



WAKE UP! IT'S YER COVER-UP EXPOSING...

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	METROPOLITAN POLICE	TOP SECRET
TERRORIST SUSPECT PROFILE		
Lives in same building as Muslims		
Foreign looking		
Threatens to use public transport		

SHOOT TO KILL

BLAIR FACED LIES

“We demand a full and speedy public inquiry into Jean’s murder. We believe that the web of deceit that was spun by the Metropolitan Police means that Sir Iain Blair’s position is now untenable and he should resign immediately. Furthermore we believe that it is inconceivable that the Home Office and government were not aware of these circumstances. They failed not only to counter the lies in the public domain but actively counselled against Jean by press releasing details of his visa status on the day of his funeral” - Justice for Jean campaign

Following leaks from inside the IPCC inquiry the mainstream media has finally grown suspicious of police actions surrounding the killing of Jean Charles Menezes on a tube train on July 22nd. Leaks from the inquiry have provided a picture very different from that initially provided by police.

Furthermore, it would appear that the Met are actively attempting to intimidate Menezes’ family from demanding a public inquiry. SchNEWS has learned of a campaign of outright obstruction to the family’s involvement in the inquiry, including an attempt to buy them off.

The leaked witness statements from the inquiry published in the mainstream press are damning enough. They demonstrate that the Met’s initial reaction was damage limitation and concern for reputation rather than any attempt to obtain the truth. Ian Blair (Commissioner of the Met) repeatedly fed the press a diet of outright falsehoods. We learned that Jean Charles was running, had vaulted a ticket barrier and refused to stop when challenged. In some news accounts he was wearing a bulky jacket with wires protruding, and no overt denials of this were made by police. We now know that he didn’t run, didn’t jump the tube, wasn’t challenged and was executed by two officers, while another pinned his arms to his sides. He was placed under surveillance by an officer who had left the army a year ago. SchNEWS reckons a year is quite a short time for a beat bobby to be promoted to an anti-terrorist unit. How many other soldiers have been fast-tracked into London’s anti-terrorist police we wonder? These lies were propagated for weeks after the killing, long after the police must have known they were wrong. Police press releases peddled lies while the real evidence was suppressed.

In a clear sign of a cover up, Ian Blair delayed the entry of the Independent Police Complaints Commission into the investigation for six days. Police obstruction of scrutiny is nothing new. The years it took the Lawrences, the Stanley family etc etc to gain

even a glimmer of justice are evidence of that. This time however, the stakes are higher than one family’s justice. The shooting of Jean Charles calls into question how the ‘war on terror’ will be fought on the domestic front. Already the right-wing press is calling for all firearms officers to be exonerated from criminal charges - i.e State sanctioned death squads. The Menezes’ case calls into question not only Operation Kratos and ‘shoot to kill’ but the whole raft of anti-terror policies and the current attack on civil liberties.

The establishment approach to the inquiry has been to sweep the matter under the carpet and substitute a version of events more useful to their agenda. The public perception was meant to be that a regrettable accident had occurred, but perhaps Menezes was in many ways culpable. That story is now lies shattered.

TUBEWAY BARMY

One major obstacle to their approach has been the public sympathy for Jean Charles’ family. There have been solidarity demonstrations both here and Brazil. A broad swathe of the public can empathise as easily with a young man gunned down on a tube as they can with the victims of the 7/7 bombings. Just like terrorists, the police are now to be feared as the agents of random death. In short the case has turned into a public relations disaster for the government’s policy on terrorism.

The Justice for Jean campaign still have a number of unanswered questions and are outraged at the revelations of a cover up. They are demanding a public inquiry. Among the questions they want answered are:

*“Where did a “shoot to kill” policy emanate from and on what claimed legal basis? What public debate and democratic accountability surrounded the coming into being of that policy?”

