sic) views were that the counsellor was able to make an accurate judgement of the victim’s credibility.

**2. The investigation** The victim contacted police in late 2014 detailing allegations of serious sexual assault. He stated that he had been present when three separate males had been murdered by his group of abusers. He states this abuse was often carried out when he was in the company of other boys of a similar age who were also abused.

He states that from the age of 7 until he was 16 he was subject to regular sexual assaults by persons introduced to him by his stepfather, a major in the British Army.

He named various high-profile individuals as his abusers and those that are subject to these applications are Lord Edwin Bramall, Lord Leon Brittan (recently deceased) and Keith Harvey Proctor. The victim alleges that he was present at the scene of three murders and he names Harvey Proctor as being involved in two of these offences and Leon Brittan as being present during one of them.

**Lord Edwin Bramall**  
Between 1975-1984 it is alleged that he abused the victim on numerous occasions, including sexual assault, buggery, and torture. This included the victim being tied up, beaten and burned with a lighter by his group of abusers.

The alleged offences involving Bramall are said to have been committed in the following locations: unknown residential premises in Wiltshire Army barracks in Wilton, Wiltshire (Erskine), Imber Military training village in Salisbury, Army barracks in Bicester – other unknown military establishments. He is also alleged to have been present at pool parties where boys were abused – believed to be the Dolphin Square complex in Pimlico.

**3. Material sought. What are you looking for?**  
Documents, journals or records detailing action by named individuals in relation to the abuse of the victim or others. Still images of the victim or any other child of an indecent nature.

**8. Duty of disclosure** Is there anything of which you are aware that might reasonably be considered capable of undermining any of the grounds of this application or which for some other reasons might affect the court’s decision? Include anything that reasonably might call into question the credibility of information you have received and explain why you have decided that that information still can be relied upon.  
(ANSWER IN A BOX) N/A

**9. Declaration**  
To the best of my knowledge and belief:  
a) This application discloses all the information that is material to what the court must decide, including anything that might reasonably be considered capable of undermining any of the grounds of the application and  
b) The content of this application is true  
Signed: **DS Eric Sword** Date: **27/2/15** Time: **11.30**

**10. Authorisation**  
Authorising officer’s name: **Alison Hepworth (DI)**  
Date: **27/2/15** Time: **13.00**

**Decision**  
The applicant satisfied me about his or her entitlement to make application  
The applicant confirmed on oath or affirmation the declaration in box 9

I am satisfied that the police are fully aware of the sensitivities and the need for a proportionate approach without press involvement. This has been considered at DAC level. I am satisfied the access material (sic) are met and have been properly considered.

I am satisfied that interference with the private life of the parties is justified, necessary and proportionate.  
Name: **HCF Riddle** Date: **2 March 2015** Time: **12 noon**

### NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

**11. Information that might undermine the grounds of the application**

Information that might undermine any of the grounds of the application must be included in the application, or the court’s authority for the search may be ineffective.

The applicant must inform the court if there is anything else that might influence the court’s decision to issue a warrant. This may include whether there is any unusual feature of the investigation or of any potential prosecution.

### Hero targeted

THIS spells out what police were looking for during the search of Lord Bramall’s home – effectively seeking permission to turn the war hero’s house upside down.

### Doubts dismissed

THIS is a crucial section of the form and, according to Sir Richard, clear evidence that the police misled a district judge into approving the search of Lord Bramall’s home. He said officers leading the investigation ‘were aware of six matters in particular which undermined Beech’s credibility’. But they dismissed this by writing N/A – or not applicable. A quite staggering entry.

### Signed off by junior

ACCORDING to Sir Richard, DS Sword was ‘a comparatively junior officer’ who had a ‘limited knowledge of the investigation and with no knowledge of the content of the Wiltshire interviews (having chosen not to read a summary provided to him)’. However the warrant makes clear it was authorised by a more senior investigating officer, Alison Hepworth.

### Boss in firing line

CONCLUDING remarks by District Judge Howard Riddle makes clear that the implication of the search warrant had been considered at DAC level. This places Steve Rodhouse, then a Deputy Assistant Commissioner firmly in the firing line.

