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NEWS

Police unlawfully intercepted Mirror reporter's phone records after disgraced chief's lies were exposed

Force unlawfully snooped on us and others after its £191,000-a-year Chief Constable, later sacked in disgrace, had an affair with a colleague, lied about it, and spent thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money on jollies with her

     COMMENTS

BY JEREMY ARMSTRONG

22:36, 18 DEC 2016 **UPDATED** 23:01, 18 DEC 2016



Cleveland Police's then-Chief Constable Sean Price (Photo: North News & Pictures)

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A **police** force last night faced stinging criticism for unlawfully snooping on the Daily Mirror after we revealed its Chief Constable blew taxpayers' cash to conduct an affair with a colleague. 1

Bosses used powers designed to track terrorists and dangerous criminals to access my phone records as well as those of other journalists, officers and a solicitor in a bid to find who was leaking information about alleged racism within its ranks. 2

We had told how £191,000-a-year **Cleveland** Chief Constable Sean Price was having a fling with his chief staff officer Heather Eastwood. 3

He claimed the romance started after he had left his wife Jackie, but that turned out to be a lie. 4

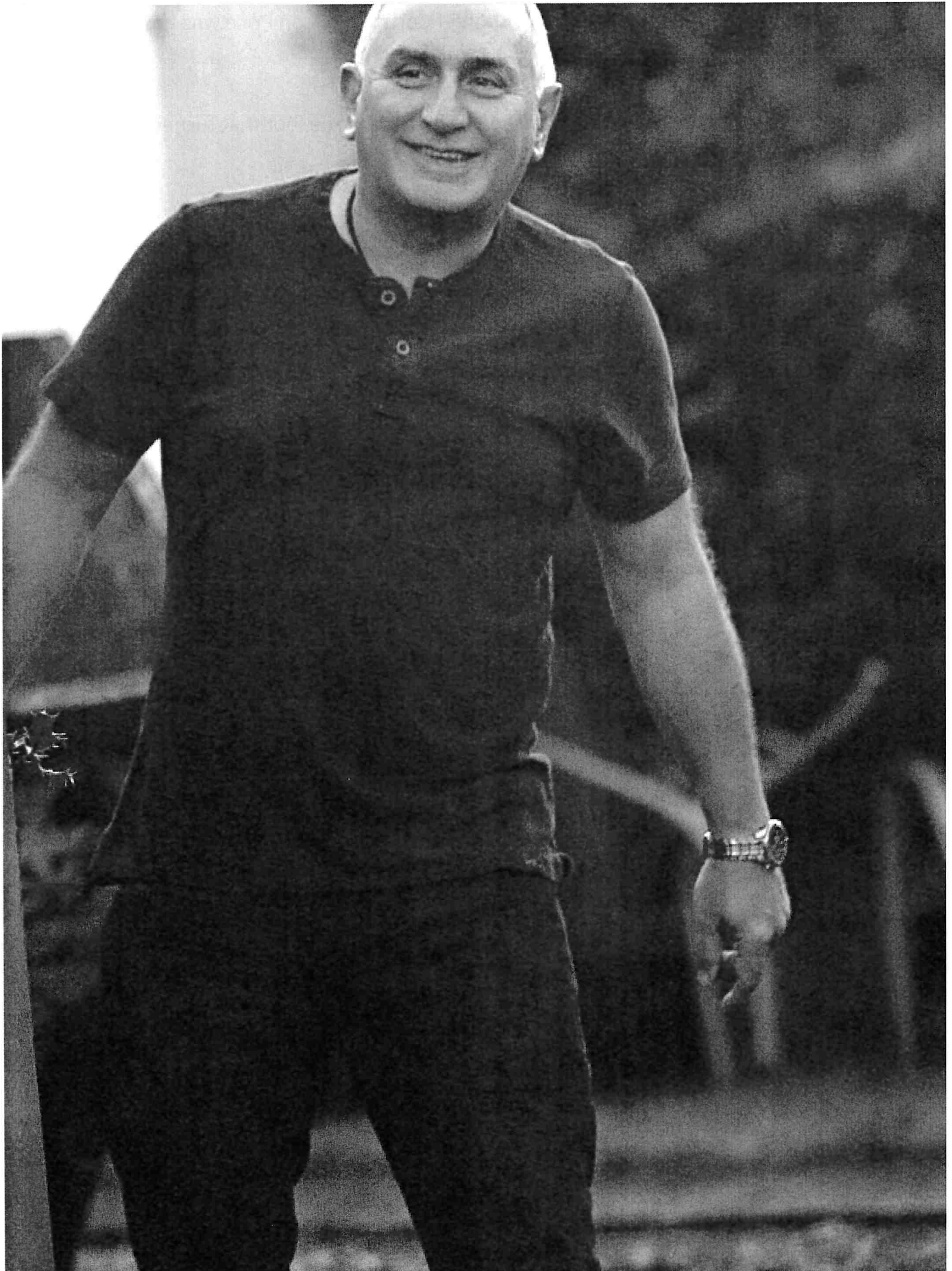
Later **sacked for gross misconduct and branded a liar and a bully**, he also spent £57,800 on a force credit card, which included bills for hotels and flowers. 5

