

Dr Danny Sullivan

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Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist

24 October 2022

PSYCHIATRIC REPORT *In confidence*

Kate Lockery
Principal Solicitor
For Crown Solicitor
Special Commission of Inquiry in LGBTIQ hate crimes
GPO Box 5341
Sydney 2001

Dear Ms Lockery

Re: **The death of Walter BEDSER**
DOB: **3 September 1933**

Background

- [1] I have provided a report at your request. I understand that the death of Mr Bedser is a subject of inquiry under the Special Commission of Inquiry in LGBTIQ hate crimes ('the Inquiry'). You have sought an opinion on issues of potential relevance to the Inquiry from the perspective of a forensic psychiatrist. Your letter of instruction dated 30 September 2022 sets out the assumed facts and the materials provided to me.
- [2] I work as a Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist. My medical degree is from the University of Melbourne. I hold three Masters degrees, in Medical Law (Melbourne), Bioethics (Monash), and Management (McGill). I am a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK) and Associate Fellow in the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators. I am an Accredited Member of the Faculties of Adult and Forensic Psychiatry of the RANZCP. I am Executive Director of Clinical Services at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health (Forensicare), where I have worked since 2004. I have clinical experience in forensic community, prison and hospital settings, with particular experience in the assessment and management of sexual offending. I hold honorary academic positions at the University of Melbourne, and Swinburne University: I am active in research, teaching and publishing academic articles, and remain engaged in clinical practice and the administration and management of mental health services. I have previously provided expert evidence to the Coroner's Court of NSW in several cases. I have been a member of the Victoria Police Road Safety Fatality Review Panel since 2009 and the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM) since 2011. My full curriculum vitae is available on request.
- [3] This report is prepared in my private capacity and does not reflect the opinion of any organisation by which I am employed or with which I am affiliated. I have no conflict of interest in this matter, and no affiliation with any party in this matter.

E: [REDACTED]
Ph: [REDACTED]
DX: [REDACTED]
ABN: 566 898 67 184



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- [4] I, Dr Danny Sullivan, acknowledge for the purpose of Rule 31.23 of the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 2005* that I have read the *Expert Witness Code of Conduct* in Schedule 7 to the said rules, and agree to be bound by it.

Information from materials

- [5] I understand that Mr Bedser died after being attacked by an unknown person wielding a knife in his antique shop in Parramatta in the afternoon of 2 December 1980. A man was seen fleeing the store and soon after Mr Bedser exited the store and collapsed nearby. Details provided by investigating police noted that a man fitting the description of the person seen running from the store bought a sheath knife at a nearby Toyworld store that morning.
- [6] Mr Bedser was known to be gay or bisexual and to have had multiple sexual relationships with many male acquaintances, and may have attended gay beats in public toilets in the Parramatta area and had sexual relationships with teenage boys employed in his shop. It was noted that the victim had "homosexual tendencies, having been spoken to in 1977 in a park", with the description of being "in the company of a man named [I48] ...". The police interviewed Mr [I48] and noted "he does not fit the description of the offender, however he is dead set poofter".
- [7] He had a significant relationship with a youth, [NP58]. There may have been a deterioration in their relationship related to an unpaid loan.
- [8] It was also possible that watches went missing from the safe in the store, though this has not been confirmed nor clearly related to his murder.
- [9] The post mortem statement of Dr Malouf noted several lacerations, and gave the cause of death as blood loss due to lacerated liver and lung due to stab wounds. Mr Bedser was noted to have died within 15 minutes of arrival in hospital despite resuscitation efforts. The coronial inquest of 11 July 1993 included evidence of Dr Malouf, who described injuries consistent with stab wounds, lacerations on the arms including the inner arm consistent with a struggle, as well as with falling on broken glass or cutting the arm on glass.
- [10] Detective Sergeant of Police Simon Hamilton gave evidence and considered that there was no evidence of a robbery, that the knife used to kill Mr Bedser was found but there were no fingerprints on it, although he noted the possibility of the theft of some French watches which were advertised but never found.
- [11] The statement of Douglas Samuels noted that a man likely to have been Mr Bedser provided information about [NP58] making a false insurance claim and reported this was because [NP58] family had refused to repay him the money he loaned them for the car.
- [12] The statement of John Richard Dempster noted on 1 December 1980, late in the afternoon, he was in Mr Bedser's store when he overheard an argument with another man who said to him "in a loud tone, angrily, "you're nothing but a fucking, thieving robbing, mongrel bastard"". He noted that the man was with a woman and left with her.
- [13] The statement of Jeffrey English noted that he had known Mr Bedser for about five years and was acquainted with him through business. He reported that Mr Bedser had "made a homosexual advance towards me". Mr English rebuffed him and noted "since that time he talked openly about his homosexual tendencies in front of me".
- [14] The statement of [I35] noted that he was born [REDACTED] and was in casual employment with Mr Bedser, involving cleaning, helping intake deliveries, moving furniture around the store and some housework including mowing the lawn, and helping him paint his room. He reported that after working with him, Mr Bedser propositioned him and eventually commenced a sexual relationship with him.

