

WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER MURDER SHE WROTE OFF...



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GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER

"IT'S A JOKE" - NO CHARGES OVER TOMLINSON DEATH...

"After 16 months of waiting, to hear nothing is being done is a complete joke. Today they gave us no hope. This experience has broken our family apart. The DPP has told us there was an unlawful act, yet no charges are to be brought. This is no justice - everyone has failed us." - Ian Tomlinson's son Paul King

Ian Tomlinson, a 47-year-old news-vendor, was killed at the G20 protests in April 2009 (SchNEWS 672). His family have waited until now to find out what action the justice system was going to take. The Director of Public Prosecution Keir Starmer stated yesterday (22nd) that there would be. er. no charges brought against any police officers involved in the death of Ian Tomlinson. This astonishingly barefaced whitewash prompted the director of INQUEST Deborah Coles to say, *"The eyes of the world will be looking on with incredulity as yet again a police officer is not facing any criminal charges after what is one of the most clear-cut and graphic examples of police violence that has led to death. This decision is a shameful indictment of the way police criminality is investigated and demonstrates a culture of impunity when police officers break the law. It follows a pattern of cases that reveal an unwillingness to treat deaths arising from the use of force by police as potential homicides."*

Freddy Unsteady, Go

The inquiry into Tomlinson's death was deliberately botched - Dr Freddy Patel, the pathologist who first examined him, claimed that he had died of a heart attack. He has now been suspended following irregularities in four other post-mortem examinations. Two other pathologists who examined the body found that he had died as a result of 'blunt force trauma'. Incredibly the discrepancy between the first report and the second two was cited by Keir Starmer as one reason for not proceeding with criminal charges. The idea that the Met simply got a bent pathologist in as part of a cover up doesn't seem to have occurred to him.

Of course there may never have been a second pathologists report if further evidence of Ian's treatment at the hands of police hadn't emerged. Footage of him shuffling away from a line of police with his hands in pockets was given to the *Guardian* newspaper (www.youtube.com/watch?v=HECMVd1-9SQ&feature=player_embedded#at=30). It clearly shows a riot cop stepping up behind him, hitting him round the legs then pushing him over. More pointedly, the film shows the absolute indifference of the other officers. They don't even glance around: this is business as usual. As SchNEWS has witnessed, this kind of casual dishing out of violence is completely normal for police in this situation - but not always seen by millions on film.

The G20 protests were deliberately corralled in a 'kettle' around the Bank of England. As the day wore on the police became increasingly violent. What happened to Ian was, apart from its tragic

consequences, an experience shared by many.

Immediately after the news of Tomlinson's death surfaced the Met's PR machine whirred into motion. We were told by a dutiful mainstream press that a man who had had no violent contact with cops had died of a heart attack while officers attempted to resuscitate him. Lies were spread that these life-saving public servants were under a hail of bottles hurled by a filthy anarchist mob. Despite the fact that the media should have learned their lesson during the Menezes affair (see SchNEWS 508, 552, 647), once again they reported the lies verbatim.

The Serious Goons

The cop who struck Tomlinson and pushed him over has now been named as PC Simon Harwood, part of the Met's Territorial Support Group (TSG). This is a specialised forced entry and public order unit of the Metropolitan Police - created the day after the notorious Special Patrol Group was disbanded in the wake of the death of Blair Peach, another man clubbed to death for being on the wrong demo at the wrong time, this time in 1979. The inquiry into his death has never been made public.

The TSG has gained its own share of infamy as the most macho and aggressive section of the most macho and aggressive police force in the UK. This is the same outfit that Sgt Delroy Smellie belongs to, caught on camera striking out at Nicola Fisher who was brandishing a carton of orange juice at the time. (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8597812.stm>). It is clear that the casual use of violence is endemic in the unit and others like it. A total of 283 TSG officers had been investigated over 547 allegations of misconduct during the year 2008-09. Of these, 159 allegations were of assault. It is of course extremely useful to those in power to have at their disposal these shock troops of re-



pression, and for them to be effective they must be guaranteed immunity from prosecution.

Legal manoeuvres have been used to shut down the family and the public's access to information - the policy has transparently been to kick the investigation into the long grass. The delay in the decision to prosecute for manslaughter has led to a situation where the time limit for a lesser charge has expired. The 'Independent' Police Complaints Commission have repeatedly refused to release footage on the grounds that it was being used in an ongoing prosecution. The same excuse has until now been used to rule out any public inquiry into his death. The IPCC also refused to take over the investigation until seven days after Ian's death, leaving the forensic evidence to remain entirely in the Met's hands.

Ian Tomlinson was murdered by the police - that is a fact. It doesn't matter whether PC Simon Harwood actually wanted him to die. From the top down they embraced tactics that were indifferent as to whether he lived or not. When Ian's death was firmly laid at the Met's door, the only consideration was how the force could get away with it. But the surfacing of the footage, clearly evidencing an unprovoked assault, has at least has forced the inevitable cover-up to be utterly implausible.

