

Cryptome

14 September 2011

A sends:

Premier Glasgow libel lawyers Bannatyne Kirkwood France are issuing the following little missive to any site hosting a 7 September 2011 article by Kevin Williamson of BellaCaledonia:

We are instructed by Tom Halpin.

The blog carries in its entirety an article originally published on the Bella Caledonia website which names our client as "Golfer".

We hereby give notice that the article has been removed from the Bella caledonia website following our legal representations on the basis that the terms of the article are without foundation.

If you continue to publish the article on your blog then legal proceedings will follow on the basis that you are repeating the libel occasioned by bella Caledonia.

We trust that you will attend to the removal of the article forthwith.

Campbell Deane
Bannatyne Kirkwood France
Solicitors
0141 221 6020

The original offending article is it the Google cache at:

<http://tinyurl.com/66hcppg> [Attached downloaded today by Cryptome.]

Briefly, its offence is to name former Acting Chief Constable Tom Halpin of Lothian & Borders Police as "Golfer", the anonymous police source who alleges Fabrication of evidence by the CIA during the investigation of the Lockerbie disaster.

This is Google's cache of <http://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2011/09/07/policing-lockerbie-a-bella-caledonia-special-investigation/>. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on Sep 8, 2011 12:55:37 GMT. The [current page](#) could have changed in the meantime. [Learn more](#)

These search terms are highlighted: **policing lockerbie a bella caledonia special investigation**

[Text-only version](#)

*independence – self-determination
– autonomy*

Policing Lockerbie, A Bella Caledonia Special Investigation

Posted on [September 7, 2011](#) by [bellacaledonia](#)

POLICING LOCKERBIE: A BELLA CALEDONIA EXCLUSIVE

What follows below is a special Bella Caledonia investigation by Co-Editor **Kevin Williamson** into one of the most tightly-guarded secrets surrounding the investigation into the conviction of Abdelbaset Ali Al Megrahi for the Lockerbie bombing.

It has been known for a number of years that a police officer – known only by the codename GOLFERS – made a signed statement to the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission in which he testified that the fragment of timer which was used to convict Al Megrahi was planted by CIA operatives with the collusion of Scottish police officers who were supposed to be investigating the terrorist atrocity.



GOLFERS has become one of the most important witnesses in the campaign to clear Al Megrahi. GOLFERS is the only known police eyewitness who has come forward and testified that serious crimes were committed by the investigating investigating to frame Al Megrahi.

Until now the identity of GOLFERS has been a fiercely guarded secret. Given that a redacted and effectively censored version of the SCCRC report is about to be released into the public domain by the Scottish Government we believe it is in the public interest to reveal the identity of the now retired police officer known as GOLFERS.

Contrary to the impression given by the SCCRC media release of June 2007 – where it was stated that GOLFERS was a “former detective sergeant” – Kevin Williamson’s investigations reveal GOLFERS to have been Deputy Chief Constable of Lothian & Borders **AS RECENTLY AS 2009**. This is his story.

THE RISE AND FALL OF A SCOTTISH POLICE CHIEF

Tom Halpin was a tough no-nonsense police officer, a proven CID man who got results. In March 2005, after serving 26 years in the force, he finally joined the big league and was appointed Assistant Chief Constable of Lothian & Borders Police (L&B). Before that he had been Divisional Commander of North Glasgow and East Dumbartonshire Police.

L&B were delighted they got their man. Chief Constable Paddy Tompkins gave him a warm welcome in the local press:

“I am delighted with the appointment of Chief Superintendent Halpin as the force’s new assistant chief constable... He has a wide range of police experience , both in uniform and CID policing, and will make a great contribution to the force.” **(EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS, 4th MAR 2005)**

Halpin’s rise through the police ranks had been fast. His involvement in CID, both as a Senior Investigating Officer and strategic management of crime in the Force, continued through his promotion to Detective Superintendent, where he served in a number of posts covering the North of Glasgow, Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, and at Force Headquarters. His employment included Intelligence and CID operations. Halpin led a number of high profile investigations before being promoted in 2002 to Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of CID operations.”

Once installed in the Assistant Chief Constable’s position at L&B it was apparent Halpin would be a contender for the top job. Little more than a year after joining L&B, Halpin was promoted again, on 1st June 2006, this time to Deputy Chief Constable.