Cleveland Police admitted it accessed my mobile records under the Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act of 2000. 6

And a tribunal in London heard it breached communication data powers to get hold of the information. 7

It claimed the move was done by mistake. 8

But former Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper branded the breach "very serious". 9





Price leaves his home yesterday (Photo: Ben Lack Photography Ltd)

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► Snoopers' Charter passes into law giving British intelligence services sweeping internet surveillance powers

The Commons Home Affairs Select Committee chairwoman said: "Communications data powers exist so the police can investigate serious crimes, not so they can prevent journalists holding them to account.

10

"In a democracy the freedom of the Press is incredibly important and needs to be protected not undermined."

11

Stockton North Labour MP Alex Cunningham added: "As a former journalist, I know how precious the protections that exist for the media are.

12

"For a police force to stand up in court and admit it misused security powers to spy on its own officers, lawyers, newspaper offices and reporters beggars belief." Redcar's Labour MP Anna Turley branded the snooping "shocking".

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She said: "Having a free Press in this country is a vital part of our democracy. We do not live in a police state."

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The Investigation Powers Tribunal in London was told our reporter's calls were checked between January 1 and May 1, 2012, under RIPA. Its excessive use for information other than terror or crime is a threat to civil liberties.

15

At the time, a "damning" review into racism and other confidential documents within the force had been leaked and bosses were trying to find the source.

16



Shamed Sean Price as top cop (Photo: PA)

The force also allegedly snoopd on former officers Mark Dias and Steve Matthews, Northern Echo reporters Graeme Hetherington and Julia Breen and a lawyer. It denies the claim.

17

But tribunal judges indicated their ruling, due in the New Year, would find it acted unlawfully on this matter. They also raised concerns about the amount of data seized and the length of the request – four months' worth of Mirror records.

18

Mr Dias and Mr Matthews claimed an equality report was in the public interest. Mr Dias told how he had been standing up to racism in the police.

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He said: "They used RIPA to identify contacts between police officers, members of the public and journalists. It was a fishing expedition and unlawful."

