

MI5 and Special Branch 'covered up Cyril Smith's abuse of boys': Police dossier handed to prosecutors in 1970 'went missing for four decades'

- **Lib Dem MP for Rochdale was accused of eight counts of sex abuse**
- **But now police have come forward to tell how their probe was thwarted**
- **They claim Special Branch and MI5 intervened on Smith's behalf**

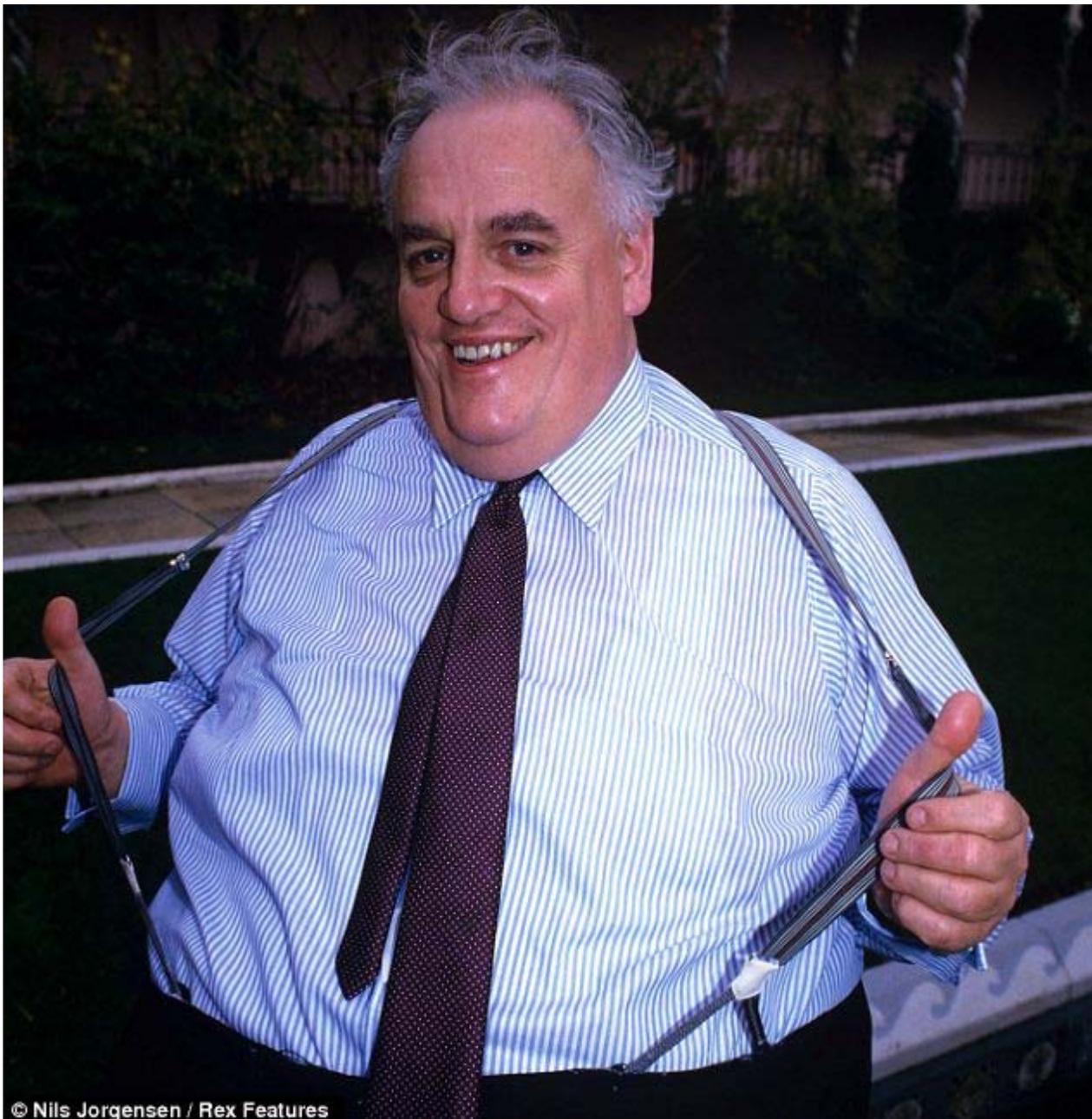
By [Alasdair Glennie](#)

PUBLISHED: 23:50 GMT, 11 September 2013 | **UPDATED:** 23:50 GMT, 11 September 2013

Fresh evidence that MI5 and Special Branch covered up Sir Cyril Smith's abuse of children has been found in a police dossier.

The file, which accuses the Liberal Democrat MP of 'a sordid series of indecent episodes with young boys', was handed to prosecutors in 1970 but then went missing for more than four decades.

It was discovered by a team of investigators from Channel 4's Dispatches.