Halpin’s immediate superior, Chief Constable Paddy Tompkins, again, gave him a glowing endorsement:

“Tom Halpin is a highly respected police officer who will bring considerable knowledge and valuable experience to the senior management of the force. His leadership skills and astuteness will continue to help drive the force forward in challenging times. I think this appointment will be welcomed by everyone in Lothian and Borders Police and by our partner agencies.”

Halpin’s stock continued to rise. In June 2008 he was awarded the Queen’s Police Medal in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List. To put the initials QPC after their name is the supreme civic recognition for distinguished service in the police. On the Scottish Government website his achievements were listed, and praise was given generously, noting in the final paragraph:

“Mr Halpin’s wide-ranging experience, sound business sense and excellent attitude were instrumental in him being appointed Deputy Chief Constable of Lothian and Borders Police in 2006.” (www.scotland.gov.uk, **14th June 2008**)

Two weeks later it was reported that David Strang, who had taken over from Paddy Tompkins as L&B’s Chief Constable was going on extended sick leave.

“It is understood Mr Strang is undergoing the operation to replace a hip due to long-term “wear and tear”, as opposed to an injury.” **(THE SCOTSMAN, 24th June 2008)**

Tom Halpin, Strang’s Number 2, was duly appointed acting Chief Constable. Councillor Iain Whyte, convener of the L&B police board, commented:

“Tom is a very capable officer with long experience both with Lothian and Borders and other forces. I have every confidence in him to carry out the role while the chief constable recovers from his operation. I would expect Mr Halpin to run everything on a day-to-day basis, but I’m sure if there is a major decision to be made then he will be able to consult with Mr Strang.” **(THE SCOTSMAN, 24th June 2008)**

THE FALL

Tom Halpin had been in the police force for 29 years. He'd distinguished himself in a number of difficult areas, many needing specialist expertise. Now he had one foot in the door of the boss's office. He was still just 48 years old. On the surface it appeared that he was riding the crest of a wave.

But appearances could be deceptive. Halpin had a secret. Nothing that would be considered damaging in the eyes of the public. Quite the contrary. But something his fellow officers would consider a breach of their Masonic-like code of mutual solidarity. It was only a matter of time before word leaked out.

At some point in 2008 dark and hostile forces stirred within the bowels of Fettes HQ and began to move against Halpin, behind his back. Instead of establishing himself as a Chief Constable in waiting, strangely, and without warning, Halpin's world suddenly began to fall apart.

Halpin had been in the hot seat at L&B for just five months when ominous articles began to appear in the press severely critical of policing practices at Lothian & Borders. With Strang still sidelined, Halpin took the brunt of the blast.

“Scotland’s second-biggest police force is today accused of “systemic failure” over crime reports, with one of its most senior officers among those singled out for contravening national guidelines.

Tom Halpin, deputy chief constable of Lothian and Borders Police and until last Monday the acting chief constable, is strongly criticised by a watchdog for endorsing the practice of his officers “filtering out” information from a report and not passing it on to procurators-fiscal.

The offence, seen as a fundamental breach of the tradition that Crown Office staff, and not police, should decide what material is relevant to a prosecution, is the third condemnation of the force’s policies in six years. Politicians last night voiced alarm and called for an inquiry.” (THE HERALD, 29th NOV 2008)

“Filtering out” is hardly something new and earth-shattering. Most police forces do it from time-to-time. This is widely known. But when it appears in print, in an official report, and worse, when linked to a single individual, then it becomes career-threatening. The following day’s press continued with more in the same vein:

“The Police Complaints Commissioner has voiced fears that there could be a “potentially serious systemic failure” within a Scottish force that would damage the delivery of justice.

Jim Martin hit out after investigating a number of complaints about the way Lothian and Borders Police investigated two incidents.

He said Lothian and Borders Police had filtered the information it passed on to the Procurator Fiscal.”

By singling out Halpin the article was alleging he was not only tolerating such reprehensible behaviour but encouraging it:

“Officers up to Deputy Chief Constable Tom Halpin appeared to be of the view this practice was acceptable...”

And not missing an opportunity to underline the point:

“...a number of officers, of varying ranks, within Lothian and Borders Police, up to Deputy Chief Constable, appeared to believe it was acceptable to submit only evidence that could be proved and was corroborated”.

The Monday before these allegations hit the press Tom Halpin had been shuffled out of the hot seat back to Deputy Chief Constable. David Strang, new hip in place, sprung back into his old position as Boss.

When senior police officers are made to carry the can for “systemic failure” then they are in choppy waters. A message had been sent that Halpin’s career trajectory had perhaps come to the end of its upward swing.