*Why was the pathologist at the post mortem conducted on July 27th (at which senior investigating police officers were present) told the following: “This man’s death occurred as part of the emergency relating to the planting of bombs on public transport in London. On the morning of the 22 July 2005 he was pursued by armed police officers as a result of surveillance. He was followed into Stockwell Tube Station where he vaulted over the ticket barrier. He ran downstairs and onto a tube train where it appears that he stumbled. The officers then immobilised him and a number of shots were fired. At the present time I am not sure as to any further details.”

*“What CCTV footage from Stockwell underground station and the underground train

exists? If there is none, why is there none?”

The family are also voicing concern about the processes of the inquiry. They are demanding to know:

*Are police officers, including those who fired the shots, making statements as witnesses or as potential suspects i.e. are those interviews being conducted under caution.

*At what levels police officers, including senior police officers, are being interviewed and whether they are under caution or not. Who is being interviewed and by whom?

*Do these include senior police, past and present who appeared to believe, wrongly, that they were entitled to order a blanket “shoot to kill” practice.

These and other questions, if asked and answered in public as Jean Charles’ family wish, will surely shed light on areas of domestic policy concerning civil liberties, the militarization of the police and the ‘war on terror’ that Blair & Co. would prefer shrouded. It should come as no surprise then to learn that police reaction to the families demand to be part of the inquiry into the death of their brother and son has been unremittently obstructive. The police’s initial interaction with the family was at the Brazilian Consulate, on the Monday after the shooting where attempts were made to get the family to leave Britain with no fuss. A Brazilian diplomat lobbied by the Met said “There has been no human rights violation, this is not a human rights issue, the police have apologised. They’re going to give you compensation, so what’s the problem?”

SchNEWS has also learned that six representatives of the Metropolitan Police travelled to the village of Gonzaga in Brazil to offer the family a substantial sum of money in return for their silence.

After the police seized Jean Charles’ house for investigation his family were placed in a hotel in Richmond selected by the police. Here they were held effectively incommunicado and denied phone calls to Brazil.

Despite this, the Menezes family is determined to seek justice and have refused to be bought off. The family campaign is several thousand pounds in debt; all the money thus far has been donated by a handful of activists and friends. If you can help in any way please send cheques made payable to Jean Charles de Menezes Family Campaign, PO Box 273, London, E7 or transfer money to Jean Charles de Menezes Family Campaign, Account Number: 61455664, sort code: 40-07-12. HSBC bank, 349 Green St, London, E13 PA5. Contact justice4jean@hotmail.co.uk 07931 337890 or 07956 210332

There will be a protest outside Downing St - Monday 22nd August at 6pm called by Jean Charles de Menezes Family Campaign. More info contact numbers above.

