

The following reproduces chapter 27 of Gordon Winter's book *Inside Boss* [Penguin Books Ltd. 1981]

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SETTING UP PETER HAIN

The 'Stop the Seventy Tour' (STST) movement became the most successful agitation group in British sporting history, though nobody was to know that when it was formed in a dingy little upstairs room in the White Swan pub in London's Fleet Street area on 10 September 1969. But BOSS certainly realized that the meeting would be important, which is why I was there that day to photograph and make tape recordings of all the people who stood up to speak.

About eighteen people turned up as representatives of different movements. They were a motley crowd. Four of them were well-known Young Liberals, three were executive members of SANROC, two were from the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and the rest were from various church groups and student bodies. One by one they stood up to say their bit. Basically, the idea was that all the movements should band together to protest against a tour of Britain and Ireland by the all-White South African rugby team the Springboks. Some of the speakers were clearly in favour of clubbing the Springboks senseless, but one was a quiet young man who impressed everyone when he spoke. It was the good-looking and articulate Peter Hain, himself an exile from South Africa. The press liked the look of him, as he was cool and reasonable, and so from that moment on, whether he liked it or not, he was 'the leader of the STST' as far as we headline-hunters were concerned.

Peter Hain was born in Nairobi, Kenya, on 16 February 1950. In 1951 his parents settled in South Africa and bought a home in the suburbs of Pretoria, where politics was discussed over breakfast, lunch and dinner. Peter's father Walter, an architect, was the chairman of the local Liberal Party and his mother Adelaine was its secretary. A

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fearless couple, they opposed apartheid, and, although they were certainly not Communists, they were banned under the Suppression of Communism Act.

As an architect, Walter Hain was mainly dependent on government and municipal contracts, and, once he was banned, he soon discovered that no official dared to give him work. So the Hain family packed their bags and set sail for Britain, arriving one year to the day after John Harris was hanged.

Peter Hain joined Britain's Young Liberal Movement in 1968 and was voted on to its executive at the age of nineteen. Later he became the chairman of the Young Liberals. He was only eighteen when he took part in his first public demonstration in Britain; I photographed him as he stood outside London's White City stadium on 13 July 1968, protesting against the South African sportsmen who were competing in the Amateur Athletics Association Championships. That photograph was never published, but sixteen months later the British public came to recognize his face when he led several hundred young demonstrators in a mass protest against the first match played by the Springbok team at Twickenham.

Four months before the Springbok rugby team started its tour of Britain, BOSS secretly arranged for a political pamphlet to be sent to all leading British newspapers. The pamphlet, signed 'The Vigilantes', stated that 'counter-protest cells' had been set up throughout the country and that any left-wing demonstrator who dared to run on to the field of play in an attempt to embarrass the Springboks would get 'carried off and walloped'. The pamphlet was worded to give the impression it had been prepared by British rugby enthusiasts who resented politics being dragged into the sport they loved. But it was all a hoax. No such group of vigilantes existed. BOSS was hoping that the - idea would be picked up by British rugby men.

One week before all the pamphlets were posted out, my London handler, Piet Schoeman, gave me an advance copy and said I should write the first story on the subject for a

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South African newspaper, which I did.¹ Piet told me that if any British newspaper approached me and asked for my source I should lie and say the Vigilante group was based at the Zambezi Club in London's Earls Court district. Ten days after my exclusive story appeared in the Johannesburg Sunday Express, the British newspaper The Times carried a similar story on the subject, saying the Vigilantes were based at the Zambezi Club.

BOSS later used the same tactic when the Springbok team arrived in London. A press release was sent to several Fleet Street newspapers stating that demonstrators who tried to disrupt any of the Springboks' matches in the United Kingdom would be dealt with in an unusual way. The press release claimed to have been issued by a group calling itself the 'Democratic Anti-Demo Organization', based in Earls Court. The group said its members would attend Springbok matches armed with tins of red spray and small bags of feathers.

'Any long-haired anarchists blowing whistles, letting off fireworks or attempting to run on to the field of play in such a way that could disrupt sport for political motives will be sprayed with red paint and then covered with feathers.'

Again, my London handler, Piet Schoeman, gave me a copy of this fake press release two days before it was posted to Fleet Street newspapers. And again I was given permission to write the first story on the subject for a South African newspaper, to give the White voters back home the false impression that they had many friends and supporters in Britain. I cabled the story to the Johannesburg Sunday Express, which used it as a splash front-page lead.[†] But BOSS fell down on this propaganda stunt, because the Fleet Street newspapers ignored the press releases. They probably realized that if they published the tar-and-feather threat they might be accused of incitement to violence.

The Stop the Seventy Tour movement was a phenomenal success. At one stage during the tour a leading news-

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paper estimated that at least 60,000 were taking part. Bishops, MPs and even members of the House of Lords joined in some of the protest marches. It was a time of high activity for me; in addition to covering the matches for various South African newspapers I also had to photograph all the demonstrators for BOSS.