### An ‘unusual’ case

THIS advisory guideline for warrant applications gets to the very heart of the charge against Scotland Yard: that it was fully aware of the glaring flaws in Beech’s story yet ploughed on with the search warrant application in the vain hope that something would turn up to justify the distress caused to Lord Bramall and his elderly wife.

Clearly the entire case was ‘unusual’ as it was a triple murder probe based on the word of one man.



OPERATION MIDLAND: THE MET'S CHAIN OF COMMAND



COMMISSIONER Sir Bernard (now Lord) Hogan-Howe Former Met chief, the buck stopped with him



ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER Patricia Gallan Formal oversight of Midland, says she never approved raids



DEPUTY ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER Steve Rodhouse Gold Commander who was in charge of all key decisions



DETECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT Kenny McDonald Called 'Nick' 'credible and true'. He supervised inquiry team



DETECTIVE CHIEF INSPECTOR Diane Tudway Senior Investigating Officer who was in daily charge of Midland



DETECTIVE INSPECTOR Alison Hepworth Reviewed and authorised search warrant application



DETECTIVE SERGEANT Eric Sword Signed search warrant application for the court

So who WAS to blame for breaking law?

By Stephen Wright Associate News Editor

THE emergence of the search warrant application for the raid on the home of former Armed Forces chief Lord Bramall puts one of the country's most senior police officers at the centre of the Operation Midland scandal.

The previously secret document - seen by the Daily Mail - reveals that a district judge approved the police request to storm the property of the D-Day hero after being assured its implications had been 'considered at DAC level' - deputy assistant commissioner.

At the time, Steve Rodhouse held that rank with the Metropolitan Police and was gold commander of Operation Midland.

He had a crucial role in running the 16-month investigation, including decisions over raids and interviews with suspects.

Also coming under renewed scrutiny is Alison Hepworth, the former detective inspector and 'authorising officer' who reviewed and authorised the Bramall search warrant application on February 27, 2015. It went before District Judge Howard Riddle in London on March 2.

Miss Hepworth was at the behind-closed-doors hearing at Westminster magistrates' court with the senior investigating

'Facing awkward questions'

officer on Operation Midland, Detective Chief Inspector Diane Tudway, and fellow murder squad officer Detective Sergeant Eric Sword - who signed the search warrant application.

Last week a former judge said police broke the law in the bungled probe into VIP child abuse fantasist Nick. Sir Richard Henriques said officers used false evidence to obtain search warrants.

As the officer in overall charge of the shambolic murder inquiry, it is Mr Rodhouse who faces awkward

- Top officer in spotlight for raid on Bramall home
Inspector 'reviewed and authorised' warrant
Application to judge signed by detectives

questions. Over the years, he has repeatedly refused to comment on whether he approved the use of the phrase 'credible and true' to describe Carl Beech - then known as 'Nick' - whose lies about child abuse and murder triggered Operation Midland in December 2014.

The phrase - originated by Det Supt Kenny McDonald - went uncorrected by police for nine months, until after the Daily Mail exposed Beech as a suspected serial liar in September 2015.

It was not until January 2016 that Mr Rodhouse informed Lord Bramall's lawyer that there was 'insufficient evidence' to charge the former head of the Army with paedophile offences.

But Mr Rodhouse's letter announcing the end of the investigation into Lord Bramall sought to absolve Scotland Yard and blamed the media for his ten-month ordeal which included the March 2015 breakfast raid. He also

left open the prospect of a further inquiry, should new information emerge. The legalistic tone of the letter infuriated Lord Bramall's family and friends, who said that the Met should have been generous enough to say that it had 'not found a shred of evidence'.

They called for a 'proper' apology from the Met after the uncorroborated allegations made by Beech came to nothing. The force later paid Lord Bramall £100,000 in damages.

When Operation Midland formally closed in March 2016, with no arrests or charges, Mr Rodhouse insisted the investigation had been 'handled well'.

He also refused to apologise to former Tory MP Harvey Proctor, one of those falsely accused of serial child abuse and murder. At a press conference, he stopped short of saying he was confident there never was a VIP paedophile ring and instead stated the evi-

dence had not reached the threshold for charges. He added: 'Our role here has been to investigate some serious allegations of crime. We've conducted a very detailed inquiry and our role really has been to assess whether or not there's enough evidence to ask the CPS to level charges.