But if Tom Halpin thought the worst was over he was sadly mistaken. He may have been wounded by the allegations attacking his methods but behind the scenes the knives were out for him and the fatal blow was about to arrive.

25th January 2009 was a big date in the Scottish calendar. This was the 250th anniversary of the birth of Scotland’s national bard, Robert Burns. A yearlong celebration had been built around the theme of *Homecoming*.

Tom Halpin would have cause to remember Rabbie’s 250th birthday for different reasons. Not so much for any kind of Homecoming but more for a message that said Pack Yer Bags & Go. The contemptuous headline in the Sunday Times said it all:

A CHIEF CONSTABLE APPEARS UNABLE TO LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH (SUNDAY TIMES, 25th JAN 2009)

What followed was the journalistic equivalent of six inch nails hammered into the wrists and ankles of L&B’s Deputy Chief Constable. The article is a detailed litany of assorted freebies, junkets abroad, and gifts that Tom Halpin received during his time as Deputy Chief Constable.

“Tom Halpin, the deputy chief constable of Lothian and Borders, is believed to have accepted more corporate hospitality than any other senior officer in Scotland.

Over the past three years he has attended at least 10 rugby internationals as a guest of the Scottish Rugby Union, including a France v Scotland match in Paris.

He also accepted two invitations from the Royal Bank of Scotland to attend golf tournaments at Gleneagles and the Euro 2008 qualifier between Scotland and Italy in 2007 at Hampden, where he was treated to a champagne reception.

Halpin was also treated to a five-day trip to Taipei in October 2006, with his flight, hotel accommodation and living costs met by the Taiwanese government.

Two months later he accepted an invitation from Cisco Systems, the computer firm, to be the principal speaker at a public services summit in Stockholm and Oslo. The trip, in December 2006, was paid for by the Crown Office. The company also paid for Halpin to attend a Robbie Williams concert at Hampden in 2006.

In August last year Halpin accepted an invitation to a performance of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet at

Roslyn Chapel, Midlothian, courtesy of Maclay Murray & Spens, a Glasgow-based law firm.” (SUNDAY TIMES, 25th JAN 2009)

In the political climate where the general public had become weary of Members of Parliament lining their own pockets at the taxpayers expense this was bad news. Yet re-reading the above list of “freebies” tends to suggest a gregarious sort of guy making himself available at various sporting events and suchlike. Yes it could be considered lowlevel freeloading but it is hardly in the same category as the likes of Gerald Kaufman, the Labour MP who tried to help himself to an £8,500 Bang & Olufsen flatscreen TV on expenses.

Although the Sunday Times reporter claimed that this information came following a (random?) Freedom of Information request, most media insiders know that the Sunday Times has close links with police and intelligence services and is regularly tipped off on such stories.

Although the freebies were relatively small beer, the lukewarm defence of Halpin would appear to confirm that Fettes HQ had their back turned to the plight of Halpin. The reported L&B response consisted of one sentence of inconsequential triviality:

“Lothian and Borders said the force had paid £1,744 for Halpin and a colleague to attend a pipe-band march and awards ceremony in France, and that the deputy chief constable had attended the rugby international while in Paris.”

The rest of the article was a curious cat-and-mouse game of innuendo, as interviewees nodded sagely or sanctimoniously that although nothing illegal was being implied – of course – these were not the actions of a responsible police officer in such a high ranking position. Alex Neil, an SNP MSP, commented:

“I am sure it is perfectly innocent, but I do think he does need to be conscious of the perception it might create. Senior police officers, like MSPs, have to be careful about the amount of hospitality they receive – and from whom.”

Ethical codes were duly trotted out:

“Guidance in the Scottish Police Service’s code of ethical practice states “staff should not accept gifts or hospitality for personal benefit as a consequence of being so employed” and that “such offers should, in the main, be politely declined”.”

Although no one was saying that Halpin had done anything illegal, or anything that wasn’t normal practice among high-ranking police chiefs, the inference was clear and a message had been sent with bullet-like accuracy.

Less than seven months after receiving the Queen’s Police Medal, and just six months after being appointed to acting Chief Constable, Tom Halpin’s judgement and integrity was being called into question making his position virtually untenable. The inevitable announcement came just five months later, on 1st July 2009:

“Deputy Chief Constable Tom Halpin is retiring from the force to take on a new role as chief executive of a group working with former prisoners.

