

News UK

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Revealed: gang boss's bloody £25,000 'bribe'

Michael O'Leary
 A MAN who survived having his face slashed by David Hunt, one of Britain's most feared gangsters, has claimed that he received £25,000 to weeks the criminal trial that could have brought the crime boss to justice.

His testimony is the first detailed account of how Hunt, the head of an organised crime network who has been targeted by detectives for several decades, managed to remain untraceable.

Paul Cavanagh claimed he took the alleged bribe because he feared for his life if he went to court and did not tell the police to protect him. A secret Metropolitan police intelligence report later showed his fears were well founded.

Cavanagh caused the prosecution of Hunt for the knife attack to collapse in 1999 when he returned his statement "disappeared" from a witness protection programme.

Hunt, 54, who had been on remand for the attack, was released from prison and went on to build a multi-million-pound criminal empire behind a facade of respectability. He was exposed only after losing a libel case against *The Sunday Times* in 2003. In his ruling, the judge said he was a violent crime boss involved in fraud and money-laundering who had launched a vicious attack on Cavanagh and then intimidated him into withdrawing his evidence.

Emboldened by the ruling, Cavanagh, now 42, has spoken from hiding to con-

ONE DAY, SON, ALL THOSE WILL BE YOURS



Prince William and Prince George watch from the Buckingham Palace balcony yesterday as an RAF Spitfire marks the Queen's official birthday. *More pictures, page 4*

British spies betrayed to Russians and Chinese

Tom Harper, Richard Karvaj and Tim Shipman

RUSSIA and China have cracked the top-secret caches of files stolen by the fugitive US whistleblower Edward Snowden, leaving MI6 to pull agents out of two operations in hostile countries, according to senior officials in Downing Street, the Home Office and the security services.

Western intelligence agencies say they have been forced into a massive re-evaluation after Moscow gained access to more than ten classified files held by the former American security contractor, who had no need of protection from Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, after mounting one of the largest leaks in US history.

Senior government sources confirmed that China had also cracked the encrypted documents, which contain details of secret intelligence techniques and information that could allow British and American spies to be identified.

One senior Home Office official accused Snowden of having "blood on his hands", although Downing Street said there was "no evidence of anyone being harmed".

Sir David Omand, the former director of GCHQ, said the news that Russia and China had access to Snowden's material was a "huge strategic setback" that was "harming" to Britain, America and their Nato allies.

Snowden, a former contractor at the CIA and National Security Agency (NSA), downloaded 1.7m secret documents from western intelligence agencies in 2011 and released details of sensitive surveillance programmes to the media.

In an interview filmed in Hong Kong, in which he unmasked himself as the source, Snowden said he acted out of a desire to protect "privacy and basic liberties" and claimed the NSA and GCHQ were operating mass surveillance programmes that targeted hundreds of millions of innocent people.

Last week's report by David Anderson QC, announced after Snowden's disclosures, concluded the intelligence agencies should retain their powers for the "bulk collection" of communications data, but that the power to issue warrants for intrusive surveillance should be stripped from ministers and handed to judges.

Two weeks after his initial leak in June 2013, Snowden fled Hong Kong for Moscow where he claimed political asylum. He has remained under the protection of Putin's regime since.

In an email to a sympathetic US senator in July 2013 Snowden claimed that "no intelligence service" could "compromise the secrets of intelligence" as he was trained in techniques that would "keep such information from being compromised even in the highest threat counter-intelligence environments (the CIA)".

However, since he exposed western intelligence-gathering methods, the security services have reported increasing difficulty in the monitoring of terrorists and other dangerous criminals via digital communications including email, phone contact, chat rooms and social media.

And last night David Cameron's aides confirmed the

Tory boverer boy leads 'no' fight

Tim Shipman
 POLITICAL EDITOR

TORY campaigners who kept Britain out of the euro, won a landslide victory in the AV referendum and destroyed Labour's plans for regional assemblies will spearhead the "no" campaign to leave the European Union.

In a fresh challenge to David Cameron's authority, Conservative donors and MPs have recruited Dominic Cummings, one of the prime minister's fiercest internal critics, to kick-start the campaign to defeat him in the referendum.

Cummings, a former special adviser to Michael Gove, was secretly signed up three weeks ago to co-ordinate the "no" launch amid growing anger from senior Tories that the prime minister is failing to demand enough powers back from Brussels. The campaign is expected to go public with a list of backers shortly.

Cummings ran *Business for Sterling*, which helped to keep the UK out of the euro. He also helped to run a successful campaign against a northeast regional assembly in 2004.

Cummings was asked to get involved by Matthew Elliott, a Tory who runs the Eurosceptic group *Business for Britain* and led the "no" campaign against the AV system in 2011.