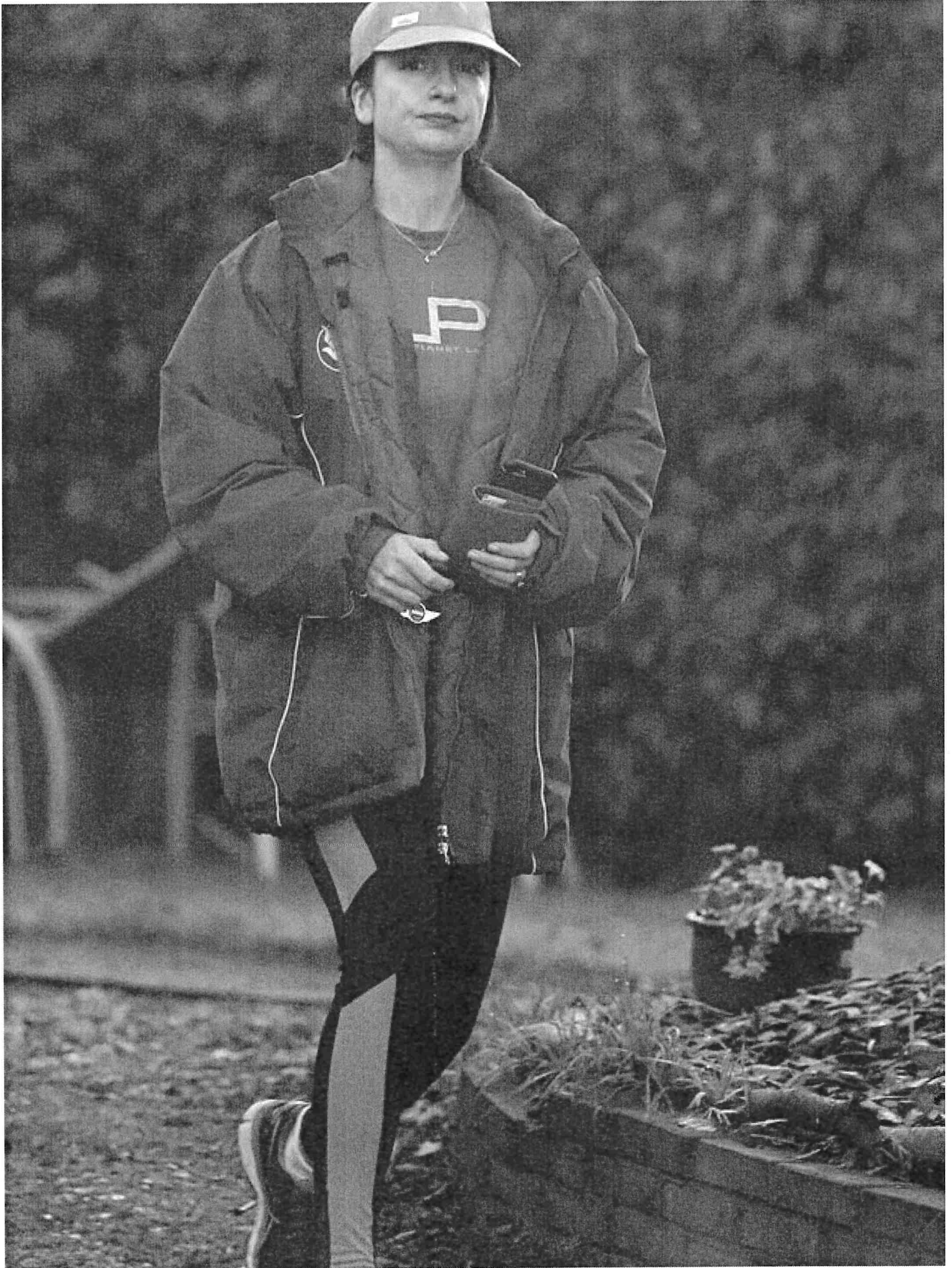
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Mr Matthews' representative Hugh Tomlinson QC added: "The tribunal indicated it will find the accessing of communications was unlawful. These are supposed to be draconian powers used in extreme circumstances."

21

In 2010, the Mirror told how Price had started a fling with Eastwood, now his wife. An internal report by Cleveland Police told how he tried to cover up his affair when we first broke the story.

22





Eastwood later married her boss (Photo: Ben Lack Photography Ltd)

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► Terror plot foiled "in its final few hours" after spooks hack attackers' phones and emails

But in interviews with officers investigating alleged corruption, Price admitted the affair started in 2009, when he was still in the £750,000 home he shared with Jackie and their young son.

23

The report into his conduct said the information released on his behalf was "inaccurate and misleading". It added: "He allowed the view to be reported that they had met socially after they both separated. This was untrue."

24

And the probe into their conduct detailed tens of thousands of pounds of public cash spent on trips abroad.

25

Price blew £57,800 on his force credit card over five years to June 2011. He stayed at top London hotels with Eastwood and splashed out on food, travel and drink.

26

Rooms were booked but not used as they apparently tried to hide their relationship. The couple went to conferences in Estonia and Denver, USA. Eastwood claimed all the trips were "necessary and for a policing purpose".

27

But during one from Estonian capital Tallinn, she emailed her mum and told her: "One of my key tasks was to find a pub with the football on!!!!"

28

Price had insisted no public money had been used to accommodate them.

