

*[The British State: Racist in the Line of Duty]*

Part 2

As far back as 1993, only one month after Stephen's murder, Nelson Mandela had been pictured with Doreen and Neville Lawrence in an alliance that saw common ground in the struggle against an ugly, racist mentality of the sort generally associated with fascism.

In the United Kingdom this is part of our own history, whether official or radical, at the receiving end. We don't call it fascism. We think of it as imperialism. We are still dealing with its effects. The Union of Parliaments occurred in 1707 but the power-base had been established by then, during the previous hundred years. From their earliest days in power (1603), the new British monarch and his ruling elite determined to establish control of the new United Kingdom; they would plunder what they could from whom they could.

An early strategy was the assimilation or removal of the Gáidhilg peoples of Ireland and Scotland: if extermination was necessary then so be it. A similar move occurred in north America, with the same plans for the locals; then on to wherever else was possible in Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, Africa, Australiasia. All were considered inferior forms of humankind. The powerful took what they could, fighting others of their kind for the spoils.

People lost everything. It was all taken. Wealth, property, identity, culture, life itself. Communities, cultures and peoples were exterminated. Men, women and children were killed as animals are killed. And the ruling elites and upper orders could go to their religious houses and give thanks to a god who bestowed upon them the privilege of belonging to the chosen ones. What luck to be part of it all! How providential it all was. They invented

polities, religions and philosophies grounded on their own rights and entitlement to power. They did not think of themselves in any sense hypocritical. It isn't as if they were raping, plundering and murdering other human beings. The ones they were raping, plundering and murdering were sub-human, perhaps even sub-species, not even human at all.

This is British State history. In South Africa a similar mentality remained rooted in its powerbase, an avowedly white racist, fascist regime. These people were still in power when Nelson Mandela met with Doreen and Neville Lawrence in London. What was it about the circumstances surrounding the murder of their son that had drawn his interest? What was it about seeing the three standing together that made such an impression, deepening a sense of shame about what was happening to the family of the dead youth. This, after all, was England! And here was a horrible reality, that *this was the reality*, this, this taking place right now, right under our nose. The nature of this and other killings, the vile acts of barbarism that were coming to light; the criminal negligence and inefficiency of the police; the idea of the "five white murderers" walking free - all of that: this was life, this was it, the reality of what it meant to be living in London, in England, in the United Kingdom.

And was it true the Lawrence family were having to cope with even more abuse, more hatred, because they had had the courage to take action? Here was an ordinary family who had been let down so utterly by the authorities. And what about the boy himself, was he not English? Okay he was black but was he born here? Where was he born? His parents were from Jamaica but what about Stephen himself? First generation English. Okay. What about that, did that mean English, or did it just mean - what? what did that mean? Was he English or was he - what was he? He was black but if he was born in London - what, what was he?

Dead. The boy was murdered. And humbug and hypocrisy were rampant. Here being exposed was a society founded on a psychology we have come to associate with fascism. Because it is easier to accept, because it keeps it at a distance. These fundamental aspects of fascism are also fundamental within imperialism. The basis is difference. Once people can be shown to be different then their rights are gone. They have none. And if violence and horrors are perpetrated upon them they have no right to expect protection under the law or that the criminal perpetrators will be brought to account for their actions. And if they want justice, why then, forget the legal system, go to Whitehall; the authorities will advise them to check it out with their political representatives.

Following the Crown Prosecution Service's dismissal of the case in July 1993 the Monitoring Group offered support to the Lawrence family. The hostility of the State authorities toward the family campaign *would have begun* from then, if not earlier. This serves to introduce a wider context which, at the time, went unnoticed, unremarked or concealed. This wider context remains marginalised to such an extent that "news" of it has yet to hit the mainstream media.

Years prior to the killing of Stephen Lawrence the State authorities had made public their opinion of the Monitoring Group. The hostility towards the group had been in place since the Metropolitan Police killed Blair Peach at the anti-racist day-of-protest in Southall. This town in Middlesex was to a significant extent a home and refuge for immigrants and asylum seekers. The community was its own protection. People could walk down the street with less fear of racial harassment than most anywhere else in the United Kingdom. There is a strength gained from that. This diversity within a community allows individuals to ask such awkward questions as, Why did

the police bludgeon to death the schoolteacher? without seeing a need to ask, Was he English, was he white, what was he?