Covering all the battles between police and protesters was not too difficult, but, as I knew nothing about rugby, I asked a senior British sports writer to educate me on the rules of the game. He was Bob Trevor, a Welshman who worked on the staff of the London Evening News. Bob hated apartheid and admitted that, although he appreciated the skill of the Springbok rugby team, he disliked the system they represented so much that he had contributed money from his own pocket so that a crowd of young protesters could hire a bus to take them to the first match at Twickenham. I submitted this minor detail in one of my reports to BOSS. I do not know whether BOSS passed this snippet on to the British security people, but something certainly happened to make Bob Trevor suspicious of me.

I took some care in my dealings with Bob Trevor and went out of my way to reduce his suspicion of me. On one occasion I definitely succeeded. He and I attended the Springbok match against Midland Counties at Leicester on 8 November 1969. There I saw a group of uniformed policemen plucking out demonstrators who were obviously ringleaders. As the police dragged the demos past a toilet I noticed they stopped for a few seconds and searched them for offensive weapons. The strange thing was that the police always stopped at exactly the same spot. Looking for the reason, I spotted two men in plain clothes taking photographs

¹ Johannesburg Sunday Express, 27 July 1969, headlined 'Move To Counter Anti-SA Sports Protests'.

[†] 2 November 1969, headlined 'Tar, Feather Threat To Bok Haters'.

of the demos. These cameramen were clearly taking police-type 'mug shots', as they only clicked their shutters when the youngster being searched had his head held high.

Later, when the two cameramen moved to a section of the crowd where demonstrators were most active I sidled up to them and started shouting pro-Springbok slogans. One of the cameramen asked 'Where are you from, then?'

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'South Africa,' I replied. 'And we know how to deal with these scruffy long-haired demos over there. We don't treat them with velvet gloves like you lot do. We give them a good hammering.'

The two cameramen laughed and asked how I knew they were policemen. I explained that they made the mistake of aiming their cameras at the faces of their victims, so they were clearly not press photographers or they would be taking more action-type shots.

One man turned to the other. 'That's something worth knowing, we'll watch out for that in future.'

Knowing now they were definitely policemen, and possibly Special Branch men, I secretly took pictures of them both with my thief lens. After the match, at about 4.30 p.m., I cabled a full report to the Johannesburg Sunday Express and mentioned that British security men had secretly taken photographs of the demonstrators. That cable took twelve hours to reach my newspaper - making it six hours too late for the print run. As a result my story never saw the light of day. During the seven years I spent in London I sent hundreds of press cables to South Africa and all reached their destination within the hour, some within twenty minutes. Suspecting my cable had been nobbled by British security, I made discreet inquiries through a friend of mine at post office headquarters.

'They'll tell you that the lines were overloaded, but the truth is your cable went to a little back room where certain experts sit vetting all suspicious or potentially embarrassing cables sent abroad,' he said.

I believed him then and I still believe him. This aggravated me intensely and made me determined to get the story published in Britain. So I gave all my photographs of the two plain-clothed cameramen to Bob Trevor. Being an outstanding journalist with a good nose for news, Bob realized the political significance of such a story. British police secretly taking photographs of demonstrators smacked of Gestapo methods, particularly when the demos were protesting against an apartheid regime like South Africa. The

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police denied taking photographs when first approached by the Evening News, so an assistant editor of that newspaper, Don Boddie, called me in and quizzed me on the whole subject. When I insisted that the two cameramen were policemen, the Evening News started an in-depth probe, and the police finally admitted, under pressure, that they had taken photographs of the demonstrators. The Deputy Chief Constable of Leicester and Rutland, Mr Eric Lacey, claimed that the pictures had only been taken in case the demonstrators later alleged they had been ill-treated while under arrest. When asked if the photographs would be destroyed or passed on to Special Branch files, Mr Lacey refused to comment. It was a sensational story, and when the Evening News ran it other newspapers quickly followed up with similar stories, particularly the Communist Morning Star, which demanded that the Home Secretary, Mr Jim Callaghan, should 'jump on' the police chiefs who ordered secret photographs to be taken of anti-apartheid demonstrators.² The matter was even aired in parliament.

Security at all the Springbok matches was very tight and most of the rugby clubs refused to grant press tickets to the Communist Morning Star, so I did a private deal with Ernie Greenwood, the chief photographer of that newspaper. I told him that if he printed up all my

² *Evening News*, 10 November 1969, *Guardian* and *Morning Star*, 11 November 1969.

film I would let his newspaper choose any photograph they liked and publish it free of charge. On the face of it, this was a fair deal for both sides, and Ernie jumped at the idea. But it was a much better deal for me, as it gave me full protection against being hammered by suspicious demonstrators who might think I was a right-winger or a policeman. Using the Morning Star as a cover saved my skin on several occasions when I took photographs of demonstrators being arrested or running on to the pitch to stop play. Once, when four demos pinned me to a wall, I pointed out that if they telephoned Ernie Greenwood of the Morning Star he would confirm I was taking pictures of 'police aggression'. On the

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other hand, if the police nabbed me on suspicion that I was taking pictures for a left-wing or 'underground' paper I would pull out proof that I was an officer of the National Union of Journalists. The Morning Star used my photographs well. So did the Anti-Apartheid Movement's newspaper, Anti-Apartheid News.

