

More lies from the British police on the de Menezes murder

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More evidence has emerged relating to the July 22 police killing of the young Brazilian Jean Charles de Menezes in London, providing further proof that the police systematically lied about the subway shooting and have been conducting a cover-up, with the aid of the Labour government of Prime Minister Tony Blair and a largely compliant media.

Claims that there were no closed-circuit television tapes of the underground tube station where de Menezes was shot dead by eight bullets fired at close range have been refuted by the staff working at the station. According to Monday's *London Evening Standard*, the staff were "amazed and furious" when told by police that tapes from the cameras were blank.

An official with the rail workers' union said that at least three of the four cameras were working. "It is most unusual to say the least," he said of the police claims. Normal procedure is that tapes are replaced every 24 hours and kept for 28 days, and it is inconceivable that station staff would not keep to this procedure shortly after the July 7 bombings of the capital's transport network that killed 56 people and a failed attempt to detonate devices on July 21.

Police have claimed that the stories that were circulated in the aftermath of the event—and used to excuse the killing—did not come from them, although they did nothing to contradict them. Until exposed as lies by ITV News, the public had been told that de Menezes had vaulted the ticket barrier at the station, had run away from the police and was wearing a heavy coat or jacket that could be concealing bombs. Witnesses were widely quoted in the press backing up this story, describing de Menezes as an Asian and even with electric wires poking out of his clothes. In fact, none of this was true. De Menezes wore a light jacket, used his pass for the ticket barrier, and moved leisurely

into the station.

But ITV News has now pointed out in a follow-up report that the pathologist's report on de Menezes's death, five days after the shooting, referred to him having "vaulted over the ticket barriers" and run down the stairs of the tube station. Harriet Wistrich, the de Menezes family lawyer, has alleged that this false information in an official document could only have come from the police.

After ITV news revealed leaked evidence from the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) showing the extent of the lies and cover-up, de Menezes's family and their lawyers demanded the resignation of Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair. Much of the media speculated that the revelations could lead to his resignation.

Not only had the lies been allowed to circulate in the media, but it also emerged that Commissioner Blair had attempted to delay the IPCC investigation, so that it only began taking evidence several days after the killing. Even more damning was the revelation that the Metropolitan Police, in a visit by Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Yates to Brazil, had offered the de Menezes family a £15,000 "ex gratia" payment.

According to the *Mail on Sunday*, the family had been pressured into meeting Yates without a lawyer present. De Menezes's brother, Giovanni, said, "They thought we were poor people, stupid people. We may be poor but we are not that stupid. We will not exchange money for my brother's life—but we will punish them."

The British government has come to Sir Ian Blair's aid and insisted that he has its backing. This reinforces the political fact that de Menezes was shot in a cold-blooded manner to instill fear in the population and implement a shoot-to-kill policy that had been secretly

decided on by Prime Minister Tony Blair and top officials two years previously. The state execution of de Menezes marks a watershed in the drive of the British ruling elite, under cover of the struggle against terrorism, to destroy the democratic rights of the people and establish the framework for a police state.

Tony Blair is on holiday, but his press secretary issued statements for two successive days declaring his complete confidence in Sir Ian. Home Secretary Charles Clarke and Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott have both made statements giving full support to the commissioner.

The entire spectrum of official politics in Britain has lined up behind Commissioner Blair and the government. The Tory opposition spokesperson on homeland security, Patrick Mercer, gave full support to the police, and no criticism of the police has emerged from officials in the Labour Party or the Liberal Democrats.

London's Labour Party mayor, Ken Livingstone, could hardly have showered more praise on Ian Blair, suggesting that the demand for his resignation came from disgruntled police officers. "Here is a radical and reforming commissioner who is making major changes in the police. He has many enemies in there who really don't want to see these changes, who want to hold on to the old ways...and I am sure many of them are taking every chance here to undermine him," Livingstone told BBC Radio 4's "Today Programme".

The British establishment is also closing ranks to make sure that no further exposures relating to the de Menezes murder get into the public domain. Following the pattern of recent government inquiries, the IPCC investigation will be dragged for months and will attempt to bury the issue. Richard Latham QC, on behalf of the IPCC, said that there was only "an intention" to report by Christmas. He added, "There is no intention on the part of the IPCC of providing what might be described as a running commentary on the progress of the investigation."

Using the justification that there may be criminal proceedings or internal Metropolitan Police disciplinary proceedings arising out of the IPCC's investigation, and that the inquest will not be held for another six months, Latham said that "nothing should be disclosed or published which could prejudice this inquest or any potential criminal or disciplinary proceedings."

Similar tactics were used in the Hutton inquiry—the investigation into the death of weapons inspector and whistleblower Dr. David Kelly, who exposed lies used by Prime Minister Tony Blair to drag the country into the war against Iraq. (See: "Britain: Lessons of the Hutton Inquiry".)

Nor has the delegation from the Brazilian government that has travelled to Britain to investigate the circumstances of de Menezes's killing done anything to challenge the British police's or the Blair government's role. According to BBC reports, Brazilian Ambassador Manoel Gomes Pereira said he did not believe there was a Scotland Yard cover-up and that he "completely" trusted the IPCC.



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