“Mr Halpin is set to leave his post in the next few weeks before taking over the top job at Edinburgh-based

community safety group Sacro in August.” (EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS, 1st July 2009)

Although the official line was “retirement” it could also be read that the former golden boy of Lothian & Borders Police was now *persona non grata*. An alternative job had been found as Chief Executive at SACRO, working with former offenders.

For this retiring police chief, with thirty years distinguished service, decorated but a year earlier with the Queen’s Police Medal, a heartfelt tribute in the local press was the least he could expect. When he arrived at L&B there were glowing tributes and warm welcomes. But when he left? All Chief Constable Strang had to say, as words of thanks for Halpin’s three decades of work as a police officer, was this:

“Tom has displayed great commitment and loyalty to creating safer communities, and while I am sad to see him leave, I know that he will bring the same attributes to his new role.”

And that was that. No mention of his long record of CID police work. Nor even his Queens Police Medal. Just a single sentence with a curt reference to his “great commitment and loyalty to creating safer communities.”

It is possible that there wasn’t space that day. Or that the journalist, Allan McEwen, simply forgot to report it. (After all he managed to get Chief Constable David Strang’s injury muddled up:

“He served a period as acting chief constable last year after Chief Constable David Strang suffered a back injury.”

As we already know, David Strang went on extended sick leave to get a hip replacement for “wear and tear” rather than convalescing from a back injury.)

However, apart from the mix up over Chief Constable Strang’s hip op/back injury, there was a significant– some may say inexplicable – difference between the article which summarised Tom Halpin’s police career in the Edinburgh Evening News, compared with the article which heralded his arrival Lothian & Borders four years earlier. Compare the two. This is from 2009:

“Mr Halpin joined Strathclyde Police in 1979, carrying out roles in both uniform and CID.

Later appointed head of CID operations across the force, he was divisional commander for north Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire before moving to Lothian and Borders.” (EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS, 1st JULY 2009)

This, on the other hand, is the headline and first paragraph of how the Edinburgh Evening News trumpeted his arrival:

“LOCKERBIE PROBE OFFICER MOVES TO LOTHIAN POLICE”

“A senior police officer who worked on the Lockerbie disaster investigation is the new assistant chief constable of Lothian & Borders Police.” (EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS, 4th March 2005)

Then further into the article:

“On promotion to sergeant he again served in both uniform and CID at force headquarters, where he was seconded to the investigation team for the Lockerbie disaster.”

And as if to underline the Lockerbie connection the article on Halpin’s promotion finished with this paragraph:

“Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed Al Megrahi was convicted in 2001 of mass murder over the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie in 1988, with the loss of 270 lives.”

It does seem odd – to the point of incredulity – that the reporter omitted to mention the one fact about Halpin’s police career that leapt off the page four years earlier when he was appointed to Assistant Chief Constable.

But since the career summaries in both instances came from cannibalised press releases issued by L&B’s Fettes HQ, we can assume with near certainty that it was someone there who decided to filter out the Lockerbie reference.

What exactly was going on at Lothian & Borders Police HQ?

PART TWO

FAIRWAY TO HELL

The bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie on 21st Dec 1988; the disputed conviction of Abdelbaset Ali Al Megrahi in 2001; and his subsequent release on compassionate grounds in 2009, form the background to the worst mass murder and most complex legal story in Scottish history.

This story is far from finished. As Al Megrahi lies on his death bed in Libya, and Gaddafi flees from Tripoli, the Scottish government are preparing the legal grounds for the release and publication – albeit it in a heavily redacted form – of the 2007 report compiled by the Scottish Court Cases Review Commission (SCCRC). This was the report which lodged an Appeal to the High Court of Justice against Megrahi’s original conviction.

It was Tam Dalyell MP – a dogged pitbull of a warrior against perceived injustice – who once said you’d need ‘a degree in Lockerbie Studies’ to understand all the legal and political machinations related to the Lockerbie bombing.

Yet despite the seemingly endless stream of claims and counter-claims, and no shortage of conspiracy theories (some proven, others not so), thanks to some intelligent journalism, it is possible for the lay person to get to the heart of the dispute over the controversial conviction of Al Megrahi.

A few days ago Bella Caledonia posted a video of a television documentary investigation carried out by a Scottish private eye, George Thomson, which was first screened on Al Jazeera in June this year. As we said at the time it was investigative journalism of the highest order.

Thomson’s investigation has a straightforward logic to it. He identifies the only three pieces of evidence that were used to link Al Megrahi to the Lockerbie bombing – a single eyewitness and a tiny fragment of an explosive device embedded in a piece of shirt – and then forensically proves:

1) that the evidence given by the only witness to identify Al Megrahi, Tony Gauci, was contradictory, disreputable, and completely unreliable; and that he was subjected to police pressure, coaching, gifts, and (following the trial) a payment of \$2m by the US Government.