He has also been in contact with Steve Baker, chairman of Conservatives for Britain – a group set up last weekend to back an EU exit if Cameron does not win far-reaching change in his negotiations. Baker has now recruited 110 Tory MPs, double the number of a week ago. Thirteen peers and 12 MEPs have also asked to join and insiders say cabinet ministers have privately signed up to the mailing list.

Labour MPs will this

Isis digs in 400 miles from Italy

CHRISTINA LAMB
 ABU GREIN, LIBYA

IN A cornered digging container at a checkpoint just outside the small town of Abt Ghria on the main desert highway alongside the Mediterranean, fighters from Libya's 166 Brigade sit dejectedly, sipping small cartons of orange juice and eating maderines from a plastic bag.

They are fighting on the newest – and most alarming – front line in the war against Isis, just 400 miles from the coast of Italy and far from the

liberators' base camp in Iraq and Syria. And they are losing.

A motley group of students of economics and engineering, two firemen, a wood trader and a former colonel, all in combat fatigues, they make up one of many militias that came together in the revolution that toppled Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

Since last summer Tripoli and the west of the country has been under the control of

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to pro-Snowden sentiment in the wake of a key court ruling and a new surveillance law, the article (behind a paywall: full text here) claims in the first paragraph that these two adversaries “have cracked the top-secret cache of files stolen by the fugitive US whistleblower Edward Snowden, forcing MI6 to pull agents out of live operations in hostile countries, **according to senior officials** in Downing Street, the Home Office and the security services.” It continues:



Western intelligence agencies say they have been forced into the rescue operations after Moscow gained access to more than 1m classified files held by the former American security contractor, who fled to seek protection from Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, after mounting one of the largest leaks in US history.

Senior government sources confirmed that China had also cracked the encrypted documents, which contain details of secret intelligence techniques and information that could allow British and American spies to be identified.

One senior Home Office official accused Snowden of having “blood on his hands”, although Downing Street said there was “no evidence of anyone being harmed”.

Aside from the serious retraction-worthy fabrications on which this article depends – more on those in a minute – the entire report is a self-negating joke. It reads like a parody I might quickly whip up in order to illustrate the core sickness of western journalism.

Unless he cooked an extra-juicy steak, how does Snowden “have blood on his hands” if there is “no evidence of anyone being harmed?” As one observer put it last night in describing the government instructions these *Sunday Times* journalists appear to have obeyed: “There’s no evidence anyone’s been harmed but we’d like the phrase ‘blood on his hands’ somewhere in the piece.”

The whole article **does literally nothing other than quote anonymous British officials**. It gives voice to banal but inflammatory accusations that are made about every whistleblower from Daniel Ellsberg to Chelsea Manning. It offers zero evidence or confirmation for any of its claims. The “journalists” who wrote it neither questioned any of the official assertions nor even quoted anyone who denies them. It’s pure stenography of the worst kind: *some government officials whispered these inflammatory claims in our ears and told us to print them, but not reveal who they are, and we’re obeying*. Breaking!

Stephen Colbert captured this exact pathology with untoppable precision in his 2006 White House Correspondents speech, when he mocked American journalism to the faces of those who practice it:

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Revealed: gang boss's bloody £25,000 'bribe'

Richard Ford
 A MAN was bribing the boss of an organised crime network with a £25,000 bribe to work for him in the north of London, it has been revealed.

The man, who is the boss of the network, is the father of an 11-year-old boy who has been taken into care by the local authority. The boy's father, who is the boss of the network, is the father of an 11-year-old boy who has been taken into care by the local authority.

The man, who is the boss of the network, is the father of an 11-year-old boy who has been taken into care by the local authority.

ONE DAY, SON, ALL THOSE WILL BE YOURS



Prince George and Prince Louis with their father, Prince William, after a play at the Palace. Prince George is 4 years old and Prince Louis is 2.

British spies betrayed to Russians and Chinese

Tom Hoggart, Richard Kirby and Tim Hayward
 BRITAIN'S top spies have been betrayed to Russia and China, it has been revealed. The former MI6 chief, Sir Christopher Meyer, has been accused of passing secrets to the two nations.

The former MI6 chief, Sir Christopher Meyer, has been accused of passing secrets to the two nations.

Tory bover boy leads 'no' fight

Tom Hoggart
 A Tory bover boy has led the fight against the 'no' vote in the referendum, it has been revealed.

The boy, who is a Tory bover, has led the fight against the 'no' vote in the referendum.

Isis digs in 400 miles from Italy

Christina Lamb
 Isis has dug in 400 miles from Italy, it has been revealed. The group has been seen in the region.

Isis has dug in 400 miles from Italy, it has been revealed.

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