

NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Published on behalf of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

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POLICE SPYING ENQUIRY – MORE REVELATIONS

The enquiry into police spying, which began last November, is examining how 139 undercover officers in a Metropolitan Police unit called the Special Demonstration Unit spied for over 40 years from 1968, on more than 1,000 political groups during long-term deployments, continues to reveal striking examples of police misconduct.

On 28th April the enquiry was told that an undercover officer was authorised by senior police to lie in court after he was one of 15 people arrested and charged with public order offences in May 1972 after they attempted to block the British rugby team's coach to make them miss their flight to apartheid-era South Africa in an anti-apartheid demonstration.

The officer was told by managers to attend and report on confidential meetings between campaigners and their lawyers using his undercover identity of "Michael Scott" during the trial of the 15 in order to bolster his

credentials among campaigners. He was "convicted" under his false name for public disorder.

On 5th May evidence was given that a spy, sent to spy on the Troops Out Movement under the fake identity "Rick Gibson", set up a Troops Out Movement East London group, later becoming the Movement's national organiser, and had sexual relationships with members.

On the 6th May it was revealed that police spied for more than 20 years on Celia Stubbs and the campaign she organised to discover the truth about the death of her partner Blair Peace, who was killed in 1979 on his way home from an anti-fascist demo. This included the spies recording the names of, and photographing, those attending Peach's funeral. Meanwhile the Met police sat on an internal report that found that it could "reasonably be concluded that a police officer [from its Special Patrol Group]" struck the blow to the head that killed Peach, only publishing this report in 2010.



The superior officers responsible for police spy deployment have always denied any knowledge of sexual relationships entered into by the spies with members of protest groups, under false identities. But, on 7th May an ex-police spy told the inquiry that managers "across the board" hadn't been troubled by such sexual relations and had not expressed any criticism or disapproval of the officers involved. He said, "It was made quite plain with jokes and banter that they knew, we knew and management knew."

On 10th May, an SWP member, the first of the many women who later found out that they had had sexual relationships with spy cops under their false identities, said she now regarded the relationship as rape.

UNEQUAL CONFLICT

In what was claimed as a response to a decision by the Israeli Supreme Court to evict four Palestinian families from the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah and the storming of the al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli police, between 9th and 10th May over 200 rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip towards Israel. On the night of the 10th, Benjamin Netanyahu, NVRN newsletter, June/July 2021

Israel's Prime Minister, announced that the attacks would be met with "great force" from the Israeli Air Force in order "to ensure the safety of Israeli civilians". Over 15 days, until a ceasefire was agreed on May 21st, thousands of rockets were fired from Gaza and while Israel bombed Gaza indeed with great force.

The results of this conflict were very unequal: Israeli bombs killed more than 230 people (including some 70 children) in Palestine while Palestinian rockets killed 13 (including two children) in Israel. The scale of the destruction was also very unequal. According to a post-ceasefire United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in Gaza 1,042 housing and commercial units, spread over 258 buildings, were destroyed, 769 further units suffered severe damage, and 53 schools, 6 hospitals and 11 clinics were also damaged. No such figures for the destruction in Israel have been issued, but it seems to have been more a matter of scattered relatively minor damage. Thus a report by the Israeli Manufacturers' Association talks of immense economic damage caused by the conflict, mostly due to large numbers of workers staying at home during it, but also through damage to buildings. Also a large number of insurance claims were made for damage to vehicles caused during the conflict.



Gaza street scene after the bombing, May 2021

The ceasefire was broken on June 15th, when after rising tensions which saw a far right march through East Jerusalem and incendiary balloons launched from Gaza, Israel's new coalition government ordered airstrikes against Hamas in Gaza.

RIGHTS BODY FINDS ISRAEL GUILTY OF APARTHEID

In a report published on 26th April, the New York-based Human Rights Watch accuses Israeli officials of the crimes of apartheid and persecution, claiming that the Israeli government enforces a policy of "maintaining the domination by Jewish Israelis over Palestinians". It claims that after decades of warnings that the Israeli government's hold over Palestinian life could lead to apartheid, it found that the "threshold" had been crossed. The report compares policies and practices towards the nearly seven million Palestinians in the occupied

territories and Israel with those towards a similar number of Jewish Israelis there.

Apartheid is a crime against humanity under international law. It is defined under the 1998 Rome Statute as an "institutionalised regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other" with the intent of "maintaining that regime".

"ETHNIC CLEANSING" IN JERUSALEM

Arab 48 reported on March 18th that more than 100 Palestinian homes face demolition and about 1,550 residents, including more than 800 children, will be made homeless by Israel's Jerusalem Municipality.