'My conclusion today is we haven't reached that threshold. We've had

'Not a shred of evidence'

a long investigation, a detailed investigation into some serious allegations of crime. It's absolutely right that we fully investigated it.'

Following the scathing report into Operation Midland by High Court judge Sir Richard in November 2016, Mr Rodhouse was referred to the police watchdog for potential breaches of 'duties and



Questions: Steve Rodhouse was a leading figure in the Operation Midland disaster. Inset: Alison Hepworth is also under scrutiny

SOMETHING ROTTEN AT THE HEART OF THE MET

Daily Mail COMMENT

SEE PAGE 16

Watchdog's lead investigator was a recent graduate in her twenties

By Jemma Buckley and Stephen Wright

THE lead investigator of the police watchdog probe into Scotland Yard's handling of Carl Beech's claims was handed the role just a few years after graduating from university, it emerged last night.

Despite Operation Midland being widely regarded as one of the most shambolic police investigations in living memory, the watchdog has absolved the police and ruled that not a single officer will face misconduct proceedings.

Now it has emerged that the lead investigator was put in charge of the vastly complex case when she was in her late 20s and with only a few years' experience. Now 30, she has a degree in International Political Studies.

She also gained a master's degree in Intelligence and International Security from King's College London in 2013.

The revelation that such a young official - whom the Mail has chosen not to name - was leading inquiries on such a sensitive case raises serious further questions about the probe by the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

Lead investigators are required to be educated to degree level or equivalent and are responsible for tasks such as conducting interviews, taking statements, visiting incident scenes, recommending if disciplinary or criminal proceedings are necessary and writing reports.

They are the main point of contact for complainants and bereaved families. They also draft the scope of the investigation and report to a team leader who is responsible for making key decisions, including outcomes of the investigations. The IOPC is

'No case to answer'

already under pressure after last week's sensational intervention from retired High Court judge Sir Richard Henriques who said police may have broken the law during Operation Midland, suggesting detectives had used false evidence to obtain warrants.

The IOPC investigated the actions of three officers involved in applying for search warrants.

After more than two-and-a-half years, the IOPC ruled the officers had 'no case to answer' and had 'acted with due diligence and in good faith at the time'.

The IOPC has refused to reopen its inquiry into those officers. It has insisted it has already investigated them and found 'no suspicion of criminality'.

The IOPC is the watchdog which oversees the police complaints system. It states its mission is to 'improve public confidence in policing by ensuring the police are accountable for their actions and



Explanation: £175,000 a year IOPC boss Lockwood

A guardian not fit for purpose

From Wednesday's Mail

ten explanation to the Home Office. Misconduct allegations around Midland were first referred to the IOPC's predecessor - the Independent Police Complaints Commission - in 2016 but the investigation was not completed until last month.

The IOPC was created in January 2018 and given new powers after the IPCC was considered to have lost credibility after a string of controversies.

The IOPC launched 687 investigations in the last year. It also received over 3,000 appeals from those unhappy about the outcome of their complaint.

An IOPC spokesman said last night: 'The investigation into the Metropolitan Police Service application for search warrants was undertaken by a team of experienced investigators.'

'A fully qualified lead investigator was supervised by an operation team leader who has worked as an investigator throughout their career. The decision on whether to investigate individuals for potential conduct or criminal allegations was overseen and approved at a senior level in the then IPCC. The investigation was also supported by our in-house legal team. A comprehensive final report detailing all the evidence we looked at and our decision-making process will be published on the IOPC website in September.'



**T**HE inquiry into allegations of a VIP sex abuse ring codenamed Operation Midland ranks as the most disgraceful episode in the recent history of the Metropolitan Police. A scandal suggesting something rotten in the state of our law-enforcement system.

Acting on the flimsiest pretext, Scotland Yard officers invaded the homes of innocent people in lightning raids, employing search warrants obtained after a court was deceived. In an omission described by an eminent former High Court judge as a perversion of justice and potentially criminal, the investigating team failed to disclose evidence that undermined the case for the house searches, carried out in the full glare of national publicity and resulting in enormous distress for those involved.