2) that the fragment of timer and the scrap of shirt it was embedded in, and the forensic records related to both, were all tampered with and thereby corrupted as evidence by the investigating authorities on both sides of the Atlantic.

THE SCCRC REPORT

For three years evidence was examined and statements taken by the SCCRC investigators. On 28th June 2007 the SCCRC referred the case of Abdelbaset Ali Mohmed Al Megrahi to the High Court of Justiciary. The final report, citing the reasons for supporting Al Megrahi's appeal, came in at over 800 pages, accompanied by another thirteen volumes of appendices. Their conclusion was nothing short of a legal bombshell. The Very Rev, Dr Graham Forbes CBE, Chairman of the SCCRC, summarised their findings:

“The Commission is of the view, based upon our lengthy investigations, the new evidence we have found and other evidence which was not before the trial court that the applicant may have suffered a miscarriage of justice. The place for that matter to be determined is in the appeal court, to which we now refer the case.”

It certainly looked like Al Megrahi would walk from court as a free man if his case ever went to Appeal. But the Appeal was never heard. Prevarications became excuses. It was difficult to understand what was causing the hold up.

The SCCRC made its recommendation to refer the case back to the High Court in June 2007. Yet a further two years passed and, inexplicably, nothing happened. Robert Black QC, the architect of the original trial in the Netherlands, was scathing in his criticism of the time delay:

“The delay in bringing Megrahi's current appeal to the hearing stage has been scandalous. Had a modicum of urgency been shown, it is entirely conceivable that the appeal could have been over before now and the appellant back with his wife and children in his own country, a free man.” (FIRM MAGAZINE, 27 July 2009)

Robert Black wrote these words just weeks before Megrahi sensationally dropped his Appeal and was flown home to Tripoli on compassionate grounds. Black commented further on the three years it had taken the SCCRC to deliver its 2007 assessment:

“If the SCCRC decided early in its deliberations that the case was going to have to be referred back on this ground – and it is difficult to believe that it did not – then delaying taking that step for three years is hard to justify. (FIRM MAGAZINE, 27 July 2009)

It would appear (to some) that people in high places had no intention of ever letting Megrahi's Appeal be heard. The Appeal would mean that all the testimonies and evidence submitted to the SCCRC would come into the public domain. It would be, as one commentator observed, like opening Pandora's Box.

In advance of a redacted (heavily cut and censored) version of the SCCRC report being published in the coming weeks it is worth returning to an aspect of the report that is no longer mentioned in the media. It relates in particular to a former police officer known in the report as the ‘Golfer.’

GOLFER

The man known only as Golfer is important. To date he is the only police officer involved in the original Lockerbie investigation who has come forward and made a signed statement which states *in unequivocal terms*, and with corroborate evidence, that the investigating authorities, led by the CIA, fabricated and planted the evidence used to convict Al Megrahi.

Golfer was interviewed three times by the SCCRC officials but to date his identity has been one of the most closely guarded secrets concerning the whole Lockerbie affair.

Let’s underline Golfer’s importance. If Lockerbie is Scotland’s Watergate then Golfer is our Deep Throat. Golfer is the ONLY eye witness to the planting, fabricating and corrupting of evidence. Potentially he is the whistle blower who could blast the whole official ship of lies out of the water.

GOLFER & THE SCCRC DOSSIER

When the SCCRC referred Al Megrahi’s case back to the High Court on 28th June 2007 they released a detailed 14 page media briefing. This press briefing was divided up into 12 sections.

The longest most detailed section of the Media Release was Part 4: **‘Main grounds that were rejected by the Commission.’** In this section bullet points summarised eight areas of investigation that were rejected by the Commission as grounds for supporting Megrahi’s Appeal.

In the first (and second) of these “rejected findings” reference is made to “a former police officer” known as ‘Golfer’ who, it was alleged, worked at a senior level in the police investigation and could provide “sensitive” information about the case.”

The SCCRC report responded to Golfer’s serious allegations of police corruption:

“Underlying each of them was a suspicion about the conduct of the investigating authorities who, it was alleged, had manipulated, altered or fabricated statements, productions and other records in order to make out a case against the applicant. The Commission conducted extensive investigations into each of the allegations and is satisfied there is no proper basis for any of them. The allegations were further undermined by records recovered by the Commission from the Forensic Explosives Laboratory.”