Ian's death is probably the most high profile death at the hands of the police in recent years. However, deaths in custody and after other contacts with the police happen regularly; 30 last year and 65 in 2008. No officer has ever been prosecuted for the death of a civilian caused in the line of duty.

"We feel like it wasn't a full investigation from the beginning. It's been a big cover-up and they're incompetent. Why isn't there an assault charge? We feel very let down, very disappointed. We expected a charge. It clearly shows our dad being assaulted by a police officer" - Paul King, Ian Tomlinson's son.

*See www.iantomlinsonfamilycampaign.org.uk and www.inquest.org.uk

THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

Democracy Village was evicted in the early hours of Tuesday morning. Just after 1am around 50 bailiffs and a similar number of police descended on the site, then taking over three hours to complete the eviction. After the majority of the site was cleared, the last to go were two who were up a scaffolding A-frame, along with another who was D-locked to the bottom of it. Other 'last men standing' were one man on top of the kitchen with a megaphone, and another who sat atop a truck piled high with fencing. No one was arrested. Later that morning a fence was erected around the square, and around 25 villagers remained on the pavement next to it.

At 2pm that afternoon a fence jumping tournament was held, with around 23 managing to get back into the square. Within the perimeter people played chasing games with the goons, and each

was led out without arrest and allowed to return to the group gathered on the pavement.

The appeal against the High Court ruling (see SchNEWS 729) was lost last Friday (16th), which meant it was only going to be days before the bailiffs arrived.

But despite this, the regular Saturday Peoples' Assembly will still go ahead this weekend (24th), 1pm-6pm in Victoria Tower Gardens, next to Parliament. It will be a forum covering topics from wars to civil liberties, direct action, climate crisis, electoral reform, land reform and more. There will also be action at the fence around the square.

* See www.london.indymedia.org/about/democracy_village www.democracyvillage.org www.democracyvillage.blogspot.com

BANKING ON THE CAMP

Climate Camp have announced their intention to "Break the Bank" with this year's action camp. Their target will be Royal Bank of Scotland.

RBS funds corporate climate criminals around the world. It helped provide E.ON with \$70 billion to help build 17 new coal and gas power plants across Europe. It also underwrote \$8bn in loans to ConocoPhillips, a company running riot exploiting the Peruvian Amazon and the Canadian tar sands.

After going cap in hand to the government for a £50bn bailout last year, RBS is 84% owned by Joe Public. But that hasn't stopped them using (y)our cash - or more accurately, debt - to finance the climate destruction that threatens us all.

The basecamp will be swooped on and occupied on the 19th and 20th of August. That will be followed by four days of training and direct action before the real fun begins with a day of action against RBS on the 23rd. The camp will be packed up and returned to nature on the 25th.

A climate camp statement said, "Ecological destruction is built into the mechanics of the financial system, with communities disenfranchised from their own futures. This is why, in August, people from across the UK will be converging to take back the power and Break the Bank!"

* See www.climatecamp.org.uk

AISLE BE BACK

Activists set up a tent in an aisle of Waitrose in Brighton in solidarity with farmers from Al Farisiya in the Jordan valley, who had their homes demolished the day before by the Israeli army.

As well as demolishing the homes of nearly 100 people, sheep shelters and 1000 sheep were confiscated. Two days later 23 homes in the village of Fasayil suffered the same fate.

During the evening rush-hour, activists filled baskets full of Israeli goods and informed shoppers that such demolitions pave the way for the further expansion of Israeli settlements that export their agricultural produce to supermarkets like Waitrose. A letter was handed to the manager calling on the supermarket to respect the rights of Palestinian farmers by not stocking Israeli produce.

* See <http://brightonpalestine.org>

** The ISM speaking tour is currently in the UK. See www.ism-london.org.uk

HURNDALL KILLER RELEASED

The Israeli soldier who murdered an International Solidarity Movement activist has been released from jail three years early. Taysir Hayb shot photography student Tom Hurndall in the forehead with a high velocity bullet using a rifle with a telescopic sight in Gaza in 2003. Tom was attempting to rescue Palestinian children from Israeli gunfire. He spent nine months in a coma before dying from his injuries in a London hospital.

A long struggle by Tom's family resulted in manslaughter charges and just an eight-year sentence for Hayb. He was also convicted of obstruction of justice, giving false testimony and soliciting false testimony.

Nurse and peace activist Alice Coy, who saw Tom get shot, said Hayb was only part of "a culture of impunity in which generations of Israelis are taught that Arabs hate them and are subhuman. They are then given guns and they know they can get away with killing Palestinians. The occupation and aggression of Zionist policy is harming ordinary Israelis as well as Palestinians."

* See <http://palsolidarity.org>

LEWES ROAD DIGS IN

Lewes Road Community Garden faced bailiffs, diggers and police for the second time today as the eviction attempt continued (see SchNEWS 729).

At around 6am three people sleeping in the adjacent office building were woken and forcibly removed by bailiffs who had fence-jumped into the garden. By 9am, two diggers had turned up for Team Tesco, but so had around 40 garden supporters who sat in rows blocking the entrance. The contractors were left with little options but to back off - again - with the security guards blaming 'lack of resources'. Gardeners peacefully occupied the garden in the summer sun for the rest of the day, pitching tents and enjoying food parcels delivered in solidarity from the nearby independent Turkish shop.