He was dead. The Metropolitan Police described the Monitoring Group as a "pernicious organisation spewing out lies and propaganda in pursuance of their own ideological aims."<sup>1</sup> Yes, and if not for the work of their campaign for justice the Metropolitan Police authority's very own Special Patrol Group would have got away with murder altogether; unnoticed, unremarked; without being forced to account for their actions let alone brought to trial, let alone anyone being charged and imprisoned.

The British State kept the findings of the inquiry into the death of Blair Peach hidden from the public gaze for thirty years, helping conceal from the public the debased and cynical disregard for human life and the rights of natural justice by one of its major police authorities. I cannot recall any campaigning journalist, nor anyone else within the mainstream media ever pursuing the truth, of fighting to disclose relevant information to the public when it should have been disclosed to the public. This is not to say there was no news. Perhaps there was and it escaped me.

The State authorities operate as every section of the establishment operates. There is no need to discuss with each other the suppression or marginalization of suspect, negative or hostile news features. It operates in like manner to class interest. It begin from the same place, from the same perspective and renders consistent that parallel lines of action are derived. There is no conspiracy involved. Nothing too mysterious.

Campaigns for justice are all very well. The trouble is that they suggest there is a lack of justice in the first place. Why should the establishment seek

<sup>1</sup> See my essay Attack not Racist, say British State, refers to *Guardian*, 13 December 1989 and the case of 'Ramesh K.' and the abuse meted out to himself and his family..

to encourage such a thing? Essentially, any campaign for justice is a campaign against the interests of the British State.

People who seek justice are suspect. Anyone without a direct family link in campaigns for justice is under suspicion. Supporters of these campaigns are the enemy. Forget solidarity: friendship itself is suspect. State authorities confuse the concept with covering one another's back. They deny the possibility that someone may be motivated by the claim of natural right. Motivation, as far as the State is concerned, can only be ideologically grounded and this means left-wing.

The British State sees anti-racism as an ideology. The phrase "justice-seeker" is used sarcastically. The phrase "justice-terrorist" will have been coined and lies in waiting for the right time. Authorities cannot admit their humanity which is seen as a weakness. The instinctive drive of the survival of our species has been subsumed, not by any governing principle, by any theological, philosophical or even political position, the only drive is dual-purposed: the security and survival of the ruling elite.

Here were these Monitoring Group volunteer people "spewing out lies and propaganda in pursuance" of all these left-wing ideological claims of justice and the natural rights of all human beings not to be tortured, violated and treated as something less than human. And what about them anyway, so-called volunteers? Were they even English? First generation, second generation, third generation: what are we talking about here? What about their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents? What test cricket team did they support? Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, South Africa, Zimbabwe, the West Indies?

The one thing the Monitoring Group was used to doing was gathering evidence in racially motivated crime. The legal authorities had set the inquest on the death of Stephen Lawrence for the end of the year. Now enough fresh

evidence was procured by the family campaign to bring to the attention of the authorities. On the basis of the new evidence the family's legal team<sup>2</sup> asked that the inquest be postponed. This was allowed. The Crown Prosecution Service would consider the evidence and reach a verdict in April 1994.

This is what happened. But the CPS found the new evidence insufficient to proceed further. They had no alternative but to drop the case again.

Doreen and Neville Lawrence had major decisions to face. Eventually it came down to one: if the State authorities were unable to prosecute the guilty could the family campaign go it alone? Yes, with the help of their support group. They set out to do what the British State had failed to do: to commit to trial "the five white murderers" of their son. In September of 1994 they launched a private prosecution. They made their position clear. "Unlike the CPS . . . their legal team (would) mount an 'enlightened prosecution,' respecting the rules of evidence and the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty."<sup>3</sup>

Some condemned this private prosecution as an attack on British justice. It suggested that the forces of law and order were incompetent, or racist, or both. Criticism such as this implied that choices were available. What choice did the family have, apart from wait and see, and trust the police authority who in July 1993 told them that "the murder hunt will continue."<sup>4</sup>

People were wondering why the parents of the dead boy had had to bring a criminal prosecution forward by themselves when "everybody" knew the identity of the murderers. Did everybody include Her Majesty's Metropolitan Police authority and Crown Prosecution Service? If so how come it was left

<sup>2</sup> The family's legal team was led by Mike Mansfield QC, assisted by Imran Khan.

<sup>3</sup> From a campaign press release.

<sup>4</sup> See note 10

to the bereaved family to make the case? Other folk were wondering what on earth a private prosecution for murder actually meant?

Well, it meant what it said. The State authorities were unable to prosecute the "five white muderers", due to an "investigation . . . marred by a combination of professional incompetence, institutional racism and a failure of leadership by senior officers."<sup>5</sup> The family were going to do it themselves, helped by their friends and supporters. The campaign group may not have been versed in the role of prosecution but they were in dealing with the worst forms of racist crime. They would gather the evidence and present it to the legal authorities who would then examine it, and determine whether or not it was sufficient to commit the five to trial.

The work of the Monitoring Group in these areas could be construed as indicative of the failure of the British State forces of law and order. More than that, in racially motivated crime this failure was consistent, perhaps even the rule. If this was the case then there was more to it than inefficiency.

The next stage in the campaign was the Committal Proceedings, scheduled for the summer of 1995. Here the family's legal team would submit their evidence and hope the State authorities would judge it strong enough to bring the guilty to trial. In the event the campaign group could not procure enough evidence to bring the "five white murderers" to trial but they had enough to charge three of them. They presented this evidence in August 1995.

The fact that the Committal Proceedings were happening at all was seen as a positive step for the family. Surely private prosecutions of this nature were unprecedented? People had never heard of such a thing. The authorities deflected this side of it. Not unique, they said, not at all - it was the fourth time. It was, yes, the fourth in 130 years. Meanwhile rumours persisted that

<sup>5</sup> See the Report of the MacPherson Inquiry for this quotation, referenced to Parliament by Jack Straw, then Home Secretary.

the campaign was being undermined by the authorities. Was it true? Obviously. Why else make such petty points as the foregoing? The central feature of this case certainly did make it unique. The British State was being taken to task at its very core, its inherent and infrastructural racism.

Media interest also focused on the difficulties people have with the Crown Prosecution Service generally which suited the British State. If the murder of Stephen Lawrence could have been transformed into a matter of law and order then they would avoid having to deal with the failure of the police and legal authorities in dealing with targeted acts of criminal violence against black people.

More than two years after the murder of their boy Neville and Doreen Lawrence had had no respite. The day-to-day grind of a campaign such as this drained all energy, physical, intellectual and emotional. This further twist in a never-ending nightmare had the family were being forced to endure publicly a blow-by-blow account of the horror perpetrated on Stephen while given daily reminders of the indifference of the authorities, an indifference that to many seemed depraved. Each time his parents appeared in public, whether individually or as a couple, their honesty and integrity were obvious. What were "these people" after?

Justice.

The police and legal authorities had already determined that there was insufficient evidence to warrant criminal prosecution. Now here was this bunch in off the street trying to show that sufficient evidence might exist after all. Who were these people?

A family in search of justice. That was all. Nothing more and nothing less. It was always justice. It was inescapable. How long would it take the authorities to grasp the truth of it? The public knew long before the Report of the Macpherson Inquiry confirmed that

Stephen Lawrence's murder was simply and solely and unequivocally motivated by racism. It was the deepest tragedy for his family. It was an affront to society, and especially to the local black community in Greenwich (that) nobody has been convicted of this awful crime.<sup>6</sup>

During the period between the freeing of the "five white murderers" of Stephen Lawrence in the summer of 1993 and the Committal Proceedings of the summer of 1995 horrific cases were coming to light of barbaric behaviour by the authorities themselves. These were being forced into the public domain through the spread of information. The more news began to surface the more inept the State authorities had proven, and the more sickened people became. There was a kind of creeping inference, that such ineptitude was too gross to be believed. Perhaps some of what was happening, if not calculated, was more than unintentional inefficiency.

The Committal Proceedings took place at Belmarsh Prison, the top-level security prison in London where terrorist suspects of any and all descriptions are detained, some "held in conditions condemned as barbaric by the Home Office's own medical experts and described by lawyers who have visited them as 'concrete coffins.'"<sup>7</sup> A trial of "IRA terrorists" was then in progress. From the different courts housed inside the Belmarsh complex "high risk" prisoners can be escorted on foot from their cells to the dock.

The public gallery was a small room inside the Court, screened by a form of reinforced or armoured glass; set high above the Court itself. The view was restricted and because of the reinforced glass sound was distorted. The stenographer's clack-clacking only added to the difficulties. All that could be witnessed was the front third of the Court; the magistrate, the

<sup>6</sup> See para b1.11 of the MacPherson Report

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/jan/20/politics.september11>

stenographer and a number of clerks, and the top of a barrister's head. Numbers were controlled strictly. Security people and members of both the Lawrence family and the families of his suspected killers were confined together in that same small room, three or four at a time being allowed entry.

It rained heavily that day but people managed along to express solidarity. Campaigns for justice draw this form of support. There is little in it for anybody, other than that primary aim, which is justice. The authorities will attempt to undermine expressions of solidarity which for them can be nothing other than suspect. Their own position is in defence of injustice. They have neither moral nor ethical standing. There is no support through the search for justice, for truth. Any support they have is political, or worse, an expression of racial discrimination. "Why don't they go back to their country if they hate us so much" is one of the more printable. Their ways of gaining public sympathy are very restricted. About the only route they have is to undermine "the enemy", the bereaved family and their campaign for justice. One straightforward method is to question the motivation of its supporters: "far-left extremist infiltrators" "spewing their ideological poison" in favour of so-called justice, etc. leading the poor misguided family of ignorant dumbblucks by the nose, and so on and so forth.

The family support group had erected a marquee tent near the parking area where people could gather and talk. The prison security staff would not allow anybody from the family, friends and supporters to buy food and refreshments from the refectory although it was supposed to be open to the public. The security staff were asked why this was the case but offered no explanation.

Most of those who attended the Committal Proceedings in support of the family campaign would have had their identity recorded. The State takes these matters very seriously. They see who is involved and look for patterns

of behaviour consistent with forms of oppositional activity in general. This will allow them to identify "justice-terrorists" on future occasions. The authorities regard bereaved family members and their friends as potentially suspect. Instead of being "ordinary" these families are "political", they have been "poisoned". In other words people become politicized through direct, personal experience. They meet such opposition in their struggle for justice that they are forced to question the motivation of the police and legal authorities altogether.

Among those who attended Belmarsh Prison in solidarity were close relations and friends of Joy Gardner. Joy was the woman whose horrific death was not due to an act of barbarism on a London street, she was killed in the privacy of her own home in the presence of her 5 year old son, at the hands of five members of the Metropolitan Police authority:

at about 7 a.m. on July 28, 1993 (they) broke in to Joy's Topsfield Avenue home, and used force to restrain her . . . (And) 'while her five year old son Graeme looked on' she was restrained with handcuffs and leather straps and gagged with a 13-foot length of adhesive tape wrapped around her head. Unable to breathe, she collapsed and suffered brain-damage due to asphyxia. She was placed on life support but died following a cardiac arrest four days later.

The idea that such bestial treatment might be meted out to another human being by the "forces of law and order" is beyond anything most of us can grasp. Eventually "three of the police officers involved stood trial for Gardner's manslaughter, but were acquitted."<sup>8</sup> Those who knew of the case were revolted. This was barbaric. The killing of Joy Gardner highlights what "action in the line of duty" entails for two departments of State: one the

<sup>8</sup> Cited in Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death\\_of\\_Joy\\_Gardner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Joy_Gardner)

police and the other the Department of Immigration. Both departments committed, and continue to commit, acts of terror and torture in the name of Her Majesty's Westminster Government, acting on behalf of the British State.

Yet another unpalatable truth about life in the United Kingdom was becoming evident to a growing section of the public, that particular minorities were always guilty and seemed always to be guilty, each and every time they were charged, and they seemed to be getting charged every day of the week - at least some of them were. Usually the ones that made the news were young folk who were cheeky and insolent. They were always having to establish their innocence, on each and every occasion they were charged.

And it seemed to be happening all the time. Following the Report of the MacPherson Inquiry a change in the law occurred relating to the "double-jeopardy" ruling. For black people there was never any "double-jeopardy"<sup>9</sup> ruling in the first place. Every single time they stepped outside the security of their own home and immediate surroundings the burden of proof was on them to explain themselves, to demonstrate their innocence, to justify their presence. Over and over and over and over again, people were always being found to be black. What was the crime? That was the crime. They were "black". Their crime was racial difference. Keep the term "black" in quotation marks, as befits a physical evaluation that is so crassly superficial it is hard to take seriously, and never would if it had to do with painting the walls of our living room or how we describe a pair of shoes.

Joy Gardner "died as a result of the restraint methods employed by three officers from the Alien Deportation Group . . . The ADG was a secretive

<sup>9</sup> As a result of the MacPherson Inquiry the old "double-jeopardy" ruling was to be consigned to the dustbin.

police unit that specialised in forcible deportations. Its activities were controlled and authorised by the Home Office and the Home Secretary."<sup>10</sup>

It later emerged that letters warning Joy of her impending deportation were 'deliberately' delayed so that she had no warning of her removal. 'They say she was 'illegal', but she wasn't illegal. She came here legally, she paid her fare, but she overstayed her time . . .<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps a charge of murder would have been more appropriate than manslaughter. What evidence did the British State's Alien Deportation Group have to suggest that a woman in early middle-age whose medical condition was unknown to them might endure and survive such treatment? She was trussed like an animal within the "safety" of her own home in full awareness that her five year old son was watching and the inevitable consequences this would have on the boy for the rest of his life.

Joy Gardner endured the treatment but did not survive it. What was the likelihood that she might have done so? Had her killers been charged with murder perhaps they would have had less chance of escaping conviction. A charge of murder might have been brought against the five officers rather than three. By intention all five would have been guilty, those who committed the actions and those who "ommitted to act" to stop it from happening.

About the only policy adjustment to occur since the British State murdered Joy Gardner was one that increased the probability that such killings would occur more frequently, further deaths committed by British State employees going about their business, in defence of injustice, in the line of duty. An entire range of public-sector workers (health workers, school teachers,

<sup>10</sup> See [socialequality.org.uk](http://socialequality.org.uk) of the World Socialist web

<sup>11</sup> Joy Gardner's mother Myra is quoted here. See <https://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/joy-gardner-25-years-after-crouch-end-woman-died-in-police-custody-her-mother-still-wants-justice-1-5623789>

jobcentre clerks, ambulance drivers, etc.) were being "trained to identify illegal immigrants". And what was the primary identifying feature?

The British State employs hundreds of thousands of people whose work it is to deny justice. That is their actual job. Departments of State dealing with human rights, civil rights, citizens rights and claims in respect of social, medical and welfare benefits, rights and entitlements. All of these groups have in common that they learn and/or are trained to ignore empathy, that which should move their humanity. In the process they inflict pain and suffering, not by intention but because it is unavoidable. It is a direct effect of what is to be done in the line of duty, it is the nature of the job.

This most basic point was substantiated by one police officer providing testimony in the case of the unexplained death of Joseph Crentsil<sup>12</sup> during an encounter with the Department of Immigration. The man was not on any "wanted for questioning" list at all. The police and immigration officers had gone to a third storey flat to question somebody else. During these procedures this man, Joseph Crentsil, fell to his death from the balcony. He had nothing to do with anything.