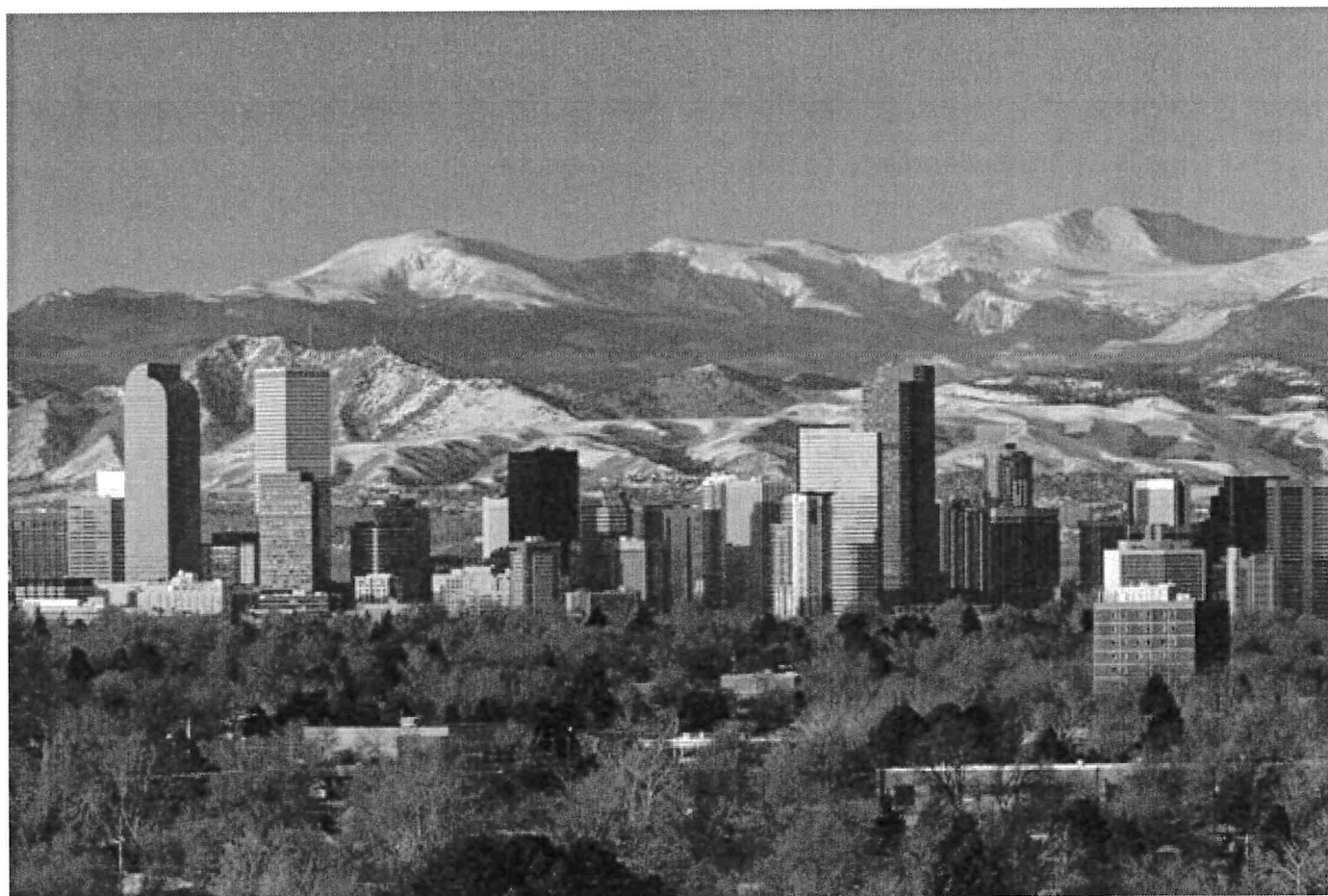
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But the report stated: "On occasions, Price did use public funds in furtherance of his personal relationship with Eastwood."

30



Pair stayed in Estonia capital Tallinn (Photo: Hemis.fr RM)



Couple went to Denver, US (Photo: AWL Images RM)

► UK security "tailing" to protect Brits from fraud and cyber criminals warn experts

Operation Sacristy, which looked at allegations of corruption, said the evidence was "strongly suggestive of dishonest use of significant public funds to the benefit of Price's relationship". 31

He told investigators that "at no time did I cause the Mirror to report that my relationship with Heather had begun later than it had. I did not speak to any reporter at the Mirror about this matter". 32

But the probe found "three occasions" prior to the story where the evidence suggested that they shared a room. 33

Five months after our phone records were accessed, Price became the first chief constable to be sacked in 35 years. 34

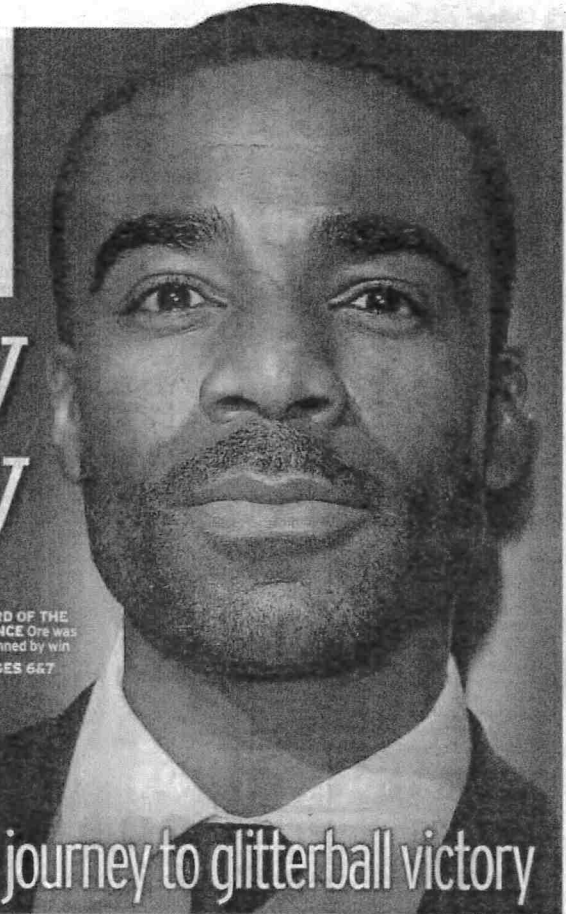
We also told how the force tried to claim back £330,000 in bonuses paid to him. That was later dropped. 35

Price was yesterday spotted leaving his home in Northallerton, North Yorks. He made no comment. 36

Cleveland Police said: "We have fully co-operated with the tribunal and process and await the determination of the panel in the coming weeks." 37

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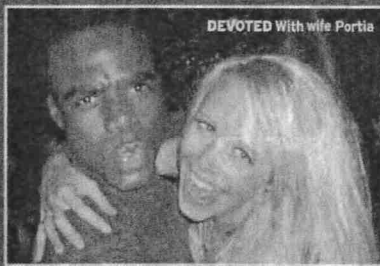
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Ore takes some of his first steps



DEVOTED With wife Portia

LORD OF THE DANCE Ore was stunned by win
PAGES 6&7

EXCLUSIVE: Winner reveals extraordinary journey to glitterball victory

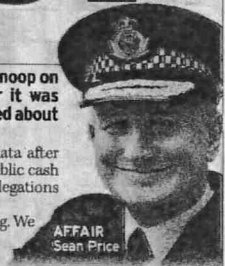
CHEATING TOP COP & THE SPY SCANDAL

EXCLUSIVE
BY JEREMY ARMSTRONG

1 POLICE used terror laws to snoop on Mirror phone records after it was revealed a Chief Constable lied about his fling with a colleague.

2 Cleveland bosses accessed data after reports that Sean Price blew public cash on the relationship and other allegations of racism within the force.

3 One MP said: "This is shocking. We do not live in a police state."
FULL STORY: PAGES 4&5



AFFAIR
Sean Price

Police unlawfully intercepted Mirror reporter's phone records after chief's lies exposed

Fox squashes Farage talk of role as UK 'bridge' to Trump

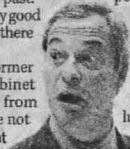
BY **BEN GLAZE** Deputy Political Editor
 NIGEL Farage's offer of being 'a bridge' to Donald Trump has been slapped down. International Trade Secretary Liam Fox said the UK had successfully dealt with incoming US presidents in the past. He added: "We have a perfectly good ambassador. Last time I looked there was no other vacancy."

The Tory also denied the former UKIP leader's claim that Cabinet ministers had been banned from talking to him. He said: "I have not
RAP Farage blast for Government

had any such instruction." Mr Farage had accused Downing Street of 'small-minded, petty, tribal' politics in not acknowledging him and said Mr Trump was a "big Anglo-ophile" which would be good for the prospects of a trade deal.

The pair were pictured together grinning when Mr Farage was the first senior UK politician to visit after the election victory.

Liberal Democrat leader Tim Farron said Mr Farage had "absolutely no right to speak for Britain on the world stage".



TOP 10 causes of driving arguments

1. Kids rowing in back
 2. Squabbling over music choices
 3. Kids moaning: "Are we there yet?"
 4. Kids making a mess
 5. Number of toilet stops
 6. Deciding who sits in the front
 7. Food and drinks
 8. Temperature in car
 9. Kids on social media
 10. Choice of games
- According to insurer list Central

SHAMEFUL

TACT

EXCLUSIVE

BY **JEREMY ARMSTRONG**
 Who was a victim of police snooping



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"For a police force to stand up in court and admit it misused security powers to spy on its own officers, lawyers, newspaper offices and reporters beggars belief." Redcar's Labour MP Anna Turley branded the snooping "shocking". She said: "Having a free Press in this country is a vital part of our democracy. We do not live in a police state."

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'LAW WAS IGNORED'

CLEVELAND Police admitted some of its actions were unlawful.

But it claimed the probe against their own officers was justified as the disclosures could amount to an "abuse of public trust" and the crime of misconduct in public office.

The tribunal panel indicated it would take the opposite view.

Aaron Rathmell, representing one of the officers, Mark Dias, said: "The clear disregard for the legal framework is one that beggars belief."

RIPA was placed under scrutiny in 2014 over leaked details of Plegbate, the row between former chief whip Andrew Mitchell and Downing Street police. It was claimed officers made up aspects of their evidence.

ACT USED WRONGLY

THE Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act was introduced in 2000.

It was meant to tackle terrorism or organised crime but has been used to snoop on ordinary people and pursue journalists and sources.

In April 2008, council officials in Poole, Dorset, put three children and their parents under RIPA surveillance to check whether they lived in a particular school catchment area.

Other councils have conducted undercover operations regulated by RIPA against dog fouling and fly-tipping. In October 2014, it was revealed it had been used by police to obtain information about

reporters' sources in at least two cases.

"In a democracy freedom of the Press needs to be protected, not undermined"
 YVETTE COOPER, FORMER SHADOW HOME SECRETARY

racism and other confidential documents within the force had been leaked and bosses were trying to find the source. The force also allegedly snooped on former officers Mark Dias and Steve Matthews. Northern Echo reporters Graeme Hetherington and Julia Breen and a lawyer. It denies the claim. But tribunal judges indicated their ruling, due in the New Year.

Spying on Press is the e-version of using a baton

ABUSE OF POWER BY POLICE

SPY COPS

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TOP COP

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ESTONIA

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USA

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COP LOVER

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jeremy.armstrong@mirror.co.uk
VOICE OF THE MIRROR: PAGE 12

COMMENT

BY KEVIN MAGUIRE



behaviour by public servants. Covertly monitoring calls by my respected colleague Jeremy Armstrong rode roughshod over his right to privacy and civil liberties. The police happily tracing

calls in the hope of unmasking a mole tells me they were more anxious to avoid embarrassment than ensure public money was spent wisely.

But a broader, more terrifying truth is this alerts us to the danger of the police as a law unto themselves, prepared to stamp on anybody who gets in their way.

Gagging papers, halting probes would make their life easier at the expense of

the public good. The disinfectant of daylight keeps the authorities honest.

Spying on the Press is the e-version of a baton. I condemn cases where journo broke laws with no public interest defence - and we must equally robustly stand up to the snooper cops.

Journalism at its best speaks truth unto power, so we should be concerned that's why the police accessed records.