These were not the misguided acts of a few inexperienced junior officers but the systematic violation of that most basic of rights — the one protecting law-abiding householders from the arbitrary invasion of their homes by agents of the state. This outrage was sanctioned in the highest reaches of the Met and carried out by detectives displaying a cavalier and contemptuous attitude towards due process.

Operation Midland was a rogue investigation fuelled by an insane Met policy demanding that alleged victims of sexual abuse should not only be listened to seriously but automatically believed.

Society bestows upon the police the right to enter private premises if there are reasonable grounds for doing so during a criminal inquiry — and this privilege should be dependent upon officers using this power wisely and proportionately. Otherwise, we will be living in a banana republic.

That the Midland team — backed by then Deputy Assistant Commissioner Steve Rodhouse, now operations chief of the National Crime Agency — abused this power is made abundantly clear in documents obtained by the Mail.

As this scandal — exposed not by politicians or the official police watchdog but by a Mail investigation — emerges, it poses the question: who effectively polices the police?

Our report today reveals investigators had evidence which made it clear allegations by the serial fantasist Carl Beech concerning the supposed torture and murder of boys by Establishment figures were riddled with inconsistencies but these doubts were not placed before the judge granting the search warrants.

This resulted in untold misery for the targets of the search operation — Field Marshal Lord Bramall, one of Britain's most distinguished soldiers, the late Lord Brittan and former MP Harvey Proctor.

There were no less than eight separate factors casting doubt on Beech's version of events. Despite nationwide publicity, no witnesses had come forward to verify his story, and indeed there was no evidence of other victims even existing.

Yet, these failings and other salient facts were not disclosed to the judge who authorised the raids.

This grievous misconduct is there in black and white — in the applications for the search warrants submitted in court. In a declaration by the officer seeking a warrant to search Lord Bramall's home, he agrees that: 'To the best of my knowledge and belief: This application discloses all the information that is material to what the court must decide, including anything that might reasonably be considered capable of undermining any of the grounds of the application.'

Answering the requirement for 'duty of disclosure' in the case of anything that might call into question the credibility of information received by investigators, the officer enters the response 'N/A' — not applicable.

This is utterly false — and it ended in detectives rampaging through the lives of innocent people, living and dead, in a deranged witch-hunt masquerading as a responsible criminal investigation.

All at the behest of Beech, a grand-standing Walter Mitty whose account of devilish sex parties involving Establishment figures torturing and murdering boys would strain the credulity of a sceptical layman, never mind the seasoned detectives of Scotland Yard.

Incompetence on an epic scale is

clearly a major ingredient of this fiasco, with common sense flying out of the window. But it is contempt for the law — bordering on criminality — combined with a total disregard for the consequences for individuals that is the mark of this dark farce.

The retired High Court judge who reviewed Midland following its implosion, Sir Richard Henriques, believes some of the police officers involved should face criminal investigation. Amazingly, his full findings are still unavailable to the public — a scandal in itself.

The Met is sticking by its claim that Midland was carried out in good faith. In a weasel-worded statement, it admits that it 'did not get everything right' but

reminds us that it was conducted under 'intense scrutiny'. The answer to which is, so what?

The treatment of the Midland victims was appalling. But they were prominent people with access to lawyers. Imagine if this had involved poorer, less prominent families — what chance would they have had of redress? Would these abuses ever have come to light?

And what of the Independent Office for Police Conduct, the supposed police watchdog, which managed to exonerate some of the officers involved without even bothering to interview them? Its credibility as an impartial investigator of alleged malpractice is fatally compromised.

Labour is in the frame, too. Commons home affairs committee chair Yvette Cooper dodges calls for a parliamentary inquiry, while Mayor of London Sadiq

Khan is equally mealy-mouthed. Are they afraid of shining too much light on the role in this sordid affair of Labour deputy leader Tom Watson, who stoked the frenzy resulting in Midland?

This imbroglio may not have been the creation of current Commissioner Cressida Dick but it is eating away at the credibility of her force. She must act — and decisively.

Today the Mail demands that the Commissioner publish the Henriques report in full and establish a robust independent inquiry, possibly involving an outside police force. There should also be a thorough review of the workings of the IOPC.

The time has come for people to be called to account, via an independent criminal investigation.

The law is the law — whoever the culprit.



# Something rotten at the heart of the Met

Daily Mail  
COMMENT