The SCCRC report raised questions marks against the quality of evidence submitted by The Golfer:

“There was a vast array of inconsistencies and contradictions between, and sometimes within, his statements to the Commission... the Commission has serious misgivings as to the credibility and reliability of this witness and was not prepared to accept his allegations.”

The SCCRC media briefing conformed Golfer’s involvement in the original Lockerbie investigation and revealed

his rank:

“The Commission’s enquiry team interviewed the Golfer, a former detective sergeant, on three separate occasions during which he made a number of allegations concerning the conduct of the police investigation. As a result of its enquiries the Commission is satisfied that the Golfer was involved in the police investigation into the bombing of PA103.”

There has been much speculation on the identity of the mysterious Golfer. Not least because the SCCRC report seems to both confirm and contradict a news story that broke in August 2005:

“A former Scottish police chief has given lawyers a signed statement claiming that key evidence in the Lockerbie bombing trial was fabricated.

The retired officer – of assistant chief constable rank or higher – has testified that the CIA planted the tiny fragment of circuit board crucial in convicting a Libyan for the 1989 mass murder of 270 people. The police chief, whose identity has not yet been revealed, gave the statement to lawyers representing Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed Al Megrahi, currently serving a life sentence in Greenock Prison.”

“The evidence will form a crucial part of Megrahi’s attempt to have a retrial ordered by the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (SCCRC). The claims pose a potentially devastating threat to the reputation of the entire Scottish legal system.

The officer, who was a member of the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland, is supporting earlier claims by a former CIA agent that his bosses “wrote the script” to incriminate Libya.” **(Scotland on Sunday, 28th August 2005)**

Adding by way of explanation:

“He said he believed he had crucial information. A meeting was set up and he gave a statement that supported the long-standing rumours that the key piece of evidence, a fragment of circuit board from a timing device that implicated Libya, had been planted by US agents.”

“Asked why he had not come forward before, he admitted he’d been wary of breaking ranks, afraid of being vilified.”

“He also said at the time he became aware of the matter, no one really believed there would ever be a trial. When it did come about, he believed both accused would be acquitted. When Megrahi was convicted, he told himself he’d be cleared at an appeal. When that also failed, he explained he had to come forward.”

“He has confirmed that parts of the case were fabricated and that evidence was planted. At first he requested anonymity, but has backed down and will be identified if and when the case returns to the appeal court.”

(Scotland on Sunday, 28th August 2005)

“DETECTIVE SERGEANT”? OR “ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE OR HIGHER”?

There appears to be a contradiction regarding the police officer's rank. The SoS story – written by reporter Marcello Mega - insisted Golfer (although not named as such yet) was “of assistant chief constable rank or higher”. It also stated categorically, underlining the above point, that Golfer was “a member of the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland”. Yet the SCCRC report records that he was a mere “detective sergeant”.

Four days before the SCCRC report was handed over to High Court of Justiciary – and four days before the report's comments on the Golfer were made public – Marcello Mega had another Golfer scoop. Below is the first part of the article in its entirety:

‘Golfer’ tells of plot to lay blame at Libya’s door

“A RETIRED Scottish police officer who worked at a senior level on the Lockerbie case has made a series of astounding allegations against his fellow investigators, accusing them of tampering with evidence.

“The detective, who is not named but is given the codename Golfer throughout the defence submission to the SCCRC, makes a number of dramatic claims. Foremost among them is his contention that bogus evidence became central to the case against Megrahi, 55.

If they are proved to be true, his astonishing claims that evidence was fabricated and planted to create the Maltese chain of evidence linking to Megrahi will cause irreparable damage to a Scottish justice system already tarnished by its handling of the case.

Golfer alleges pieces of supposedly bomb-damaged clothing, parts of a timer circuit board and an instruction manual for a Toshiba radio-cassette recorder were added to the evidence to lay a trail that would lead to the ‘bomber’.

In a damning indictment of Scottish justice, he claims senior members of the Lockerbie investigating team agreed to manufacture and manipulate evidence to help secure a suspect and conviction.

He has also claimed that police statements from the key prosecution witness, Maltese shopkeeper Tony Gauci – the only man to [partially] identify Megrahi in the chain of events outlined by the Crown – either went missing or were altered before the Libyan's trial.

In particular, he says that Gauci's first statement was altered, as he was shown the original version by a colleague, and that when Gauci was first shown photographs of both accused, he had failed to identify either of them.