WORLD WILD WEB

...of direct action. Our international round-up: USA - Activists in Knoxville, Tennessee recently occupied an ancient mountain to protest against mining. The action was taken to protect the Appalachian Mountains from the devastating practices of top mining. Dedicated citizens blockaded National Coal's strip mine to halt the destruction of Zeb Mountain, chaining themselves to equipment and using their bodies to create a giant "no blast" zone. 10 people have been arrested so far but actions to keep the mine shut down are continuing. Four of the arrestees have reported being violently assaulted by mine workers and police, some sustaining serious injuries - www.mountainjusticesummer.org **ICELAND - 21 international activists taking direct action against the Alcoa Dam in Iceland (see SchNEWS 487) are under threat of deportation. Activists from Iceland and around the world set up a direct action camp in Eastern Iceland in July to stop the construction of the Karahnjukar hydroelectric megadam, which will destroy a large swathe of highland Icelandic wilderness. www.savingiceland.org **FINLAND - A genetically modified field trial has been destroyed in Jokioinen, Finland. According to the media the GM potatoes were ripped out of the ground. Boss of the Boreal company says the damages are significant and that this will set the GM potato research back a year. Shame. **NEW ZEALAND (Aotearoa) - Happy Valley is a beautiful area of native bush, fragile wetlands on the West coast of New Zealand. Its thriving ecosystem is home to many threatened species including the Great Spotted Kiwi and the large native *Patrickensis* land snail...and it's under attack from state-owned Solid Energy who want to destroy the valley with an open-cast coal mine. People are fighting back and in a carefully planned protest, three activists 'locked on' to train tracks preventing coal trains from passing for nearly 4 hours. Cops were forced to dig up the concrete to remove them. www.savehappyvalley.org.nz **INDIA - Around 100 activists marched to Coca-Cola's Plachimada factory in Kerala, southern India, demanding that the bottling plant be shut down permanently. (The plant that was pressured to close in March 2004 because it was ruining the local water supply, see SchNEWS 447) The protesters were stopped about 100 metres from the gates and the heavy police force resorted to a violent baton charge, severely injuring four activists who were hospitalized with severe head injuries. Another 43 people were held in custody, including a 16 year old girl. In a show of solidarity with the people of Plachimada, the Kuttiaady panchayat (village council) in Kerala declared the area a Coke-free zone, receiving the support of shopkeepers as well as political parties. www.IndiaResource.org **AND ER...SOUTHEND - Southend based road campaigners, Parklife, this week staged a sit-in and demonstration at the Department of Transport (DfT) main offices in London against the controversial F5 road scheme planned for the A127/A1159, Priory Crescent. The group opposes plans to build a dual carriageway on top of an East Saxon king's burial site. The burial was discovered during preparatory works for the road early in 2004, and has been described by experts as, "a discovery of international importance which stunningly illuminates the rich and complex world of the so-called Dark Ages". Speaking from inside the building, campaigner Shaun Qureshi said, 'This protest is to draw attention to one of the most ridiculous road schemes ever devised, to put pressure on the decision makers to stop funding, and to show that, should the final go-ahead be given, the people of Southend will take direct action to stop it.' www.savepriorypark.org ** Grassroots Gatherings at the Rosspoint Solidarity Camp, Eire 27 - 28 www.indymedia.ie/newswire.php?story_id=70581

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PEACED OFF AT EDO

A planned march through Brighton town centre to kickstart a week of action against local arms dealers EDO MBM ended in a dramatic high street confrontation and four arrests.

Last Saturday's march and rally in Churchill Square was planned without seeking police authorisation, a serious matter in Neo-Labour Britain. One SMASH EDO activist told SchNEWS "There's no point in negotiating with the police, you get nothing but threats and obstacles thrown in your way. Their purpose is solely to minimise the impact of any dissent - if they had their way we'd be allowed ten minutes to walk around an industrial estate in Portslade as a compromise."

The build up to the march was characterised by mud slinging in the local press as senior police officers queued up to talk about the chaos that would be brought to the city centre and the impact it would have on local shoppers (No mention of course of the forthcoming Labour party conference which looks set to disrupt the life of large chunks of Brighton for weeks)

About fifty protesters wanted to march through town to raise awareness of local bomb makers EDO. Instead they were allowed to walk a short way down the High St before being diverted into a side street by over a hundred police, some with dogs. Hundreds of shoppers witnessed this piece of street theatre, as Sussex Police, with a helicopter above, demonstrated their tolerance of dissenting opinions. It was at this point that four arrests were made for our old friend 'obstructing the highway'. Among those were an eighty year old man and a sixteen year old girl. All were released on police bail in the early hours of the morning, Brighton's shoppers safely in their beds.

This isn't exactly the first time that SMASH EDO activists have been given a hard time for daring to stand up and say that a weapons manufacturer isn't welcome in their town. The injunction (see SchNEWS 492) is interpreted by police to mean that all filming at the site is forbidden, allowing the director of Guardian Guards (EDO's hired goons), Mark Lynch, to harass and intimidate protesters with impunity.

Campaigners on Monday's 'Carry on Up the Injunction' mocked Lynch by collectively adopting his trademark shaved head and 'toothbrush' moustache. So attired, the 'Lynch mob' goose stepped up and down in front of the armaments factory issuing spoof injunctions.