- [15] Information provided by Gregory James Bolton noted that he was an antique dealer and described Mr Bedser as having a bad reputation for being ruthless as an dealer. Mr Bolton informed the investigating officer that Mr Bedser had been having an "affair" with **NP58** **NP58** and informed police that Mr Bedser are had told him that he preferred "ethnic boys", and used to place advertisements in the window of his shop for boys to help out in the shop after school and he subsequently seduced them.
- [16] A statement of **I40** noted that he was born on [REDACTED] and knew Mr Bedser through **NP58**. He reported that on one occasion Mr Bedser offered him \$20 "to take part in sexual activities with him" but he denied accepting this. Mr **I40** also described another time when Mr Bedser took him to the Market Street Parramatta toilets one night and left him in the car, returning a short time later and informing him "that there was not anyone there". He also noted him attending other toilets.
- [17] Police interviewed **I38** who lived with **I43** both working as nurses with the Parramatta Psychiatric Service and considered it "obvious that both he and **I43** are homosexuals". Mr **I38** reported that Mr Bedser had openly discussed his personal life including boyfriends, and "told him that he was working the public toilets and when he picked up a male friend, he would take them back to his shop for further discussions in the loft...". Mr **I38** also noted that Mr Bedser had requested him to sleep with him and had offered him "goods to do so" but Mr **I38** had turned him down. Mr **I38**'s impression was that Mr Bedser did not have any sexual involvement with females. Mr Bedser had reported to him that he had slept with male shopkeepers in the vicinity. He also noted that "Bedser had told **NP58** that he had slept with **I38**".
- [18] **I37** was interviewed. He claimed that **NP58** had stolen objects from the shop and had sold them. Mr **I37** noted that he was not homosexual but had been propositioned by Mr Bedser to have a sexual relationship with him. The police officer noted that "notwithstanding **I37**'s claim he was not involved in homosexual activities, there is no doubt that he was receiving money from BEDSER for services rendered in that regard".
- [19] Police interviewed Charles Duffield, who knew Mr Bedser through business and also was aware that he was homosexual "and also by- sexual.. also told him that he had been having sexual intercourse with a 16-year-old girl in the Harris Park area". He noted that Mr Bedser had been seen on several occasions "in the company of a young Greek or Italian about 19 years old". He was noted to be having a sexual relationship with his bookkeeper and reportedly smoked cannabis.
- [20] An interview with **I39** born on [REDACTED] noted that he was aware that Mr Bedser was homosexual and "would allow the deceased to masturbate him", while engaged in employment with him in the shop and also mowing lawns. He was aware that Mr Bedser was having a sexual relationship with **NP58** and had bought him a car.
- [21] **I46** was interviewed, noting that he met Mr Bedser through his school friend **NP58**. He reported that Mr Bedser suggested they both sleep on a double bed but **I46** refused and threatened to bash him "if he tried anything untoward with him". Although he denied having been to the shop, he later acknowledged that "BEDSER had asked him to go up into the loft above the back room... where he saw several magazines pertaining to bodybuilding, but never submitted to any sexual or homosexual acts with the deceased". He also mentioned that Mr Bedser had loaned money to **NP58** family, that **NP58** had stolen a car and that **I46**'s father asked Mr Bedser for a loan, but he declined.
- [22] **I47** born [REDACTED] was interviewed. He noted previously working for Mr Bedser from the start of 1979 on a casual basis and denied any homosexual activity or advances made to him. He noted "they had discussed homosexuality and **I47** informed the deceased that he was straight and interested in that sort of activity".