His evidence also casts fresh light on one of the unresolved conflicts during the trial of Megrahi at Camp Zeist in the Netherlands in 2000-01.

During the trial, a detective attracted criticism from the judges for failing to explain why he had altered the label on the bag holding the single most vital piece of evidence.

The officer had initially labelled the bag ‘cloth (charred)’ but had later overwritten the word ‘cloth’ with ‘debris’.

The bag contained pieces of a shirt collar and fragments of materials said to have been extracted from it,

including the tiny piece of circuit board identified as coming from an MST timer made by the Swiss firm MeBo.

The judges said in their judgement that his evidence had been “at worst evasive and at best confusing”.

Golfer has now told Megrahi’s legal team that the detective had told him he had not been responsible for changing the label. If this were true, questions would have to be asked about why the officer did not explain this to the court.

Golfer also claimed that the detective knew he would be questioned about the label change, the only one in the entire case of thousands of productions, and was so nervous about it that he had trouble sleeping the night before he gave evidence.

Golfer makes it clear that most of his colleagues were entirely committed to pursuing a case against the first suspects, the PFLP-GC, and could see no reason to deviate from that path when they were instructed to look to Libyan involvement.

The report to the commission says: “When this happened, many senior officers were unhappy.”

The identity of Golfer remains a highly guarded secret. The defence report says he is an “ex-police officer who worked at a senior level in the Lockerbie investigation”. It cautions that his evidence is sensitive and requires investigation.

Golfer will be seen as having betrayed his former colleagues. Paradoxically, if his claims are thoroughly investigated and prove to be true, they could yet be crucial to providing the relatives of the dead with the truth they have been craving for almost 19 years.” **(THE SCOTSMAN, 24 June 2007).**

It is worth noting a number of points here.

One) this is the first time the code name Golfer has been used in public. Marcello Mega’s story is given credence four days later when the official SCCRC media release is published. Mega clearly had access to either Golfer himself or to an insider in the Al Megrahi camp.

Two) the rank of Golfer is not stated in this article yet it is clear from comparing with the earlier story in 2005 that Mega is referring to the same detective he previously described as “of Assistant Chief Constable or higher”. The details pertinent to the Lockerbie inquiry are the same.

Three) the claims made by Golfer in this article were included in his statements made to the SCCRC.

Four) the claims made by Golfer about tampered-with evidence are consistent with the evidence amassed in the aforementioned documentary screened on Al Jazeera in June 2011.

So who is Golfer? Who is the one person who could blow the whole Lockerbie case wide open if his identity is revealed? Are we looking for a high ranking police officer “of Assistant Chief Constable or higher”? Or a lowly “former detective Sergeant”?

Three police departments were involved in the original investigation: Dumfries & Galloway, Strathclyde, and

Lothian & Borders. Golfer would have been in one of these police forces.

Although Marcello Mega's original 2005 article describes Golfer as "retired" it is clearly implied that the high ranking officer was still active in the police force after 2002. Perhaps the "retired" tag was included to protect the police chief's identity.

But another intriguing possibility arises. Golfer could have been, as the SCCRC media release states, "a detective sergeant" at the time of the Lockerbie investigation. But he could have risen through the police ranks to reach the rank of "Assistant Chief Constable or higher"?

From my investigations it turns out that there was indeed a high ranking police officer of "assistant Chief Constable or higher" **who was also** a lowly "detective sergeant" at the time of the Lockerbie investigation. This information is confirmed on the Lothian & Borders Police website. (The page is still live even if the officer is no longer of gainful employ there).

This police chief's official Lothian & Borders police biog states:

"He joined Strathclyde Police in 1979, when he was posted to 'C' Division, covering North Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire. He carried out a number of roles in both Uniform and CID before being appointed to the team responsible for the introduction of the HOLMES major enquiry system.

On promotion to Sergeant, he again served in both Uniform and CID at Force Headquarters, where he was seconded to the Lockerbie disaster investigation team."

His name? Tom Halpin. Or to give him his official rank (when Marcello Mega first ran the SoS story in 2005): **Assistant Chief Constable Tom Halpin of Lothian & Borders Police.**

Is former Deputy Chief Constable Tom Halpin the man previously known only as Golfer?

We can understand that Mr Halpin did not want to divulge his identity at this stage, for obvious reasons, but upon reflection we believe that it is overwhelmingly in the public interest that Golfer's identity is made known.

