

Socialist Party

The party fighting all cuts to jobs and services.



Justice for Smiley Culture For an Independent Trade Union & Community Inquiry

Smiley Culture is yet another death of a black man following a Metropolitan Police raid. Four Officers are claiming that the single stab wound to his chest was 'self inflicted' and happened whilst he was left alone to make a cup of tea! No wonder 1,500 people packed into the public meeting to hear about his death, angered after hearing from his family and friends.

Today's demonstration, whilst acting as a mark of respect for Smiley, will also express anger at the role of the Metropolitan Police. This time there must be an open investigation. We give our full support to Smiley Culture's family's campaign for justice.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) claim now that they 'have the same questions as the family' – we ask are they truly independent? These Commissioners, appointed by the Government and unaccountable to the community where this atrocity took place, could again decide that individual officers have nothing to answer for, never mind face action for Smiley's death.

This follows other high profile deaths at the hands of the police in the area – Jean Charles de Menezes, Brian Douglas, Wayne Douglas, Ricky Bishop, Derek Bennett etc. Since 1990 there have been 929 deaths in Police custody and 1398 deaths involving the Police. (source: Inquest) There has not been a single case which has been properly investigated and brought those officers responsible to book.

The Socialist Party demands an open, community inquiry into Smiley's death. This inquiry should be made up of elected representatives from the local trade unions, community organisations and especially the youth. It should be allowed full access to all involved in the police operations that led to Smiley's death and



take all the evidence it requires to reach a conclusion.

The anger felt by many, especially young people, will also be a reflection of their day-to-day experience of the police. Blacks are 7 times more likely to be the subject of police 'stop and search' powers nationally. In inner city areas like Lambeth that is likely to be far higher. The number of stop and searches rose by over 70% in the last five years. Whilst not at the levels of the vicious harassment under the old 'sus' laws which led to the Brixton uprising 30 years ago, young people will be angry. Lee Jasper, the ex-Policing Adviser under Mayor Ken Livingston, now says 'the area is on a knife edge', but he did little to curb the use of these powers under his watch.

With black youth now facing 50% chance of unemployment in many urban areas, high levels of school exclusion and cuts to youth clubs and facilities, the social situation is brewing for major social upheavals in Brixton and other areas of London. Now there are still over 11,000 people unemployed in Lambeth. Although there have been superficial improvements, the old problems remain.

But one problem is worse. In 1981, the

**All-Welcome
Public Meeting:
Thursday 21 April**

**The 1981 Brixton Riots
Racism, Poverty & Anger Explodes**

7.30pm
**Contact David for details on:
07985900753**

Labour Council provided opposition to the Tories. Now the Labour Council is enthusiastically carrying out £79 million cuts. With the withdrawal of Educational Maintenance Allowance and the increase in University fees, the ConDem government has taken away opportunities from young people, but the Labour Council has made the situation dramatically worse. Services for young people including the Connexions advice service, youth workers, youth clubs and libraries have been hit with the Council planning to close five libraries in Lambeth.

The Socialist Party does not want the anniversary of 1981 celebrated by rioting, nothing has fundamentally changed in Brixton, for policing or for black youth as a result of it. We support mass action, particularly in conjunction with the trade unions to fight the cuts in Lambeth. We have seen student protests on tuition fees and over half a million trade union members march against public sector cuts on March 26th. The Trade unions could call co-ordinated strike action to defend our services. And the local community would be fully involved in defending services.

We also demand real police accountability



GOOD EVENING YOUNG MAN. NOW HAVE YOU PERSONALLY NOTICED ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT HAVE ADDED TO THE TENSION IN THIS AREA?

to the local community with full operational control by local elected committees. These committees should be elected from the local trade unions fighting to defend jobs and our public services, from the local community and especially from young people facing regular harassment on the streets.

The Socialist Party is fully involved in the campaign in Lambeth to oppose all cuts. We have also initiated a demonstration from Jarrow to London (see <http://www.youthfightforjobs.com>) to demand opportunities for young people.

We demand:

- An independent inquiry by trade union and community organisations into the killing of Smiley Culture - no confidence in the 'Independent' Police Complaints Commission.
- Democratic control over strategic and operational policing.
- Abolition of the Territorial Support Group.
- Opposition to ALL cuts: national and local trade union action against the cuts.
- The right to decent benefits, a free education & training with a job at

Jean Charles De Menezes

The killing of Jean Charles de Menezes in Stockwell on 22 July 2005 was a "brutal act committed by hyped-up, out of control police officers, the result of a catalogue of error and incompetence". That was the conclusion of the Old Bailey trial at the end of October and of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) report in early November 2007. The jury at the Old Bailey found the Metropolitan Police guilty of "catastrophic" errors leading to the shooting dead of Jean Charles at Stockwell tube station, south London. The Met was fined £175,000 and ordered to pay £385,000 costs for exposing the public to unnecessary risk under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The penalty was paid out of taxpayers' money! Individuals were not held responsible for their actions when Jean Charles was killed. The IPCC report had been drawn up 18 months previously, its publication delayed pending the court decision. The Met is not accountable to elected bodies and clearly believes it can act with impunity. If it was not for courageous and determined campaigns for justice, such as by the de Menezes family, many police outrages would remain hidden. The arrogance displayed by senior police officers shocked many people. An editorial appeared in the London Evening Standard (2 November 2007), perhaps summing up their views: "The number of grave police failings during that operation was 19 - and the Met admitted none of them. In these circumstances, the public will hardly be satisfied by Sir Ian's promise that "lessons will be learned from the affair".

trade union rates of pay.

- This could be delivered by a democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people.

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