Peter Hain was a useful ally. When I told him I would be travelling up to Wales to cover the match at Swansea, he gave me an introduction to a group of students there who allowed me to accompany them when they made a mass invasion of the pitch. But the rugby authorities at Swansea had a nasty shock up their sleeves for the demonstrators that day. They had hired eighty 'stewards' to keep the peace, and, whether by accident or design, many of these peacekeepers were skinheads just itching for a good punch-up. When a group of 200 demonstrators tried to rush on to the pitch, shortly after half-time, the skinheads moved in with a vengeance, punching, kicking and creating general havoc. Between forty and fifty demonstrators were taken to hospital for treatment as a result. David Jardine, the vice-president of Swansea University Students' Union, was beaten black and blue and suffered such severe shock that he was unable to talk after being picked up off the floor. Roger French, of Reading University, was taken to hospital with a broken jaw. Paul Jordan, also from Reading University, was taken to hospital for an eye operation. The skinheads showed no mercy and even kicked girls in the ribs as they fell during the vicious melee. In this instance the police acted very correctly and rushed reinforcements to the area in an effort to stop the fighting; one constable was stabbed when he tried to save a girl being trampled underfoot.

I was the only press photographer on the spot when the fighting broke out, and Bob Trevor used my pictures to great effect in the Evening News.³ Sixty-seven demonstrators were arrested at that match and I photographed most of them one by one as they were thrown into police vehicles.

When allegations of brutality were laid against the

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police, an official investigation was mounted, and I received a request from Mr K. Oxford, the Assistant Chief Constable for the Northumberland Constabulary, for all the photographs I had taken at the Swansea match. Mr Oxford assured me that whatever material I supplied would remain confidential. I wrote back to him saying I would be willing to lend him all my negatives but asked him to wait for three weeks as I was busy. The real reason was that I had sent all the negatives to BOSS in Pretoria for identification purposes. But finally, in the third week of January, I met Mr Oxford and handed over some one hundred negatives. About two weeks later he returned them all to me after having photographs printed up by police darkroom technicians. I do not know what use he made of those photographs or if anyone appeared in court as a result.

Some well-disposed person sent me an anonymous letter one week later. It consisted of a long list of the names and addresses of most of the demonstrators I had photographed being arrested at the Swansea match. Alongside each name was a number. I checked with my negatives and found that each number on the list related to my numbered negatives. To this

³ 17 November 1969.

day I do not know who sent me that list, but it was clearly someone who had access to my negatives during the time they were out of my possession. Even stranger, the envelope containing the list was postmarked London, not Swansea. BOSS was very impressed when I submitted the list for their political files at Pretoria H.Q.

During the 22 November match at Twickenham, police defence measures were so strong that only four press cameramen were allowed on the pitch. I tricked my way behind the police lines by sidling up to the officer in charge and saying ‘Where do you want me to be based, sir? I’m taking the pictures of the demonstrators.’ It worked. The officer, speaking out of the side of his mouth, said ‘Situate yourself on the other side in the middle of the grandstand, there’s a big group of demonstrators over there.’

For the rest of the match I stood amongst about thirty policemen and photographed all the demos to my heart’s

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content. But my crafty move bounced back on me when I was spotted by Herschel Strauss, who was in the middle of the protesters. He is a lawyer from Cape Town who left South Africa for political reasons and knew me well. Soon afterwards he gave a story to the British Sunday Telegraph claiming that I must be a BOSS spy because I not only photographed all the demonstrators but for some strange reason seemed to be in cahoots with the police at the match. The Sunday Telegraph ran the story but, for some reason, left out my name. Once again I escaped widespread suspicion.

When the Springboks played at Edinburgh I flew there from London at BOSS expense. The same applied when I attended the match in Dublin on 10 January 1970. My flight and hotel costs were met by BOSS so that I could take close-up photographs of every well-known Irish person who took part in the mass march against the Springboks. These included Bernadette Devlin and Mr Kadar Asmal, an Indian barrister from South Africa who was then the number one activist in the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement. On my return to London the Communist Morning Star gleefully front-paged one of my photographs showing a policeman falling off a wall after a demonstrator had hit him in the face with a rotten egg.⁴

The Springbok tour was a rotten time all round for the police. They were spat at, called ‘filthy capitalist running dogs’ or ‘racist pigs’, and many were injured. But they often got their revenge. Their favourite tactic when pulling a demonstrator out of the front ranks was to go into a huddle all round him. This meant the arrested man got a few ‘accidental’ elbows in his face, stomach and back during the scuffle. Another target was the testicles, but it was extremely difficult to take a photograph of that. There were usually so many policemen that the demonstrator could not even be seen. At several matches the police outnumbered the demonstrators. London’s riot chief, John Gerrard, admitted that

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he had assigned 1,560 policemen to the international at Twickenham on 20 December. Peter Hain’s Stop the Seventy Tour campaign received worldwide publicity, and several British policemen I talked to privately agreed with the outcry against apartheid. But other policemen took the attitude that all the demonstrations were secretly masterminded by Moscow Communists, and they put the boot in whenever they could. They also framed some of the people they arrested running on to the pitch. One such policeman was Detective Sergeant Grant Smith, who planted a knife in the pocket of a Black youth he arrested during a match at Twickenham. The Black was convicted, but Sergeant Smith confessed four years later, saying he wished to clear his conscience.