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11 Responses to *Policing Lockerbie, A Bella Caledonia Special Investigation*



andyweightmanightman says:

September 7, 2011 at 7:20 pm

Interesting investigation. Well done for persevering. But the substance appears to be that you claim that Tom Halpin is the man previously know as the Golfer. His evidence, however, has been discounted by SCCRC so does anything change in relation to the substance of the doubts that have been expressed by SCCRC and other over the Lockerbie verdict?

[Reply](#)



bellacaledonia says:

September 8, 2011 at 8:28 am

Yes his evidence has been discounted by the SCCRC. As has all testimonies claiming that evidence was tampered with. Since then (2007) we now know that evidence WAS tampered with.

The SCCRC report chose to focus the substance of a potential miscarriage of justice on the witness Tony Gauci and discount police fabrication of evidence (including the statements made by Golfer). While this was good news for getting the Megrahi case to an Appeal at the High Court it still has the aroma of "selectivity" about it

Again, I'd implore anyone wondering if the SCCRC report's dismissal of Golfer's testimonies were legitimate to go back and watch the Al Jazeera documentary and decide for themselves whether the evidence was tampered with. And if the conclusion is Yes... then why was this rejected by the SCCRC report? Along with Golfer's statements which corroborate this evidence.

One narrative is that Al Megrahi was guilty. An alternative narrative is that the investigatiing authorities, along with the Scottish judiciary, conspired to concoct a miscarriage of justice against Al Megrahi and have united to prevent the investigating authorities from being themselves investigated. Take your pick.

KW

[Reply](#)



Andy Wightman says:

September 8, 2011 at 9:58 am

Thank you Kevin. I accept that the SCCRC may not have the last word on this and if, as you say, there is clear evidence subsequent to their report that tampering took place and there are credible witnesses, then this could be explosive. I will wath Al Jazeera documentary again...



daretodare says:

September 7, 2011 at 9:15 pm

Very grateful for clear and understandable analysis.

Three things -

1. During the Camp Zeist trial, a detective attracted criticism from the judges for failing to explain why he had altered the label on the bag holding the single most vital piece of evidence.

Therefore, it is on public record that at the time of the trial the judge and prosecution know that key evidence in the Lockerbie bombing trial has tampered with (and possibly fabricated)

2. Golfer – has the actual details. Who, When, Where. Crucially in his statement he is supporting earlier claims by a former CIA agent that his CIA/White House bosses “wrote the script” to incriminate Libya.”

3. So “CIA Golfer” – has the actual US details of Who, When, What, Where.

Question, has some investigative journalist in the US wrote up "CIA Golfers" story? If so can we join up the dots?

[Reply](#)



jakey says:

September 7, 2011 at 10:18 pm

Join the dots?

Can I join?

What are the membership criteria?

don't you mean "connect...."?

[Reply](#)



jakey says:

September 7, 2011 at 10:32 pm

Of course you realise that some will mutter that his accelerated promotions were not unrelated to his silence.

I still don't understand why and on whose authority the CIA or anybody else for that matter were given access to a crime scene, never mind take a pro-active, indeed lead role in the matter of the investigation. What particular skills and expertise did these rapidly deployed first responders of the CIA have that our own police and air accident investigation people not have?

[Reply](#)



bellacaledonia says:

September 8, 2011 at 8:48 am

Indeed. And why was the only physical piece of evidence linking the bombing to Libya – the fragment of timer – allowed to leave Scotland and go to an FBI lab in Washington?

The FBI forensics team in Washington led by Tom Thurman were so incompetent (I'm being charitable) they didnt even test the alleged fragment for explosive residues. Yet every recovered part of the aircraft was tested for explosive residue in the UK. No one has ever explained satisfactorily why that fragment ever went to the USA.

[Reply](#)



Kevin Phillips Bong says:

September 7, 2011 at 11:37 pm

Or Tam Dalyell who expensed £18K on book shelves for his castle.

[Reply](#)



Charles Norrie says:

September 8, 2011 at 5:58 am

Most interesting

[Reply](#)



Aangirfan says:

September 8, 2011 at 6:50 am

Excellent.

Major Charles McKee's team had discovered evidence of CIA drug smuggling.

It looks like some of the Scottish police, media and politicians were part of the cover-up.

- Aangirfan

[Reply](#)



bellacaledonia says:

September 8, 2011 at 8:39 am

The drug smuggling story is (in my opinion) a red herring. If this case is to go to a public inquiry of any sort we need to concentrate on the planting of evidence in the form of a fragment of timer, the doctoring of official police records, and an unreliable and paid for witness.

KW

[Reply](#)