A Section 6 legal warning was placed on the gates during the afternoon but, although cops and more bailiffs turned up during the afternoon, they were reluctant to take further action without clarifying the legal situation. By 4pm the occupying Gardeners had been left in peace - for the time being.

* See www.lewesroadcommunitygarden.org

ACTION AID - BY GEORGE!

Campaign group Action Aid has targeted Asda stores this week in an effort to highlight the Walmart-owned chain's appalling record of exploiting sweatshop labour in Asia.

Actions have taken place in major cities up and down the country; campaigners have been putting secret messages into the pockets of Asda clothing describing the corporation's treatment of their garment workers, as well as collecting 2p from Asda shoppers as they enter the store. This amount is calculated as how much Asda would need to raise its price on a £4 t-shirt to guarantee their workers earn enough to feed, clothe and educate their families (assuming they gave that 2p to the workers of course). A small price when you consider the £45 million profit each day that the Walmart group makes.

Anyone who finds a secret message in the garment they've bought can send it to Action Aid to claim a campaign t-shirt and enter a prize draw for other ethical clothing items. They will also be invited to send a letter to Asda bosses demanding fair treatment for workers making Asda clothes.

The group have promised to continue with their campaign every month until Asda increases the wages of overseas workers. Action Aid claims that even Asda's own surveys demonstrate that their workers aren't paid enough to sustain themselves or their families. They have formed a coalition with Asia Floor Wage (a group dedicated to improving pay conditions for garment workers across Asia) to persuade Asda to re-evaluate their pay structures.

At the moment, Asda pays its factory employees in Bangladesh an average of £6.70 in a working week of 48 hours. Asia Floor Wage calculates the basic living wage needed in Bangladesh at £25.90 a week. This could easily be achieved through tiny increases of final retail prices but it seems that profit-greedy capitalists at the top simply prefer their workforces to live in poverty.

Whilst some high street retailers have promised to meet more 'ethical' targets by 2015, Asda still lags far behind other retail chains - even Primark we wonder? - in both word and action.

* See www.actionaid.org.uk to find out more about the campaign.

PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap

SABS: ROVER AND OUT

With huntsman Cameron lording it up in number 10, sabs across the country are bracing themselves for a repeal of the fox hunt ban. The West Yorkshire Hunts Sabs are readying themselves to step up the fight against hunting and are fund-raising for a new (or old) Land Rover. This would double the number of sabs able to patrol each week. They are also on the blag for OS maps, essential oils (like Citronella and Eucalyptus), 2-way radios/mobile phones, cameras/camcorders and more. Or get out there and do some fieldwork yourself!

To make a donation or check out progress on the 'Landy'o'meter' see www.westyorkshiresubs.wordpress.com

INSIDE SCHNEWS

There's been some progress in the case of Renata Zelazna, a Polish anarchist imprisoned in Holland. Once a long term Brighton resident, Renata was charged back in May with the attempted murder of a policeman (see SchNEWS 721) and has been in prison since. This week saw her trial and, despite the policeman claiming that he has nightmares about Renata's "piercing eyes", the prosecution have asked for a maximum sentence of only two years - for a crime that normally carries a minimum six year sentence. One supporter told SchNEWS, "We're hoping that this is indicative of how weak the prosecution case is". In the Dutch system, weirdly, sentencing is discussed before the verdict. A verdict is expected on August 3rd.

In a letter from prison Renata said, "I'm a vegan, I don't kill, this is one of the most important things to me - to respect the lives of others, to do no harm."

* Letters to Free Renata Zelazna, PO Box 74, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 4ZQ

CALAIS: OUT TO LUNCH

No Borders activists in Calais have started distributing food to migrants to fill the gap left by holidaying charity Salam. After initially taking one meal a day to the 'jungles', activists are now distributing large quantities of rice, veg and locally donated bread, and helping prepare food in situ.

Salam, which normally provides breakfast and dinner, is away for six weeks, leaving the migrants with just one meal a day. When they return, the charity that provides lunch, Belle Etoile, will go on holiday for four weeks.

Most of the migrants are now sleeping out in open jungles after the squat sheltering many of the Africans was forcibly closed down.

* See calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com

...and finally...

Deigo Maradona's World Cup flops weren't the only Argentinian football disaster this month. Two inmates, serving sentences for armed robbery, were able to escape from a 'high security' Argentinian jail this week by calmly scaling the fence and climbing the exterior wall - before coolly strolling off into the sunset. It seems the jail was so cash-strapped it only had two men to cover the watchtowers and had been manning the watchtowers with scarecrow guards - complete with footballs for heads and prison officers' caps.

Like the national team, the jubilant jailers proved completely useless when the chance finally came to make a name for themselves. The escapees are no doubt claiming the 'hand of God' aided their clean getaway...

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers, no justice, no peace, fuck the police. Honest.

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