

Rally against police killing of Anthony Grainger in Manchester, UK

Our reporters
23 June 2012

A rally to bring attention to the death of Anthony Grainger at the hands of the police took place at the Queen Victoria monument, Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester June 17. It was one of several across the UK that are traditionally held on Fathers' Day.

This was the first organised by the Grainger family. More than 200 people took part, mostly from the United Families and Friends Campaign. As the day went on, a number of passersby stopped and listened to the speakers.

Anthony Grainger, 36, died from a single shot from a Heckler and Koch MP5 submachine gun, fired by a police officer, as he sat alone in a shopping precinct car park in Cultcheth, a suburb of Warrington, Cheshire, in England. A group of 16 armed officers were involved alongside other unarmed officers and a large number of highly equipped police vehicles and equipment. Yet according to the Greater Manchester Police, there is no video coverage of anything that took place in the car park.

Anthony's mother, Marina Schofield Ahmed, began the rally by explaining the heartbreak her family is going through and pledged that they will fight on until the truth comes out and justice is done.

Danny Dickinson told the audience that he brought support from the Socialist Equality Party to the Grainger family "and all those seeking justice for the crimes committed by the capitalist state here in the UK, and also to groups and families across the globe, who like you, are fighting to make people aware of state killings."

"Every death is a personal tragedy," he said. "Every death invariably ends with the police getting away scot-free. The ruling class and its state apparatus defends its

own, come what may. The Crown Prosecution Service and the legal system, backed up by the media, step in to whitewash the whole affair, demonise the victim and create maximum confusion—allowing the killers to walk away...

"The SEP offers its help and that of the *World Socialist Web Site* in working alongside you in continuing this exposure and in mobilising working people and youth in defence of democratic rights and against police repression."

Janet Alder's brother, Christopher, a former British soldier, was unlawfully killed by police officers 14 years ago in a police station in Kingston upon Hull. Janet told the audience how Christopher had walked into the police van at a hospital, but was dragged unconscious from it and laid out on the Queens Gardens police stations custody suite floor. An official video shows he died on the floor. His rough breathing is audible, then it stops. No attention was given to him by the watching officers, who laughed and made monkey noises.

Janet demanded to know why the police officers who escorted Christopher into the back of the police van went straight to hospital, had their uniforms taken from them and cleaned, and why the inside of the police van was also cleaned out after they arrived at the station.

She and her family have been intimidated throughout the 14 years they have been fighting for justice. After receiving and burying what they were told was Christopher's body, they were informed almost 11 years later that the person they had laid to rest at Hull's Northern Cemetery was a 77-year-old woman, Grace Kamara, and that Christopher's body was still in the city morgue. Janet finished by asking rhetorically, "Do

you think I will ever get justice?”

At the end of the rally a minutes silence was observed while the names of some of those who had died at the hands of the police, written on posters, were held up by supporters and family members.

After the event, the WSWS spoke to Wesley, who is involved in the campaign and who is the cousin of Anthony Grainger. He said, “My family have been torn apart like you could not believe; no parents should have to bury their own children. Anthony has been killed under very suspicious circumstances.

“They, the police, released in the newspapers and on television that he was a well-known criminal/drug dealer. Firstly I would like to say that I have only recently found out that the police demonize the character who they have killed, which goes straight out into the press/media for all the public to see.

“It’s a tactical move on behalf of the Greater Manchester Police so that the public have no sympathy for the victim, in the case, our Anthony. So the general public will always think, ‘Oh well he must have deserved it’.

“Anthony’s criminal record was for only handling stolen vehicles and no insurance, which goes back 11 years ago. Anthony has never been involved with any sort of violent crimes or gun/weapon offences. My point is that if they, the police, knew there was no weapons in the car, why on earth did they kill him?

“We as a family want answers, we want the truth and most importantly we want Anthony’s name cleared. We seek justice and we will not stop until justice is done, the #justice4grainger campaign is growing from strength to strength but we need more support as we need to be heard.

Wesley said the campaign “would be showing a film called *INJUSTICE* which is about families who are going through the same pain as ours with 6,000 deaths in custody and not one conviction against the state. The film will be shown at Cross Street Chapel, Cross Street Manchester, M2 1NL at 3 p.m., Saturday, July 7, to raise awareness of what is going on in our not so ‘great’ Britain.

“We are also having another important meeting on Wednesday, June 27, at 7 p.m. at Friends Meeting

House in Manchester to discuss the next plan of action for our campaign, to which anybody is welcome.”

Thanking all those who supported the campaign and attended the protest, Wesley said, “We would also like to thank all the speakers, our Marina’s speech was very emotional, she was so very brave; Janet Alders speech was so very powerful and truthful; and all the other campaign speakers that got up and told us about their campaigns.

“We know this is not going to be an easy fight but we are prepared to take this all the way. We want justice for Anthony and the policemen and women prosecuted for their crimes, as you or I would be if we did this. We have united with many other campaigns, who are fighting the same cause and we stand as one, we fight as one and our voices will be heard. No justice, no peace! The police need to be made accountable for the actions.”

The family of Anthony Grainger have set up the Justice for Anthony Grainger campaign, which has over 6,000 members of the Facebook group “#justice4grainger ...R.I.P Anthony Grainger.”

The author also recommends:

UK: Partner of Anthony Grainger, shot by police, campaigns for truth about his killing
[20 April 2012]



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