According to *Arab48*, the Israeli municipality rejected plans it had requested as an alternative to the demolition of the Palestinian homes; instead it is set to demolish the Palestinian homes and turn the area into "The King's Garden". claiming that it was a garden for Israeli kings thousands of years ago. (And surely that trumps any claim to the land by Palestinians living there now!)

The municipality had agreed to provide Palestinians with land in other areas to build new homes, but it suddenly backtracked on this decision.

Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor said in a statement that the "massive destruction and displacement operation against the population may amount to ethnic cleansing and a war crime."

BOYCOTT OF ISRAELI SHIPS IN SUPPORT OF PALESTINE

Port of Oakland, California

At dawn on June 4th over 500 activists picketed all six gates at the port to ensure that, the *Volans*, a cargo vessel operated by the largest Israeli shipping company, ZIM, could not unload its cargo there, and it left without doing so. Dockworkers had been refusing to unload it for a couple of weeks.

Workers with 10 local chapters of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union [ILWU] in Northern California had released a statement of solidarity with Palestinian trade unionists on 25th May, condemning Israeli attacks on Gaza and the ongoing expulsions of Palestinians from their homes in Jerusalem.

The action was supported by the global *Block the Boat Coalition*, which aims to prevent Israeli cargo ships from unloading anywhere in the world. Lara Kiswani, a member of the group said, “We are sending a strong message that profiteering from Israel’s apartheid and ongoing violence against the Palestinian people will not be welcome in the Bay Area.”

The ILWU prevented ZIM ships from docking in 2010 and in 2014, the last time that ZIM-owned shipping vessels had tried to use the Oakland port until this June.

ILWU says that similar actions are being planned at other ports on the US and Canadian west coast, as well as at docks in New York, New Jersey and Houston, Texas.

Livorno, Italy: On May 15th, as Israeli airstrikes pounded Gaza, dockworkers in Livorno announced they were refusing to load a shipment of weapons headed for Israel. “The port of Livorno will not be an accomplice in the massacre of the Palestinian people,” members of L’Unione Sindacale di Base said in a statement.

In response, the following day Israel’s largest trade union, the Histadrut, “ordered Ashdod and Haifa port workers to decline service to all Italy-bound ships”, according to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

However the boycott in support of Palestinians spread and the following week port workers in South Africa and California (see above) joined the boycott. In **Durban** dockworkers refused to offload an Israeli-owned cargo ship in protest at Israel’s crimes in Gaza. (South African port workers have a history of support for Palestine. In 2009 the Durban-based South African Transport and Allied Workers Union refused to offload an Israeli-owned ship.)

Workers at the Italian port of **Ravenna** also joined the boycott, saying they would “refuse to load weapons, explosives or other war material” destined for Israel, and organising a strike on June 3rd in relation to an Israeli-owned ship intending to land there. The strike was called off after the vessel’s owner decided to cancel the shipment – a win for the workers.



Israeli cargo ship *Volans* at sea

PALESTINE ACTION CONTINUES CAMPAIGN AGAINST ELBIT



Occupying an Elbit factory roof 1

building.

Elbit Systems is an Israeli-owned arms manufacturing company with 10 factories and offices in the UK. Palestine Action (PA), formed last summer, has organised many direct actions against these premises. The actions are estimated to have already cost the firm and its associated companies over £2 million in losses.

In an action on April 13th, the group carried out actions at two places at once. They occupied and blockaded Elbit’s arms factory in Oldham and targeted Elbit’s HQ in Bristol.

In Oldham, activists sprayed computers with red paint, broke windows, chained themselves to the premises, stuck “war crime scene” barrier tape across the front doors and unfurled pro-Palestinian banners. Five people were arrested, two on suspicion of criminal damage and three on suspicion of burglary. In Bristol activists occupied the roof, put up posters and sprayed red paint over the

On 11th May, following Israeli attacks on Gaza and Jerusalem, over 150 protestors shut down the British head office of Elbit. Three people were arrested.

Meanwhile, six PA campaigners Huda Ammori, Richard Barnard, Jocelyn Cooney, Caroline Brouard, Genevieve Scherer and Robin Refualu face charges of conspiracy to commit criminal damage without lawful excuse against Elbit Systems and its landlords, in organising eight actions against Elbit sites last year. A plea hearing was set down for 28th April at Crown Court at which the six planned to plead not guilty on the grounds that they had a lawful excuse of preventing the war crimes that Elbit enables. But the plea hearing was postponed indefinitely and the six remain on bail on condition they don't return to the four premises targeted.

Two other PA activists have been charged with conspiracy to commit criminal damage to Elbit property. During police interview, one, Emily Arnott, who sprayed red paint on Elbit property, was told that actions by PA against Elbit could be considered "terrorism" and that they could be charged under terrorism charges. On 16th April, Arnott was released on bail on condition that she was electronically monitored and subjected to a curfew. Arnott commented, "This is the police conspiring with Elbit to protect war criminals. Elbit, who produce drones, drones that are killing Palestinians every single day. Drones that were used in Gaza in 2014, to murder."