Others were not so lucky. One demonstrator, aged twenty-six, was drinking a pint of beer when he was arrested at one of the matches. On appearing in court he produced excellent character references from Liberal MPs John Pardoe and Eric Lubbock, -to show he was not a violent person. But it made no difference; he was fined £20 after being found guilty of

⁴ 12 January 1970.

possessing an offensive weapon - a one-pint beer mug. David Fysh, a student of economics from Hornsey, London, found crime did not pay when he was arrested at another Springbok match. He was fined £10 after police told the court he had intended throwing two offensive weapons during the game: two one-penny coins.

The funniest incident I reported on concerned Peter Cockroft, a Manchester University student who was charged with threatening behaviour after he had assaulted a police horse. Peter, aged twenty-two, was knocked off his feet during a rush by demonstrators and fell underneath the horse. Giving evidence in court, Constable Keith Williams swore that the accused had 'grabbed hold of one of the horse's legs and bit it fiercely'. Peter Cockroft denied the charge strenuously, and even the court smiled as it bound him over to keep the peace in future.

Peter Hain could perhaps be forgiven if he didn't smile at that story, as he was later to claim that police officers had

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planted evidence on, and lied in court against, at least thirty demonstrators during the Springbok tour. He said details of the cases had been sent to the Home Office, but 'nothing was done'. Peter Hain could hardly grumble, however, about the overall success of the STST campaign against the Springboks. It was a phenomenal triumph in terms of mass protest, and the Springboks went home with their tails between their legs.

Peter Hain and his followers then turned their attention to the proposed tour of Britain by a South African cricket team in the summer of 1970. A campaign of widespread condemnation was mounted, and it was clear right from the start that even if the South African cricketers did arrive in Britain their tour would be a farce. Unlike rugby, which is conducive to screams, yells and bashings, cricket is a far more gentlemanly pursuit, calling for long periods of play and tranquillity. The noise of 1,000 chanting demonstrators would have been enough to put any batsman off his stroke.

The MCC argued long and hard that the Springbok cricketers should be welcomed to Britain; one of its favourite slices of misleading reasoning was that 'bridge-building', not isolation, was the best way to end apartheid. The MCC did not seem interested in Peter Hain's argument that Blacks in South Africa were not given equality in sport. They apparently believed the South African government's claim: 'Our Blacks are simply not interested in cricket; that's why there is no Black in our cricket team.'

It is a pity that Peter Hain did not go on British television and remind the MCC of a similar statement made about sport: 'The reason why no Jew was selected to participate in the Olympic Games was that no Jew was able to qualify by ability for the Olympic team. Heil Hitler.' That remark was made to the world press by a Nazi leader in 1936 when he explained why the German team was all Aryan.

Peter Hain's STST members never confronted the South African cricket team. The tour was called off, and the MCC suddenly changed gear by stating that it would not

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have any relations with South African cricket until substantial changes were made in the practice of apartheid as far as team selection was concerned. Meaning: 'Let's see some Black faces in your White South African cricket team, old boy.'

One Johannesburg newspaper reported the cancellation of the Springbok cricket tour with the headline 'Hain Stops Play'. It was then that Peter Hain became the most hated man in White South African sporting circles. It was clear he must be taught a lesson.

Within hours of the Springbok cricket tour being called off, my London handler, Alf Bouwer, gave me a special assignment. I should type out a lengthy report on everything I had witnessed at all matches played during the Springbok rugby team's tour, the names of all demonstrators, times, dates, places and photographs. In addition I was to incorporate all I knew about Peter Hain, his friends, his STST movement and its links with student bodies at

universities all over Britain. This was a massive job which took me the best part of a week. When it was finished it ran to more than sixty pages. Alf Bouwer was delighted and immediately sent a copy of it to BOSS in Pretoria. A few days later Alf told me that BOSS wanted to 'pin that political butterfly, Peter Hain, to the wall'. And I was to be used as the pin.

At the time a British barrister named Francis Bennion had announced he was planning to institute a private prosecution against Peter Hain on charges of conspiring with others to mount unlawful demonstrations against South African sportsmen. Alf pointed out that Mr Bennion would need good witnesses if his case against Hain was to succeed. BOSS was satisfied that I would be the most valuable witness Mr Bennion could hope to find, as I was the only newsman who had attended all the Springbok rugby matches. Fleet Street newspapers had, of course, sent representatives to cover all the matches, but different reporters had been chosen for some of them, particularly when the Springboks had played in Wales, Scotland and

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Ireland. Apart from this, I had been present when the Stop the Seventy Tour group was formed, I had been friendly with Peter Hain throughout the tour, and, even better, I had taken more than 1,000 photographs of the demonstrations at the various matches. BOSS told me that immediately after giving evidence against Peter Hain my cover would be broken and I would be flown back to South Africa.

For some reason BOSS told me not to approach Francis Bennion direct. Alf Bouwer said this was most important. I was to make sure that someone else introduced me. That person was Mr Gerald Howarth, a good-looking man in his early twenties. BOSS described him as a staunch right-winger who had been courageous enough to attend the mass anti-Vietnam demonstrations outside the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square - courageous because Gerald had paraded round the estimated 10,000 demonstrators carrying a banner which defended the United States.

BOSS told me that Gerald Howarth would probably make contact with me but, to ensure that he did, I should visit the office where he worked and casually let it be known there that I had attended all the Springbok rugby matches. Gerald Howarth was the general secretary of a set-up known as the Society for Individual Freedom (SIF) which rented small offices at 55 Park Lane, Mayfair. It was a right-wing group which opposed free entry to Britain of Black immigrants. Its chairman had once called for the repatriation of coloured immigrants. Most of the people associated with it were eminently respectable, and at least four of them were titled. Alf Bouwer told me to pop into the Park Lane offices of the Society for Individual Freedom on the pretence of wishing to buy one of the books they sold. But, Alf warned, 'Watch yourself very carefully when you visit the society, because at least two senior British intelligence operatives are members and it's almost certainly a British intelligence front organization which is mainly used for disseminating Establishment-type propaganda.'

I was astonished, but, Alf was quite adamant on the subject. He said he had received his information from a British

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Special Branch Detective Inspector. I asked Alf Bouwer to tell me the names of the two senior British intelligence operatives connected with the Society for Individual Freedom. He said they were Mr Ross McWhirter, co-author of the Guinness Book of Records, who was shot dead by the IRA in November 1975, and Mr George Kennedy Young, MBE, a merchant banker and president of the Nuclear Fuel Finance S A of Luxembourg, who had been head of counter-espionage in the 21st Army Group during the Second World War and Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Defence from 1953 to 1961.

It all sounded very cloak-and-dagger, but I did as I was told and took myself off to the Park Lane offices of the Society for Individual Freedom, where I noticed a large pile of books ready for distribution. They all bore the same title, and the author was Mr Enoch Powell. While buying a copy I casually mentioned that I was a South African journalist who had

covered all the Springbok rugby matches. It was only a matter of hours before I received a telephone call from Gerald Howarth. He almost carried me over to the Lincoln's Inn Fields chambers of Francis Bennion when I said I would be willing to give information which could help to convict Peter Hain.

I was impressed by Francis Alan Roscoe Bennion and found him to be not only a gentle person but also very much the gentleman. He was educated at Harrow and Balliol College, Oxford, and had flown as a pilot in the RAF during the Second World War. After qualifying as a barrister he had lectured in law until 1953 and then entered government service. In 1956, when only thirty-three, Mr Bennion had been sent to Pakistan to help draft the country's new constitution. His expertise was such that he was then loaned to Ghana in 1959 as legal adviser on converting the country into a republic.

Francis Bennion explained that arrangements had been made for the South African cricketers to play twenty-eight matches during their four-month tour of Britain; many thousands of people would have attended these matches,

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and millions would have watched them on television; His point was that these millions of ordinary people should not have been deprived of such legal pursuits just because of the unlawful agitation activities of Peter Hain and his left-wing associates. Mr Bennion emphasized that he had no personal grudge against Peter Hain, but 'agitators like him must not be allowed, however good or bad their cause may be, to stop the lawful activities of others'. I agreed with Mr Bennion entirely and offered to liaise with his leg man, Gerald Howarth, who was building up a dossier against Peter Hain.

Mr Bennion gave me details of an anonymous death threat he had received by telephone. This was a new angle on the aspect of Peter Hain being prosecuted, so I wrote a highly flattering story about Mr Bennion and cabled it off to South Africa, where it was well used.⁵ Mr Bennion was so delighted with my story when I gave him an airmail copy of the Johannesburg Sunday Express three days later that he took me to lunch near his office. After listening to me talk about the demonstrations I had witnessed against the Springbok rugby team, he told me I would be his key witness. 'On your evidence I am sure we shall secure a conviction,' he said.

He then told me he wished to hold a press conference. Did I know a good venue? I suggested that, to take the mickey out of Peter Hain and the STST movement, Mr Bennion should hire the room in the White Swan pub where STST had held its first press conference. Mr Bennion thought this a crackerjack idea and it was in that small room that he faced the press when he outlined his intention to prosecute Peter Hain.

I had several meetings with Gerald Howarth as a result of which he typed out a statement based on the evidence I could offer. But, bearing in mind what Alf Bouwer had told me about the Society for Individual Freedom having links with British intelligence, I had taken the precaution of getting Gerald to sign an agreement in which he and Mr

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Bennion promised not to disclose my name 'to any person, or any court of law, at any time' without my prior permission. It was only a short document, but it got me out of a tremendously difficult situation two years later. When this agreement was signed I gave Gerald Howarth and Francis Bennion a revised draft of my sixty-page report to BOSS on the whole Springbok rugby tour and Peter Hain's STST movement. But I deliberately did not sign it before a Commissioner of Oaths.

