



Ray Adams: sensitive jobs

Mysterious role of ex-Yard man with a colourful past

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RAY ADAMS, a former Scotland Yard commander now embroiled in the pay television piracy row, has been involved in several high-profile investigations.

Mr Adams is the head of security at NDS, a subsidiary of the Murdoch empire, which is alleged to have been involved with one of the websites that published a secret code used to make counterfeit smart cards for pay-television channels. In 1987, soon after he

look over as head of the Metropolitan Police's criminal intelligence branch, SO11, it was announced that Mr Adams was the subject of a corruption inquiry after a criminal alleged improper financial links with informants.

He was regarded as an able, ambitious detective who had risen to a pivotal role in the Met at the relatively young age of 45. He was then the second-youngest officer in Met history to reach the status of commander, the first rank of the Association of Chief Police Officers. The inquiry, under the supervi-

sion of the Police Complaints Authority, was made public because another officer - De Alan Holmes - committed suicide after being interviewed, as a witness, by officers involved in the investigation.

The allegations related to an earlier period in Mr Adams's career, when he worked as a detective in south London. A measure of the kind of work he carried out came in 1985 when Kenneth Noye was arrested for the killing of an undercover officer in the investigation into the 1983 Brink's-Mat gold bul-

lion robbery. Noye, who was acquitted of murder after claiming self-defence in his Old Bailey trial, is said to have told officers after he was arrested that they should speak to Mr Adams, who knew him and would say he was not a violent killer. During the three years the inquiry dragged on, Mr Adams was subject to what he later described as "innuendo and wild speculation" and considerable press scrutiny.

In 1990, the Director of Public Prosecutions announced there was no evidence to support charges

against Mr Adams, who did not face any subsequent disciplinary action. Mr Adams was by then working for the force's inspectorate. He stated robustly that he always knew the investigation would come to nothing, adding: "I wouldn't have been trusted with the sensitive jobs I have been, otherwise."

Three years later, Mr Adams retired prematurely with back problems. One of his last acts, in 1993, was to write to the lawyer acting for the parents of the murdered black teenager, Stephen Lawrence. The letter formed the

basis of two days of hearings in Sir William Macpherson's public inquiry into the Lawrence case, in 1998.

The essential allegation against him was that he had links with Noye, who in turn had links with Clifford Norris, a criminal and the father of one of the principal suspects in the Lawrence case. It was suggested that he tried to impede the arrest of the suspects.

The Macpherson report found no evidence of any dishonesty, collusion or corruption on the part of Mr Adams.