Not one to take a joke, Lynch arrived at the Peace Camp the next day with ten coppers, a helicopter and a park ranger. The police informed everyone that they had five minutes to leave or they'd be arrested. A stand-off ensued. Things got a bit strange when they were asked what law they were using. All eyes turned to Lynch, which is peculiar because as far as SchNEWS is aware he is neither a copper nor a council worker. Eventually, following an intervention from one of Brighton's Green councillors, it turned out the council had no intention of evicting the camp! Red faced police were forced to withdraw and tried to pretend the whole thing had been a 'well-fare' visit (hence the snarling Alsatians obviously).

Farcical as this affair was, it begs some serious questions such as: Who is running the show here; Sussex Police, EDO MBM or the Council? Whose idea was the eviction? How easily can the authority of the local council be usurped by the employee of a US arms company? On whose instructions are Sussex Police carrying out this campaign of intimidation against peace activists? The peace camp continues 'til this Friday (19). www.smashedo.org.uk

* DSEi - Britain's biggest arms fair happens 13-16 September at the Excel Centre in London Docklands. There's a Disarm DSEi direct action training next Sunday (28) @ LARC, 62 Fieldgate St, Whitechapel, London. www.dsei.org

ANOTHER FINE MASS

In March this year a disabled man was prevented from taking part in a Critical Mass at the G8 environment ministers meeting in Derby. Police allowed cyclists but prevented him from joining in on his wheelchair. He tried sue under the Disability Discrimination Act but has had to drop his case after he learnt that Derbyshire police have a get-out clause which says that the act does not apply if it is protecting national security.

So what was this danger? - er, 100 cyclists! This threat to our very survival required one thousand police from 23 different counties. Memorials and statues were boarded up, shop windows were barricaded and a huge area of the Market Place was cordoned off to keep the children's face-painting and samba band at bay. A Derbyshire police spokesman said, without a hint of irony: "...that disruption to people of Derby and Breadsall was kept to a minimum." Er, right.

TEXAS SOLD 'EM

Last week, in a standard display of corporate bullying, British Airways' in-flight meals contractor sacked some 800 workers. In response, baggage handlers at Heathrow - members of the same union as the elbowed Gate Gourmet workers - walked out in solidarity. Within hours, the entire airport was essentially shut down, stranding thousands of passengers and costing millions.

Sacking so many people required Gate Gourmet bosses (have you ever had a 'gourmet' meal on a plane?) to make their announcement by megaphone. Within 3 minutes 800 workers were told that their jobs would be going, although they could get them back, but on lower pay! 70% of the workers were Asian women, earning a whopping £6.20 per hour. Gate Gourmet has wide ranging experience in the field of dismissals, including the United States where it tried to introduce a new nationwide contract which the Teamsters Union referred to "as being so bad that it served as a good example of the destructive mindset of so many managers these days."

Responding to Union criticism that no management were up for dismissal, bosses quickly promoted 147 shop floor workers to management positions - and then promptly sacked them! Knowing this would cause a problem, an outside security company was hired in and the police were alerted before the announcements were made. The solidarity action by BA workers to come out on strike in support of Gate Gourmet staff was illegal in the UK. Union bosses rejected it too, despite the fact that UK legislation flouts the basic standards set by the International Labour Organisation.

Meanwhile Gate Gourmet's holding company, venture capitalists Texas Pacific Group, is doing a roaring business. It owns a wide range of food outlets, including Burger King, and compliments its food investments with a range of biotech companies. So why the sackings? "We should all accept responsibility for demanding cheaper flights," said one passenger caught up in the delays. "This causes a price war which affects pay and conditions for workers." £2.50 Easy Jet flight to Spain, anyone?

* Support the sacked workers www.pledgebank.com/Hardship-Fund

...and finally...

Despite the country being on the highest level of anti-terror alert ever, Sussex police still found forty officers to raid a cannabis café in Worthing on the 11th of August. SchNEWS wonders if there was mix up at headquarters and they believed that suicide bombers were holing up inside. Sussex cops website stated, "There wasn't a fire, just smoke." Rumours that militant Al-Qaeda cleric Afghan Hashish is being held in custody were still unsubstantiated last night...

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers... No matter what country under the sun, you can't mete justice from the barrel of a gun.