

# Colourful past of Murdoch security man

## Former Met officer linked to pay TV row had role in Noye and Lawrence cases

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The former Scotland Yard commander now under scrutiny for his role in the ITV Digital piracy row is a colourful figure well used to the spotlight of publicity.

Ray Adams, 59, head of security at NDS, a company controlled by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, is by turns charming and overbearing. He played intriguing parts in two of the most significant crime stories of the past 20 years.

The first involved Ken Noye, the underworld boss convicted of handling gold from the 1983 Brink's-Mat bullion raid. Noye is in jail for a road rage murder. The second was the racist stabbing of Stephen Lawrence in 1993. Mr Adams's conduct was the subject of inquiries in both cases and he was cleared of any impropriety.

His alleged relationship with Noye came to light in 1985 when the latter was on trial for the murder of a police officer, Detective Constable John Fordham. Noye stabbed DC Fordham to death when he found him hiding in the grounds of his home.

Noye claimed he acted in self-defence and told investigators that they should talk to Chief Superintendent Ray Adams, who would vouch that he was neither a violent man nor a killer.

Mr Adams had investigated Noye in the mid-70s and was one of several officers who regarded him as a useful source of underworld information.

The link to Noye formed part of an internal inquiry by Scotland Yard's complaints investigation bureau in 1987. This investigation centred on claims that Mr Adams and other officers had taken bribes and had improper relations with criminal informants. By then, Mr Adams was head of the force's intelligence gathering arm, SO11.

One of the officers questioned by CIB about Mr Adams was Detective Constable Alan Holmes. DC Holmes, who was not under suspicion, shot himself at his home in Surrey shortly after being interviewed.

Noye, who was an inmate at the Albany maximum security

prison, was also questioned. Three years after the CIB investigation began, the director of public prosecutions announced there was no evidence to justify charges against Mr Adams. Cleared of any wrongdoing, the detective described the claims as "innuendo and wild speculation".

The link to Noye was to haunt him when the black teenager Stephen Lawrence, was stabbed to death in 1993.

On the face of it, Mr Adams was only peripherally involved in the liaison between the police and the Lawrence family during the early stages of the investigation. But the family had suspicions which were detailed in chapter 31 of Sir William Macpherson's report into the murder, published three years ago.

Sir William outlines how the family claimed that Mr Adams may have had links to Clifford Norris, the criminal father of Dave Norris, one of the prime suspects for Stephen's murder.

The Macpherson report refers to "a notice of allegations and issues" delivered to Mr Adams by the Lawrence legal team, which says: "A potential channel for such influence arises from Commander Adams's previous links with Kenneth Noye who in turn has links with Clifford Norris."

Mr Adams gave evidence to the inquiry for two days. He admitted that he had dealt with another member of the Norris family, who was a police informer, but insisted he had no contact with Clifford Norris. Sir William concluded that while there were "strange features" to Mr Adams's account the accusations against him were unfounded.

"Whatever maybe the suspicions of Mr and Mrs Lawrence's legal team, there was never any substantiation of the allegations that were made... We have seen nothing to suggest Mr Adams was involved in collusion or corruptly involved in efforts to hold back this prosecution."

Back troubleended Mr Adams's career in the Met. He formally retired in August 1993 but was declared unfit for duty four months earlier — shortly after Stephen Lawrence's murder.

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