

*61 Sept '83*



Michael Bettaney—defeated by a computer in his literary research.

## *Bettaney ideal student, Oxford tutor recalls*

**M**ICHAEL JOHN BETTANEY, the security service official accused under the Official Secrets Act, was a model undergraduate during his time at Pembroke College, Oxford, his old tutor said yesterday.

Dr David Fleeman, librarian and lecturer in English literature and language at Pembroke, said: "He was not a distinguished academic undergraduate, but was a hard-working chap and got a respectable second-class degree.

"He was up at a time when there was a period of student unrest but he was not part of that. He was a member of the OTC at the university. People who go into that are generally not radical and he fitted that.

"He was just the undergraduate a tutor craves for. He was no trouble, did the work and was interested in it."

Bettaney, 33, appeared at Horseferry Road Court on Monday, accused under the Official Secrets Act of activities prior to passing information which might be useful to an enemy.

He was remanded in custody until Monday.

Dr Fleeman last saw Bettaney in the autumn last year. "He turned up at college and we had a pleasant day. He simply said he was working in London and that would give him a little more opportunity to come up to Oxford."

Bettaney had even suggested that he might take up research again—a project he had dropped in the mid-1970s. Dr Fleeman was Bettaney's tutor while he was taking a degree in English from 1969-72. They remained in touch when Bettaney started research and later left the university.

"He did say he had gone into Government service and could not talk about it, so I never questioned him about it. He always seemed to be a very reliable and dependable man."

Bettaney's research was into the use of Shakespeare quotations in Dr Johnson's dictionary to try to investigate some of the 18th century author's critical judgment.

But he found that another student in Wales was covering some of the same ground—with the help of a computer—and he gave up after about a year.

*Daily Telegraph*  
*20 Sept '83*

# SECURITY OFFICIAL ON SPY CHARGE

## Inquiry into more serious matters

By *KENNETH CLARKE*

**A** MAN described by number 10 Downing Street as "a middle ranking official in the security service" appeared before magistrates in London yesterday accused of breaching the Official Secrets Act.

Michael John Bettaney, 33, born in Stoke-on-Trent but said to have no fixed address, was described as a Government servant when he made a brief appearance at Horseferry Road court on the spying charge.

Det. Supt. John Peter Westcott, head of the European section of the Special Branch, who made the arrest, told the court that there would be further charges of a more serious nature.

He applied for a remand and objected to bail on the grounds of the "serious nature of the offence."

It was not clear last night whether Bettaney worked with D15 or the counter-intelligence agency, D16.

The Downing Street spokesman would not say whether he was more closely associated with the Ministry of Defence or the Foreign Office.

### Certain acts

The charge is:

That on divers dates between January, 1983 and September 16 in the United Kingdom, he did certain acts preparatory to communicating to another person for a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interest of the State, information calculated to be useful to an enemy, contrary to section seven of the Official Secrets Act, 1920.

Section seven of the Act refers specifically to an act "preparatory to the commission of an offence."

Bettaney, smartly dressed in a pinstriped suit, shirt and tie, stood impassively in the dock and spoke only once, to say: "Yes, I understand and I agree", when asked if he understood the proceedings.

He was arrested by Det. Supt Westcott, an espionage expert, on Friday and taken to Rochester Row police station where he was charged at noon.

### Weekly remand

Mr Miles Laddie, who was assigned to defend Bettaney under the courts duty solicitor scheme, asked for a four-week remand until October 17 and said his client would agree to be dealt with in his absence for formal, weekly remands, until that date.

It is believed that the Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir Thomas Hetherington, who is presently abroad, knew that Bettaney was to appear in court, but has not yet received any police reports on the case.

Bettaney, believed to be a bachelor, was arrested at the request of senior security service officers who had carried out their own investigations.

In such circumstances, the Special Branch acts as executive agent for another government department.

The magistrate, Mr Kenneth Harington, granted Bettaney legal aid providing he made a £100 down payment. He was remanded in custody until Sept. 26 after Mr Laddie said there would be no application for bail.

# MI5 man in court on spying charge

By Stewart Tendler  
Crime Reporter

A middle-ranking officer in MI5, the Security Service, was remanded in custody by a London court yesterday charged with an espionage offence under the Official Secrets Act.

Mr Michael John Bettaney, aged 33, and born in Stoke on Trent, appeared at Horseferry Road magistrates court charged under Section 7 of the 1920 Official Secrets Act. Mr Bettaney was described in court as a government servant of no fixed abode.

He is charged that "on divers dates between January 1 and September 16 1983 in the United Kingdom he did certain acts preparatory to communicating with another person for a purpose prejudicial to the safety of interest of the State, information calculated to be useful to an enemy".

Mr Bettaney was arrested last Friday by Det Superintendent John Westcott of Scotland Yard's Special Branch and charged at Rochester Row police station. Yesterday Mr Westcott said there would be further charges of a serious nature.

Mr Miles Laddie, appearing for Mr Bettaney, said his client was not applying for bail and the accused was remanded until September 26, though he will not appear again in person until October 17.

After the court appearance a government spokesman said Mr Bettaney was a middle ranking member of the Security Service. The spokesman said he was not aware of any other individuals charged or likely to be charged. No one had been expelled from the country.

MI5 is responsible for intelligence and security within the United Kingdom. Its director general, whose name is classified, has control of six departments of which the most important is "A" directorate dealing with intelligence resources and operations.

"C" is responsible for protective security; "K" for counter-espionage and "F" for countering "domestic subversion", mainly on the political left and in the trade unions.

Officers of MI5 are not allowed to make arrests themselves; this is the responsibility of Special Branch.


**ROUTING AND TRANSMITTAL SLIP**

Date **30 Oct 83**

TO: (Name, office symbol, room number, Building, Agency/Post)	Initials	Date
1. <b>DD (P4M)</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>3 OCT 1983</b>
2. <b>C / <del>SECRET</del> SEC</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>OCT 1983</b>
3.		
4. <b>C / SSC</b>		
5.		

Action	File	Note and Return
Approval	For Clearance	Per Conversation
As Requested	For Correction	Prepare Reply
Circulate	For Your Information	See Me
Comment	Investigate	Signature
Coordination	Justify	

**REMARKS**

**FYI.**  
 British press coverage of  
 latest espionage case.  
 D / OS briefed  


DO NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disposals, clearances, and similar actions

<b>FROM:</b>	Room No.—Bldg.
	Phone No.

5041-102

OPTIONAL FORM 41 (Rev. 7-76)