In June 1971 BOSS asked me to write a story giving publicity to a fund being set up in Britain to raise money for the financing of Francis Bennion's prosecution. Called the 'Hain Prosecution Fund', it hoped to raise £20,000. The man who officially fronted this fund-raising appeal was none other than Mr Ross McWhirter, who acted as the chairman of the fund, and

⁵ Johannesburg *Sunday Express*, 14 June 1970, headlined 'Death Threat To Anti-Demo Man'.

the treasurer was Gerald Howarth. When I suggested writing an article giving the fund valuable propaganda in South Africa, Gerald Howarth was enthusiastic and introduced me to Mr Ross McWhirter. Both were pleased with the story I wrote, which was given prominent treatment in South Africa.⁶

Francis Bennion flew to South Africa two weeks later to collect possible witnesses for his Hain prosecution. BOSS took full advantage of his visit by circulating a vast amount of roneoed subscription lists throughout the offices of all civil servants in South Africa. The significance of this was not quite understood by the British press. After all, if a subscription list were sent out to civil servants in Britain those people who agreed with it would subscribe and those who did not would not. It's not like that in South Africa. If you are a civil servant there, your job is at risk if you are not seen to be pro-government. You subscribe. While in South Africa Mr Bennion spoke at public meetings, and members of the audience donated money for what they called the 'Pain For Hain Fund'. Mr Bennion has a sister living in Cape Town, and her husband, Mr John Rowling, also made himself active in the anti-Hain campaign.

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Francis Bennion sold his Georgian home at Warlingham in Surrey to help raise extra funds for the Peter Hain prosecution. I gathered that his wife, Elizabeth, and three daughters were not in complete agreement over this move. At one stage it caused a separation between Mr Bennion and his wife.

Although Mr Francis Bennion definitely had close links with several people who were clearly anti-Black, it is only fair to stress that when talking to me he insisted that he was opposed to the policy of apartheid. He said 'I have worked with Coloured people in several countries and have a lot of friends among them.' I doubt if Mr Bennion's Coloured friends would have agreed with his tour of South Africa to compile evidence and funds to be used against Peter Hain. The Jamaican government certainly took exception to such activities. At the time, Mr Bennion had a lucrative £10,000-a-year contract as a tax consultant with the Jamaicans, but they sacked him on hearing about his anti-Hain campaign. When it comes to his views on race, Mr Bennion is clearly something of an enigma. For example, when he was invited to dine with the South African Premier in 1971, he refused because he knew Mr Vorster had been interned during the war for pro-Nazi leanings.

Francis Bennion did not get it all his own way when he tried to mount his prosecution against Peter Hain. A magistrates' court refused to grant summonses, so he appealed to the High Court. During that hearing it was publicly stated that Mr Bennion's 'star witness', a journalist named Gordon Winter, had disappeared. To make it worse, the Director of Public Prosecutions had sent police to my home to serve a subpoena on me to attend court. But something had gone seriously wrong, and the DPP stated that 'extensive police inquiries have failed to locate Gordon Winter'. Suddenly, I was a missing man, and the *Guardian* ran a story on 21 May 1971 announcing that. It was all very embarrassing, so I sat down and wrote a strong letter of complaint to Sir Norman Skelhorn, the Director of Public Prosecutions, telling him that no police officer had been to my flat to the

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best of my knowledge, and that if one had done so he could have spoken to my landlord, who lived in the same building, or to any of my neighbours, who knew I was not missing. Furthermore my name, address and telephone numbers were listed in the Foreign Press Association handbook, I was an accredited member of the Parliamentary Association for Overseas Correspondents at the House of Commons, and in any case even the briefest inquiries at the National Union of Journalists would have disclosed the fact that I was an officer of that union and that I certainly had not disappeared.

⁶ Johannesburg *Sunday Express*, 13 June 1971.

The Director of Public Prosecutions mounted a special inquiry into my complaint and discovered that the police officer sent to my home had merely knocked on my door when I was out and had then apparently taken the afternoon off to see a cowboy film instead of searching for me. The upshot was that the DPP sent me a letter of apology in which he expressed regret that the police report in his possession had been ‘inaccurate and conveyed the misleading impression’ that I had disappeared. I took this letter to the *Guardian* and made sure they published details from it.⁷

Some very strange things also happened to Peter Hain and his friends before and during the Hain trial. One month before, someone sent Peter a large envelope by air mail from Vienna. It contained an explosive device, which fortunately did not go off, because Peter’s sister Sally, aged fifteen, opened it from the bottom instead of the top. Later it was neutralized by explosives experts.

Two months earlier, Peter Hain disclosed that he had definite evidence that his telephone was being tapped at his London home and that the telephones of other leading Young Liberals had also been monitored. In addition to this their letters appeared to have been opened before delivery. ‘It is not clear whether the phone tapping is by BOSS, or their British counterparts, or by some collaboration between the two,’ he said.

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BOSS definitely tried to recruit South African journalists to spy on Hain. One was Eugene Hugo, a quiet young reporter from Natal. On 15 January 1970, my handler, Alf Bouwer, gave me this message from BOSS in Pretoria:

‘HUGO, Eugene N. White Adult Male working as a journalist for the South African Argus Group based in London. Born 26/3/1943 in Dundee, Natal. Passport number D14866. Married to Margaret Mary Hugo, White Adult Female SA Subject, passport number D5238. Eugene Hugo is very friendly with Peter Hain and claims to be a liberal, but there is a possibility he may pose as such to further his career with the liberal Argus Group. Please assess whether he can be trusted.’

I knew what that meant: BOSS wanted to recruit him as a spy. I submitted a warning to Pretoria stating quite categorically that Eugene Hugo could not be trusted. He despised the South African government.

But BOSS did not accept my assessment. Within a matter of days Alf Bouwer approached Eugene Hugo and offered to pay him well if he spied on Peter Hain for BOSS. Hugo not only refused; he rushed to Mr Alex Noble, then the managing editor of the Argus Group in London, and told him all about the approach. Mr Noble complained to the South African Ambassador in London, who promised that Eugene Hugo would be left alone as long as no publicity was given to the ‘alleged spy approach’.

Alf Bouwer was angry and told me: ‘We will deal with the bastard later.’ It was about seven years before BOSS took its revenge on Eugene Hugo. He was then working in America, and BOSS mounted a massive smear campaign against him which made headlines in South Africa. I do not know how it was all engineered.

I was often surprised by the things BOSS knew and the confidential files they were able to peep into. On 18 February 1971 I accidentally bumped into a young man who was buying some far-left literature in Collets Bookshop in London’s Charing Cross Road. He spoke with a South

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African accent, so I asked him his name. He said he was Alan Berry from Sweden and had once lived in Johannesburg. During our five-minute chat he casually mentioned that he hoped to contact Peter Hain during his one-month holiday in Britain. As he was clearly a left-winger, I submitted a report on him to BOSS. Back came this reply:

⁷ 13 July 1971, headlined ‘Apology To Journalist’.

'BERRY, Alan. Adult White Male, born Republic of South Africa 14/1/1949. Now studying in Sweden where he is known to be interested in setting up a local group to aid Peter Hain. Berry is a card-carrying member of the Swedish Communist Party. He lives with Miss Gunnel BERBCRABTZ, an Adult White Female who is also a senior member of the Swedish Communist Party. They live together as man and wife at Tangu 36, Hagersten, 21638, Sweden, but are not legally married. Please submit details if Berry makes contact with Peter Hain.'

BOSS gave me other information about Mr Alan Berry, but I did not keep a full note of it all. One thing is clear, however: BOSS certainly had access to security files in Sweden, as they also had Alan Berry's Communist Party card number, and that of his lady friend.

During the Hain trial, one of the witnesses for the defence was Mrs Ethel de Keyser, the secretary of the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Prosecution counsel, Owen Stable, QC, asked her about the Movement's annual meeting held at the National Liberal Club in 1969. Mrs De Keyser said she could not remember everything about this meeting, as a full note had not been taken by any of her members. All she had kept was a note of all the resolutions and records of the voting. The interesting aspect of this was that the press had not been admitted to the meeting, yet the prosecution seemed to know everything that had been said during that closed session. Peter Hain, who was defending himself, stood up in court and asked Mrs De Keyser: 'Mr Stable seemed better informed than you about the annual general meeting of 1969. To your knowledge have South African spies been at AAM meetings?'

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Mrs De Keyser answered 'Yes, we think this has happened.'

But I happen to know that no BOSS spy attended that AAM annual general meeting; my handler, Piet Schoeman, told me that our spy, who was a senior member of the AAM, was unable to attend because of illness. I do not know his or her name.

Finally the big moment came when I was due to stand in the witness box at the High Court and give evidence as a witness for the prosecution, proving that Peter Hain had conspired to disrupt South African sports tours in Britain etc. So what did BOSS do at the last minute? They told me to switch sides and give evidence in favour of Peter Hain and not against him! Anyone who has the slightest knowledge of court procedure will realize what a pickle this landed me in. I had given Gerald Howarth and Francis Bennion a minutely detailed sixty-page report against Peter Hain and all his alleged conspirators. Now I was being ordered to ignore that and help Hain get off the charges I had helped to erect.

But two very important things were in my favour. I had insisted that Gerald Howarth should sign the agreement that details in my statement should not be disclosed under my name without my permission. I held them to this and said I could not give all that evidence in court. When Gerald Howarth opened his mouth in astonishment and asked why, I told him I was 'involved in intelligence work' and that I had no option. I did not say I worked for BOSS, but I am sure he realized it. The other thing which stood in my favour was that Francis Bennion was a gentleman. Once he has given his word he keeps it. He called me to give evidence only on all the photographs I had taken of the various demonstrations against the Springboks. And this was the big escape hatch I used when I finally gave evidence. After prosecuting counsel had led me through my evidence I suddenly turned 'maverick' witness and told the court I had taken more than 1,000 photographs at the anti-Springbok demonstrations but that the prosecution had

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chosen only photographs that showed aggression by demonstrators against the police. Pulling a photograph out of my briefcase, I showed it to the court saying that it was one of several the prosecution had not been interested in because it showed police aggression against demonstrators. At this point Judge Bernard Gillis, QC, intervened and asked to see the photograph I held in my hand. It showed about twenty uniformed policeman, and at least one plain-clothed Special Branch man, clustered round a demonstrator as eight policemen pulled

him backwards over a steel barrier at the Springbok match at Edinburgh on 6 December 1969. After looking at the photograph closely Judge Gillis told me that if I had any other photographs like it I should produce them for the sake of justice.