- [23] Subsequently, Mr [I47] admitted "that he and the deceased used to masturbate each other, in the shop... further stated, that the deceased person frequented the toilets at... referred to his visits to the toilets as doing the 'BEATS'; he also told [I47] that he frequently met other homosexuals at these toilets and that he participated in acts of homosexuality with these persons while at the various toilets".
- [24] [NP58] was interviewed. It was noted that his date of birth was [REDACTED]. He acknowledged that within a couple of months of starting work he and Mr Bedser "formed a relationship. The deceased used to have oral sex with [NP58] in a room above his shop... gave [NP58] number of presents... would also pay [NP58] the sum of \$10.00 for oral sex. This would take place approximately once a month". He reported an argument after Mr Bedser reneged on a promise to loan him money to buy a car.
- [25] Solicitor Bruce McDonald was interviewed and "advised us that he was in possession of a tape recording made by the deceased, between the deceased and Mrs [NP59] [NP59] on 11 June 1980." This was a hidden recording "in which he fronts Mrs [NP59] over some money owned him by her".

Your specific questions

Whether there are any aspects of the manner of death (including the nature and extent of the injuries inflicted) and/or crime scene which may indicate that a homicide has occurred in the context of LGBTIQ hate/prejudice/bias (hereafter collectively referred to as "hate")

- [26] There are no features of the crime scene suggesting hate crime.

The possible motivation/s of the unidentified perpetrator of Mr Bedser's injuries, to the extent that this can be discerned from the available evidence. In answering this question, please consider any relevant concepts including (but not limited to) notions of masculinity, male honour, internalised homophobia, medicalised stigma, conflating homophobia with paedophilia, perceptions of the characteristics of LGBTIQ persons, and particular psychopathologies

- [27] Witness observations on the day of his death were conflicting, but there were several accounts of an argument possibly preceding the assault. This could have related to arguments over money or sexual relationships, including from a male relative of one of the young men employed by Mr Bedser and with whom he had had sexual interactions (or young women), or alternatively from a man with whom Mr Bedser had had sexual interactions. The purchase of a knife beforehand suggests that the protagonist had intended to kill Mr Bedser specifically.

Aspects of victimology that may be relevant to Mr Bedser's death

- [28] There was no indication of mental disorder or clinically concerning substance abuse in Mr Bedser, although some substance use was described.
- [29] Mr Bedser was described as not argumentative and quiet. However he was noted to have had conflict related to loans to families of people with whom he had had sexual interactions.
- [30] He was generally described as homosexual in orientation although may have had some female interactions. He was also noted to have been relatively comfortable with propositioning males who were not clearly homosexual.
- [31] Mr Bedser had a propensity to complex financial dealings including loans, and complex sexual relationships with young men who may not have identified as gay.

Any recommendations for further investigations with respect to determining the manner and cause of Mr Bedser's death

[32] I have no suggestions.

Any other matters you wish to raise within your expertise that may be of assistance to the Inquiry.

[33] I note that the investigating police used language suggesting limited familiarity with gay people.

[34] I hope this report has been of assistance to the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely



Dr Danny Sullivan
Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist