

Thousands protest police murder of Liu Shaoyo in Paris

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4 April 2017

Around 8,000 people joined a protest held in Paris on Sunday by Asian organizations against the murder of Chinese immigrant Liu Shaoyo on March 26 by police. Protesters were also defying a reactionary media campaign, launched by French domestic intelligence services, insinuating that their opposition to the extrajudicial execution of the 56-year-old father of five children is simply a state operation launched by China.

A banner was stretched around the statue in the center of Republic Square, that read “Police killers, we want justice.” Protesters carried banners that read “Truth, justice, dignity” or “I love France.”

One youth, Chen Hui, told the press that he had come to the protest “so as not to be the next one to be killed by a policeman,” adding that he feared that the Asian community would now be a “target” of police violence.

Sacha Lin-Jung, one of the organizers of the protest who also leads the “Chinese Living in France” non-governmental organization (NGO), wrote on Twitter: “Police violence affects all French people. We are raising our voices today in order to fulfill our responsibilities.” He added that the goal of the demonstration was to “put pressure and support the family, to establish the truth and to struggle against police violence.”

The murder, coming only weeks after the police rape of Théo in the working class district of Aulnay-sous-Bois, points to the rapid rise of police brutality against people of all ethnic origins under France’s state of emergency.

According to Liu’s daughters, police battered down the door to their apartment in a popular neighborhood of Paris and, without warning, shot their father, who had scissors in his hands to cut up a fish he was cooking. They say Liu made no physical contact with police.

Police presented multiple versions of events, without ever explaining why they shot Liu. First, it claimed that he took his scissors and attacked one of the policemen, wounding him and forcing him to go to the hospital in a “relatively urgent state.” Then it declared that in fact, the policeman had not been wounded at all, and that his bullet-proof vest stopped Liu’s scissors. However, neither account explains why police would have had to shoot and kill Liu.

The incident compelled the Chinese government to publicly ask France to protect its citizens on French soil and to also “fully bring to light what happened in this matter.”

French domestic intelligence has reacted to the popular protests by launching a reactionary media campaign, seeking to discredit the Liu family’s supporters, and more broadly all the organizations in the Chinese community hostile to police violence—which it implies are agents either of Beijing or the Chinese mob.

On March 30, *Le Parisien* published an article summarizing a note of the General Directorate of Internal Security (DGSI). It reportedly alleges that the Chinese mob, including a “big fish” tied to prostitution and gambling, is trying to “infiltrate” the protests. It also claimed that “someone close to the Chinese Communist Party and a secret agent, both of whom have infiltrated the NGO movement in France,” were joining the protests because “Beijing is very nervous about the operations of mafia networks.”

At the same time, according to *Le Parisien*, the DGSI complained that protesters were rejecting all accusations that they were being manipulated by Beijing or the mob: “Indeed, the movement is gathering many young people, who are very militant, and who do not want to hear anything about Beijing’s influence or

mafia groups.”

The next day, FranceInfo published extracts from another DGSJ briefing which, this time, placed the blame squarely on “the Chinese authorities,” which it said are “actively implicated in leading the protests.” The passages cited from this note sought to whip up suspicion and hysteria against the protesters. It added that Chinese NGOs in France “are very directly manipulated by Chinese diplomatic and consular authorities” and “seem unusually mobilized.”

The Liu family’s lawyer, Calvin Job, rejected the intelligence services’ insinuations against the protesters, calling them “defamatory.”

“This is the response we see systematically whenever there is an issue of police violence,” Job noted. “Considering the recent cases, like that of Théo, when they began to really attract attention, then things came out about a supposed abusive use of public funds by the family of the young Théo. Today, they want to make us believe that, since the citizens of the Chinese community are not sufficiently mature to organize themselves and to protest the injustices they are suffering, they are necessarily being manipulated!”

These attempts to establish an amalgam between the Republic Square protest and the activities of spies and the mob is a sinister and absurd provocation, aiming essentially to de-legitimize and ultimately illegalize all opposition to police violence and the state of emergency in France.

An innocent man was murdered by police and people of all ethnic origins in cities and suburbs across France fear they could be next. By throwing accusations against one or another NGO, without presenting any proof but simply on the say-so of unidentified intelligence officials, the security forces are trying to discredit the legitimate anger of the thousands who have exercised their constitutionally-protected right to protest.

Class tensions are explosive in France and across Europe. Tens of millions of European workers are unemployed; the PS government is deeply unpopular after having crushed protests against its retrogressive labor law; and France has been under a semi-permanent state of emergency that has suspended basic democratic rights for a year and a half. However, according to France’s spies, social anger and opposition today are the fault of Chinese agents!

The security forces’ decision to present such arguments must be taken as a warning to working people. Aware of the social gulf separating the elite from the masses, they are preparing arguments that equate all protest with treason and would thus justify banning protests and any NGO or organization that they consider to be an obstacle. Ultimately it is a sign of the deep political crisis in France, and of the panic and isolation of the ruling class.



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