A police file which accuses late Lib Dem MP Cyril Smith of 'a sordid series of indecent episodes with young boys' which went missing four decades ago has been unearthed by reporters from Channel 4's Dispatches

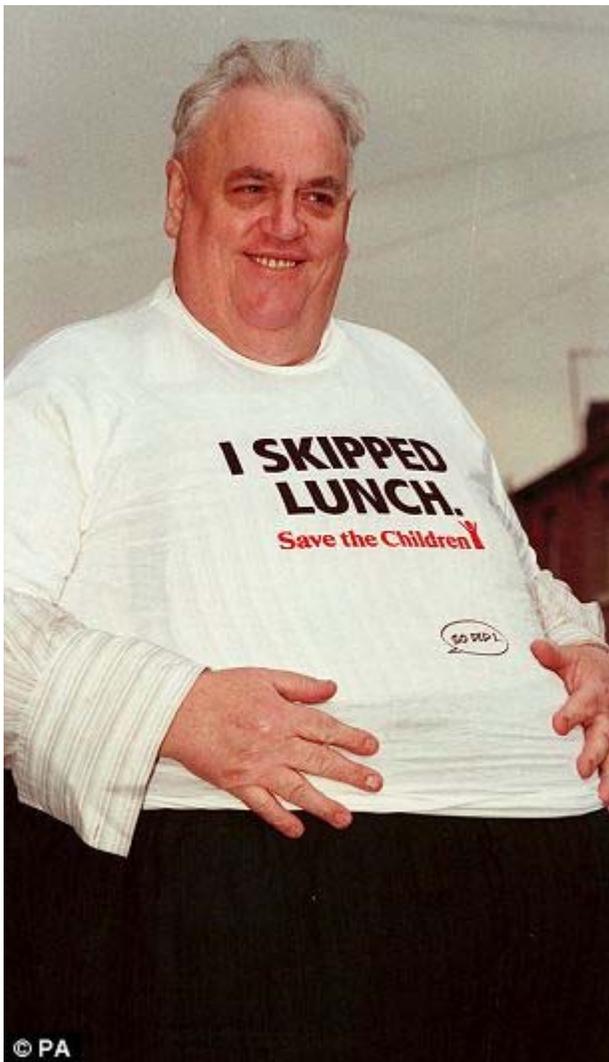
The file reveals that the 29-stone politician was accused of eight counts of sex abuse, including six offences at a care home he set up in his Rochdale constituency.

The case has strong parallels with that of former BBC DJ and abuser Jimmy Savile, who was allowed access to patients at Broadmoor, Stoke Mandeville and Leeds General Infirmary.

The Dispatches reporter, Liz MacKean, worked on the BBC Newsnight investigation into Savile in 2011.

That programme was shelved later that year – sparking a crisis at the corporation and her acrimonious departure.

Smith, who died three years ago aged 82, was a guest on an edition of Savile's show Clunk Click that was broadcast in 1973.



Parallels to the Savile case: The 29-stone politician was accused of eight counts of sex abuse, including six offences at a care home he set up in Rochdale

Miss MacKean has unearthed evidence that the file containing claims against the MP was suppressed at the highest levels of the Establishment.

The allegations first surfaced last year when Simon Danczuk, Labour MP for Rochdale, called on Home Secretary Theresa May to investigate whether MI5 were involved in a cover-up.

Dispatches spoke to a former Special Branch detective, Tony Robinson, who said he found the file in a safe at police headquarters in Lancashire.

He claimed he took a call in 1977 from 'Box 500', the police codeword for MI5, requesting the file be sent to London by special courier.

At the time, Smith was heavily involved in negotiations to keep James Callaghan's government in office through a pact between Labour and the Liberals.

Another officer, Paul Foulston, told Dispatches he was ordered by Special Branch in London not to interview a witness in a murder inquiry.

He claimed they then discovered the 18-year-old, who was soon ruled out of the investigation, had been involved in a sexual relationship with Smith.

Mr Foulston said: 'It was quite apparent to us that they were in effect protecting Cyril Smith and not investigating him.'

The police file names eight victims who describe being stripped, massaged, beaten and subjected to bizarre 'hygiene examinations' or 'chastisements' by Smith.

One victim told Dispatches he was so upset he ran away from Cambridge House care home and was forced to live rough for several months.

Another, Chris Marshall, said he was taken from his dormitory and abused by Smith in a bedroom in Knowle View school – another Rochdale institution set up by the politician.

He told the programme: 'They had the evidence to stop him, didn't they? They knew what he was up to.'



Smith strains the benches of the House of Commons: Dispatches reporter Liz MacKean has found evidence that the file containing claims against the MP was suppressed at the highest levels of the Establishment

A police chief said yesterday that a lack of leadership from responsible authorities led to abusers Savile, Smith and Stuart Hall getting away with their crimes for so long.

Andy Rhodes, assistant chief constable of Lancashire Constabulary, told delegates at a child sexual exploitation conference near Blackburn that gaining knowledge of the subject and acting upon it was the key to tackling the problem.

Mr Rhodes told the meeting: 'The reason Cyril Smith, Jimmy Savile and Stuart Hall got away with what they got away with, which was serious, serious prolonged sexual exploitation of young people, was because leaders who had responsibility to do something, did not do it.'

‘They turned a blind eye. Buried their heads in the sand.

‘There are a lot of leaders around the country (now) becoming aware and increasing their knowledge about what sexual exploitation is all about in their areas.’

The Paedophile MP – How Cyril Smith Got Away With It is on Channel 4 tonight at 11pm.