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Mirror News > UK News > Cleveland Police

Cheating cop who accessed Mirror phone records claims his phone was also monitored

Sean Price, 59, was sacked from his £191,000-a-year job with Cleveland Police four years ago after we told of his affair with a colleague

BY JEREMY ARMSTRONG
20:50, 19 DEC 2016
UPDATED 20:50, 19 DEC 2016

NEWS



Cheating cop Sean Price (Photo: PA Archive)



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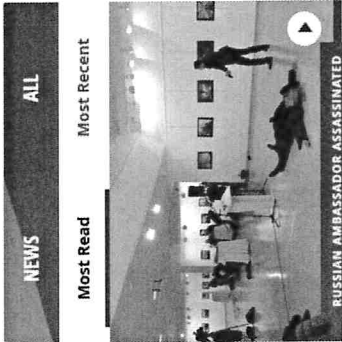
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The cheating **policeman** at the centre of the Mirror data scandal has claimed HIS phone was monitored too.

SHARE

2 Sean Price, 59, was sacked from his £191,000-a-year job with **Cleveland Police** four years ago after we told of his affair with a colleague.

PROMOTED STORIES



1 Russian ambassador to Turkey assassinated by police officer 'in revenge for Aleppo'

3 The disgraced Chief Constable hid his fling with his ex-chief staff officer Heather Eastwood, 45, after spending thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money on jollies with her around the globe.

4 Cleveland Police has admitted accessing Mirror phone records for four months from Jan 1 to May 1, 2012 - at the time we ran a number of stories on Price and the long-running investigation into claims of his corruption.

5 Five months later, he became the first chief constable to be sacked in 35 years, branded 'a liar and a

2 BERLIN CHRISTMAS MARKET TRUCK ATTACK
Berlin 'terror attack': Live updates as truck ploughs into Christmas market leaves 'several dead and 50 wounded'

3 RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR ASSASSINATED
Russian ambassador shot

Russian ambassador shot dead: Latest updates after Andrei Karlov gunned down at art exhibition

4 BERLIN CHRISTMAS MARKET TRUCK ATTACK
Terror attack feared in Berlin as truck ploughs through packed Christmas market killing and injuring shoppers

5 RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR ASSASSINATED
Shocking footage shows moment Russian ambassador to Turkey repeatedly shot and killed 'in revenge for Aleppo'

bully'.





Sean Price was sacked from his job as a chief constable (Photo: PA)

At his home near Northallerton, North Yorks, the ex police chief said: "I think my phone was probably being monitored as well at the same time."

7 "But I didn't order anything of that nature." He later added: "None of this happened while I was in office."