Some 2,220 Palestinians were killed by Israel during that 2014 offensive, including 550 children.

The other, Richard Barnard, was asked by police that "You [PA] aren't a proscribed organisation yet, but don't you agree that your actions are akin to terrorism?"

More info: www.palestineaction.org

COLSTON STATUE UPDATE: Also in Bristol, the four charged with criminal damage for toppling the Edward Colston statue and throwing it in the Avon elected for a jury trial at Crown Court when they appeared at Bristol Magistrates' Court on January 25th. The trial was set down for December.

A group of supporters outside were dispersed by police enforcing covid restrictions, with four charged with breach of these regulations. The police later apologised for misapplying covid powers in stopping the protest and paid substantial damages to the four for wrongful arrest.

COURT CHALLENGE TO ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA

The Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) was on 22nd April given permission by a High Court judge to bring a case for judicial review of the decision taken by international trade secretary Liz Truss in July 2020 to resume arms sales to Saudi Arabia, which was followed by UK arms exports to it worth £1.4bn.

Such sales had been halted in June 2019 when the Court of Appeal ruled that minister had made no concluded assessments of whether the Saudi-led coalition had committed violations of international humanitarian law, as was required before military sales should be made. Truss justified resuming arms sales now on the grounds that such a review has now been held and had identified only isolated incidents (!) of attacks by Saudi on Yemen.

Sarah Waldron of CAAT commented, "UK-made weapons have been central to a bombardment [of Yemen] that has destroyed schools, hospitals and home and created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world."

Meanwhile, The American Friends Service Committee and Quaker Peace & Social Witness and Mwatana for



Detainees being released

Human Rights have nominated CAAT as their nominees for the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize. The nomination is described as being intended to draw attention to the suffering of the Yemeni people and to the case for judicial review CAAT is bringing.

In January the new US Biden administration "paused" arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates pending a review of such sales to these countries. The UK has not followed this lead.

TWO DEPORTEES FREED ON GLASGOW STREET

The *Scotsman* reported on the 14th May that at 9.30pm the previous morning two Indian Moslems had been picked up by UK Border Agency officers from a property in Kenmure Street Pollokshields, a Moslem area of the city, for deportation, but that the deportation van was stopped from leaving the street all day by a street protest.

The action had started when a small number of local residents rushed out to block the Home Office van containing the two men and one man had crawled under it to prevent it leaving.

Footage from the scene was broadcast on social media and soon a crowd of some 200 had assembled, reportedly shouting such things as “Leave our neighbours alone; let them go” and “Cops go home” at a ring of police surrounding the van.

Scottish Justice Secretary Humza Yousaf said the Home Office’s actions had been “reckless” and added that both he and First Minister Nicola Sturgeon had been in touch with the Home Office to abandon the operation. He tweeted that immigration was a matter reserved to the Scottish government and so the “situation should have never have occurred – the UK Govt’s hostile environment is not wanted here.” And shortly after 5pm, Police Scotland issued a statement saying that Superintendent Mark Sutherland had decided to release the detained men “in order to protect the safety, public health and wellbeing of those involved in the detention and subsequent protest”.

One of the men, Lakhvir Singh, 34, spoke afterwards through a translator, saying, “I’ve been astonished and overwhelmed by the support I’ve received from the people of Glasgow.

EXTINCTION REBELLION ACQUITTALS

Extinction Rebellion (XR) protesters blockaded print works at Kowsley, Broxbourne and Motherwell on 6th September 2019, in protest that the papers printed there, including the Sun and Daily Telegraph, failed to report on climate change. Most were arrested and charged.

It was not till this year that these cases came to court. On 29th April three who had sat on a van outside the Knowsley plant were acquitted of aggravated trespass by Liverpool magistrates on the grounds the prosecution had failed to prove they were on private land when arrested.

On the 5th May two more, who were among dozens who parked a yellow boat and van outside the Knowsley works, were found not guilty of trespass by a jury.

On 10th May, another six who’d been involved in the boat and van blockade appeared at St. Albans Magistrates’ Court charged with obstruction of the highway. Before the trial started one of the defendants

put on a pink mask and began shouting about injustice while filming the inside of the courtroom on his smartphone. He also glued a hand to his desk, so the trial was adjourned while Hertfordshire police and fire and rescue were called to free him. He was subsequently charged with criminal damage to the desk. 20 other people involved in the same blockade are awaiting trial.