This became known later, when the State authorities were having to account for the man's death. One particular police officer began his testimony by saying "that he saw 'a black male appear from the toilet' and asked him to wait until immigration officers had spoken to him."

It is easy to miss exactly what is happening here. For the British State it is very convenient that we miss what is happening.

Nothing else about this man returning from the toilet was required to signal a possible issue other than racial difference, in this instance skin-

<sup>12</sup> For a fuller account of this see <http://www.irr.org.uk/news/accidental-death-during-immigration-raid-says-inquest-jury/>

colouring. The police officer marks the difference by referring to it: I saw a black male. Difference is the sole factor. The police officer spots the difference and stops the individual. He will pass him over to the immigration authorities to prove that he is not guilty of the crime. What crime? Any crime. Of being illegally present in "our" country, whatever; what does he have in his pockets anyway, and what about these credit cards and driving licence and is this passport his anyway, the photograph could be anybody..

The burden of proof is on him, the person challenged by authority, the "suspect". The presumption of guilt applies. There is no presumption of innocence: "sus law" is "black law". Black people are guilty until proving otherwise. In Criminal Law a person is supposedly innocent till proven guilty. Not for black people and other minorities. The British State has managed to shift presumption to suit their own political agenda. A black person is always guilty until proving that, on this particular occasion, he or she is innocent. Next time they may not be.

Black people can be stopped every day of the week, not only when they step out of the house but when they are inside it, courtesy of the British State immigration authorities. Prove to me that you are not guilty of the charge.

What charge?

I haven't decided yet. Difference is the basis of quite a few. Let me see, are you legal? Turn out your pockets.

But you stopped me yesterday to search my person.

Yes and today too, and tomorrow if necessary. You were black yesterday, black today and black tomorrow. And if you continue to prove your innocence you will be okay and have nothing to worry about whatsoever.

But what about tomorrow?

You can prove it tomorrow.

Some of the grounds for this appalling and degrading treatment are laid down by the British State as follows:

Chapter 46 of the Immigration Services' Operation Enforcement Manual (which) allows officers to question people living in a communal residence other than a named offender to 'eliminate them from their enquiries'. . . This rule basically allows immigration officers to go on 'fishing raids' if they have what they consider to be 'reasonable grounds' – to suspect that a person is an immigration offender.

At the time of Joseph (Crentsil's) death, police officers attended all private-address immigration visits because immigration officers did not have powers of arrest. But they do now. Over 80 per cent of immigration officers in London are now arrest-trained.

Therefore any Immigration Officer is now at liberty to stop "a black male who appears from the toilet" and ask him to account for his presence in "our" country or to turn out his pockets, or provide ID, or hand over the phone, banker's cards, bla bla bla.

"Lawful residents in Britain will not be affected and have nothing to fear" said the British State. No, they will be able to prove their innocence. What hypocrisy. What humbug. What of the extreme fear that afflicted Kwanele Sziba to such an extent that she fell to her death while attempting to escape a "summons" intended for her brother-in-law?

According to the Home Office the dead woman had nothing to fear if she was lawfully resident. But she did fear. It cannot be doubted that this woman did fear. There is no other possible explanation for the fact that she made a dash to escape the situation. She expressed her fear by her dash to escape. It was the situation she was escaping.

This is basic psychology. If she did fear then there had to have been something that induced the fear. If she was scared she was scared of something. It doesn't matter one iota if that something did not merit fear in the eyes of everybody else in the world.

What on earth did this Home Secretary, a white member of the British ruling class have to fear from policy guide-lines in respect of the search for illegal aliens? He was party to their incorporation. Why was this most senior member of British State authority allowed to spout a piece of psychological nonsense and get away with it? This was Michael Howard, a Whitehall Parliamentarian for 30 or 40 years who "held Cabinet positions under the governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major" and is now Lord Howard, "appointed to the Order of Companion of Honour in 2011."<sup>13</sup>

Kwanele Sziba was black. Of racial difference she was always guilty, always to be humiliated, disrespected, dishonoured or violated, manhandled, trussed like an animal.