'I have 1,000 negatives,' I answered. 'Obviously if you choose your photos you choose what you want. Some of my photographs show quite clearly that as the tour progressed the police got more vicious and caused a lot of trouble. This one shows quite a few policemen plucking a demonstrator out of the crowd. There is a crowd beneath them. The police are higher than the demonstrators. The police tactic was to pluck out one of the most vociferous. They would grab his testicles - this was common practice - and give them a good squeeze and give him a good hammering. This picture shows one policeman going for his testicles. This in turn enraged the demonstrators and they became more aggressive. They spat at the police. It was a progressive thing that led to unhappiness all round. In this match certainly the police were to blame. No doubt about it. I was myself arrested for taking pictures of that incident... Two other journalists were assaulted at the match. Frank Herrinarm of the Sunday Times was given a hard time by the police. He complained to me afterwards on the plane back. I think all the pressmen in my vicinity agreed that the police had been diabolical.'⁸

That evidence I gave was completely true, but the irony

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is that if BOSS had not told me to help Hain get off. I would have omitted to mention 'police aggression' when being led through my evidence by the prosecution. Peter Hain's defence counsel (later dismissed in the course of the trial) were delighted by my disclosure, so I rounded it off nicely for them by confirming that Peter had been chosen by the press as the spokesman for the STST movement because he was 'a very cool, articulate, independent, reasonable young man' who understood what journalists wanted when they telephoned for an interview. I also added that, at all times during his many interviews with me, Peter Hain had made it clear he was not in favour of violence, and that the groups who had taken part in the formation of the STST movement had acted on their own initiative. This gave the defence the chance to exploit its main line of rebuttal, that Peter Hain could hardly be held responsible for everyone's demonstrations as the elaborate conspiracy charges claimed.

In his book *The Cricket Conspiracy*, the British Sunday Times journalist Derek Humphry stated that my evidence was almost certainly the main reason why Peter Hain was found not guilty on the three most serious charges brought against him. I could not help Peter Hain on the remaining charge, that he had unlawfully conspired to hinder and disrupt the Davis Cup tennis match between Britain and South Africa in July 1969, as I had not been present at that demonstration. Peter Hain was fined £200 after being found guilty on that charge.

As I walked out of court after giving evidence, Nancy White, a senior member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, rushed up and threw her arms round me.

'I'm so delighted by the evidence you gave,' she said. 'We were all worried that you were a BOSS agent set up to frame Peter and send him to jail. But on behalf of all the other people at the Anti-Apartheid Movement I would like to apologize for the suspicion that you could be the kind of disgusting person who could work for BOSS.' Later I was thanked by Peter Hain's mother as she talked

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to Lord Avebury (the former Liberal MP Eric Lubbock), who had been responsible for starting a 'Hain Defence Fund' to collect money for costs not covered by legal aid. Mrs Hain had tears of joy running down her cheeks as she embraced Lord Avebury. The delight on all these faces made me realize what life would have been like if I had given evidence against Peter Hain, as originally planned by BOSS. Losing my temper with Pretoria for one mad moment, I pulled Mrs Hain aside and whispered: 'I don't exactly know what part BOSS played in mounting

⁸ The Times, Daily Telegraph, Glasgow Herald and Scotsman, 3 August 1972, all headlined 'Police Vicious'.

this case against your son, but I do happen to know there's some other jiggery-pokery going on, as at least two British intelligence men are said to be involved with the Society for Individual Freedom which helped Francis Bennion to mount the whole thing.'

I am not sure whether I mentioned Ross McWhirter's name to Mrs Hain, but I definitely told her about Mr George Young. At a later stage Mrs Hain told me that a friend of hers had checked on George Young and that my information was 'almost certainly correct'.

Some of my right-wing friends in South Africa wrote to tell me they were disappointed by the evidence I had given in favour of Peter Hain. My editor on the Johannesburg Sunday Express, Johnny Johnson, wrote to say 'It's about time you made up your mind whose side you are on.' But BOSS was pleased by the way I had extricated myself. They knew it left me free to mount the most important political smear of my career. The victim this time was the Right Honourable Jeremy Thorpe, MP, leader of the British Liberal Party. That was why BOSS had told me to switch sides in the Hain trial. The Thorpe scandal had fallen into my lap. BOSS took the view that rather than give evidence against Peter Hain, which would force me to return to South Africa at once, I should keep my cover intact and stay in Britain to deal a crippling blow to the Liberal Party.