Six further XR activists were acquitted on criminal damage charges to Shell HQ in Waterloo in April 2019 by a jury at Southwark crown court, in spite of the judge instructing them that five of the defendants had no defence in law. A seventh defendant who had pleaded guilty was later given a conditional discharge on the grounds of fairness. The seven had variously poured fake oil, glued themselves to windows and doors, broken glass, climbed on to a roof and sprayed graffiti onto the building.

FLOWER POT POWER

On April 30th climate activists from Extinction Rebellion Scotland, collaborating with Trident Ploughshares and Faslane Peace Camp, blocked the North gate of the Faslane Naval Base, home of the UK’s nuclear submarine fleet, for 11 hours.

As shown in the picture the group placed in front of the gate three heavy planters filled with earth, plants and flowers bearing the words “Safe”, “Green” and “Future”. Three women extinction rebels locked onto each planter stopping vehicular access.

The action was part of a global day of anti-war resistance celebrating the anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. The protesters said they were demanding a future safe from the “threat of nuclear weapons and environmental destruction”.

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It was not until 11 hours after the blockade began that the activists attached to the three pots were cut free by police and charged with breach of the peace at Clydebanks police station.

KING'S BAY PLOWSHARES 7 UPDATE

On April 9th Mark Liddle became the last to be sentenced of the King's Bay Plowshares 7 who had entered King's Bay naval Base, home to six US Trident nuclear-armed submarines, on April 4th 2018. He had previously twice refused to be sentenced virtually and had his sentencing hearing postponed. He was given a 21-month sentence. As with all six of his co-defendants, Mark was also ordered to share payment of restitution of \$33,503.51. He was also sentenced to three years of supervised probation after completing his sentence.

At the time of Mark's sentencing five others of the King's Bay Plowshares 7 were still in prison serving their sentences.

Subsequently Fr. Steve Kelly S.J. was released on April 13th, after being sentenced to "time served" when he appeared charged with violating conditions for his supervised release for a previous 2017 trespass conviction at another US Trident submarine base at Kitsap-Bangor. He had by then served three years in prison for the trespasses at King's Bay and at Kitsap-Bangor.

Martha Hennessy and Carmen Trotter were released on May 26th and 27th leaving Mark Liddle, Clare Grady and Patrick O'Neill still in prison of the 7.

COMING EVENTS (London except where said. ZOOM meetings not included)

Saturday, June 26th: "After COVID, Demand a New Normal" People's Assembly march and rally. Assemble noon, Portland Place WC1 before marching to Parliament Square for the rally. CND will form a "Nurses not Trident" bloc which will be part of a Peace and Anti-war bloc with Stop the War Coalition and like organisations. Info: information@enduk.org

Friday August 6th, noon-1pm: London CND's annual Hiroshima Day Ceremony by the commemorative Japanese cherry tree in Tavistock Square WC1. Info: info@londoncnd.org; 020-7607 2302

August 6th, Milton Keynes, 7.30pm: Hiroshima Day Lantern Floating Ceremony at Willen Lake commemorating the deaths and suffering caused by the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. Info: mkpeacepagoda@gmail.com; 01908-663 652.

August 6th-9th: annual international Hiroshima-Nagasaki fast and days fast and days of action. People, fasting or not, are particularly invited to join fasters and supporters from 11 to 11.45am each day in the Embankment Gardens immediately behind the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall, for a get-together hopefully with entertainment and speeches, followed by a daily anti-nuclear vigil in Whitehall opposite Downing Street from noon-1pm. (On the

6th, the vigil will be from 2-3pm, to follow the Hiroshima Day Ceremony in Tavistock Square – see [previous entry](#)) Info: Marc, marcwmorgan@btinternet.com

There will also be fasts and days of events in other place in the UK. These include Bristol (contact Row on Rowland.Dye@cooptel.net for details), Plymouth, Wales and Scotland. For these also contact marcwmorgan@btinternet.com

Monday August 9th: Nagasaki Day Peace Walk. Assemble 7.30pm in the courtyard in front of Westminster Cathedral in Victoria Street to walk to the London Peace Pagoda in Battersea Park for a Japanese lanterns' ceremony at dusk in memory of those killed in the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. (Walk organised by Pax Christi, 020-8203 4884; ceremony by the Peace Pagoda, londonpeacepagoda@gmail.com.)

August 9th, Lewisham, 1.30-3.30pm: socially-distanced picnic, with music & poetry. In the Archbishop Tutu Peace Gdn, Chinbrook Meadows, Grove Park. Info: annegarrett@yahoo.com; 020-8460 1295.

September 14th-17th: Defence and Security Equipment International arms fair (DESI) held in Excel Centre in Docklands in East London. DESI is a major international defence equipment fair which

specializes in aerial, land and naval vehicles, arms, drones and other military and security equipment. As usual, demonstrations are being organised to try

to stop it. For information and to take part contact: info@stopthearmsfair.org.uk