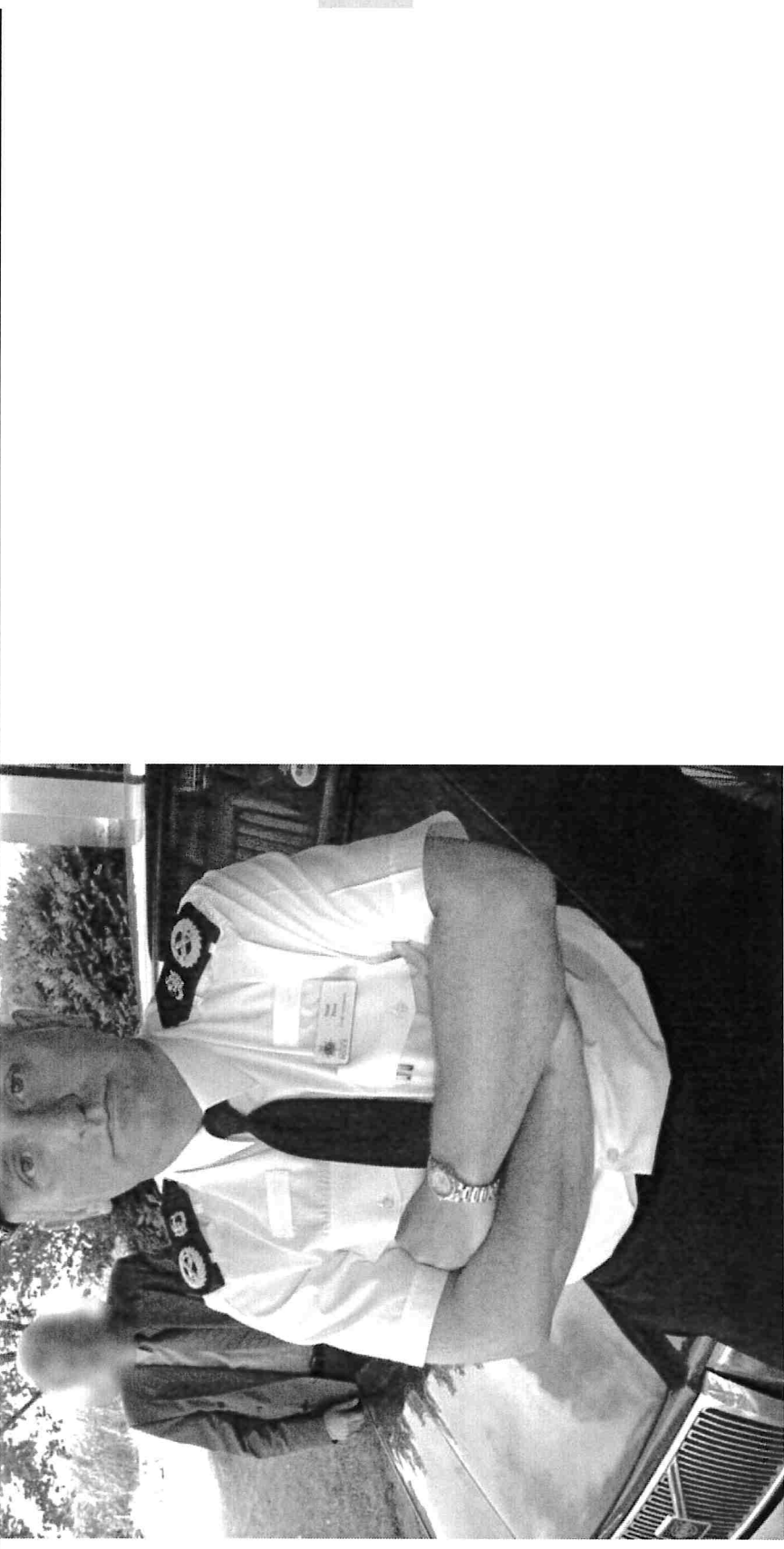
8 "So there is nothing I can say about it because I know nothing about it."

9 "There is no link between me and this course of action it happened after I left the force."

10 Wearing his Everton shirt before the derby match, the dad-of-two was asked if he got information from a specific officer during the course of the inquiry into his alleged corruption.

11 He pondered before replying: "It doesn't ring a bell I'm afraid."





f t c+ p
SHARE

Sean Price also claims his phone was monitored (Photo: North News & Pictures)

But officers were trying to trace the source of our stories - despite Cleveland Police claims that they breached data powers 'by mistake'.

An e mail from Det Insp Tony Rock, sent on May 3, 2012, stated: "The recent Operation Leven leaks to the Daily Mirror are going to be even more difficult to pursue as a number of forces have been involved in this investigation.

13



"There is some indication that the information to the Daily Mirror came from a source.

14

"I also have some reservations that it has been so high profile that there will have been background Facebook and Twitter chat which may have been picked up and then presented to us as from an 'unnamed police source' to illicit a response."

15

Our records were taken under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), which regulates public bodies intercepting communications. But it was meant to detect serious crime, and terrorism.

16

Cleveland Police admitted obtaining mobile phone records from three reporters, a solicitor and two police officers at an Investigatory Powers Tribunal last week.

17





SHARE

Cleveland Police admitted obtaining mobile phone records from three reporters (Photo: Evening Gazette)

They were looking for the officers behind the leak of a "damning" review into racism and other confidential documents. **18**

Ex-officers Mark Dias and Steve Matthews claim leaking an equality report and an internal grievance was in the public interest. **19**

They have now complained to Barry Coppinger, the Cleveland police and crime commissioner, about the 'serious corruption' in the force aggravated by discrimination on the grounds of race. **20**

Mark claimed officers were involved in 'covering up' the unlawful use of surveillance relating to RIPA applications. **21**

He warned complaints had to be dealt with swiftly so that officers did not retire or leave before an inquiry was carried out. **22**

Cleveland Police said: "We have fully co-operated with the investigatory powers tribunal and process and await the determination of the panel in the coming weeks." **23**

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M MORE ON
Cleveland Police