Was Ibrahima Sey "legal" when he was "unlawfully killed" at Ilford police? Evidence to the inquest established that while the man was

on his knees, with his hands cuffed behind his back, and surrounded by over a dozen police officers in the secure rear yard of the police station, he was sprayed by CS gas, and then, upon being taken into the police station, he was restrained face down on the floor for some 15 minutes or more until he had stopped breathing . . .

The inhumanity of this was illustrated clearly at the inquest when one of the police officers explained how he had swapped the handcuffs he placed on the man with those of a colleague because he did not want to do the

<sup>13</sup> ibid

overtime involved in accompanying the prisoner to hospital. It is reckoned that Ibrahima Sey would have been dead by that time anyway.<sup>14</sup>

This lack of humanity is breathtaking. It suggests psychosis but is utterly consistent with the attitude of the authorities. Those who commit, aid and abet these outrages are spurred by a form of reasoning that dehumanises the individual. If the victim can be transformed into something less than human then basic questions concerning ethics, morality and elemental human rights do not apply. Employees of the State need not consider such questions. They dispense with their humanity meantime, in work-hours anyway.

Not long before the horrific murder of Joy Gardner the “unlawful killing” of Shiji Lapite took place within Stoke Newington police station. Shiji Lapite had been strangled or asphyxiated following “his arrest by two plain-clothes policemen.” This London police station was notorious, with an appalling record of racist violation. The catalogue of shame went back more than thirty years at that time. The “long history of corruption, racism and brutality (had) seen officers jailed for involvement in drug dealing and even stealing property from corpses.”

A picket of the police station was organised by Shiji Lapite’s family and friends. It so happens that members of the Hackney Community Defence Campaign were going to attend the picket in solidarity with the bereaved family. Prior to this killing the people in Hackney had “carried out extensive investigations into corruption at Stoke Newington police station.” But now, the very night before the picket, their premises were broken into and “burgled . . . The Hackney Community Defence Campaign members suspect that the Special Branch (or MI5) was responsible”<sup>15</sup> If so they were carrying

<sup>14</sup> The incident took place in March 1996, see *Statewatch* 3, vol. 7, no. 6, November December 1997 for a report on the inquest.

<sup>15</sup> This information from my original Guardian article.

out actions in the line of duty, having sold their humanity, bought and paid by the British State.

One of the first people killed by one of the "new US-style long-handled batons"<sup>16</sup> was Brian Douglas, a young black man. Again it was the Metropolitan Police who gave him a horrible beating. They then left him in a cell "for fifteen hours [despite him vomiting and being visited by four doctors]. He was taken to hospital, slipped into a coma and died five days later."

It later emerged he had a fractured skull and damage to his brain stem. At the inquest PC Tuffy said his baton had accidentally slipped when he hit Douglas on the shoulder. Evidence at the inquest said the force of the blow was equivalent to being dropped from 11 times his own height onto his head.

A "police consultative meeting" was arranged in Brixton so that matters between the authorities and the dead man's family could be discussed. Immediately after this "consultative meeting" members of the Metropolitan Police were caught making "a clumsy attempt to covertly film" the family as they left the building. It is so utterly shameful, yet consistent. Later the British State authorities trotted out the same old excuses, "insufficient evidence to prosecute the officers involved (and) refused consent to disclosure of statements taken by the investigating officers."<sup>17</sup>

In December of the same year another young man died following an action by State employees in the line of duty. He was Wayne Douglas (no relation to Brian). Eyewitness reports indicate he was armed with a knife. He was surrounded by 15 policemen who were screaming at him to "put it down, put it down." Douglas threw the knife to the ground and was then allegedly

<sup>16</sup> See <https://4wardeveruk.org/cases/adult-cases-uk/police-restraint-2/brian-douglas/>

<sup>17</sup> See <https://4wardeveruk.org/cases/adult-cases-uk/police-restraint-2/brian-douglas/>

attacked by a number of officers. The police treatment of the man was described as “beyond belief” by one of several people who witnessed the incident. According to a PCA press release (5.12.95) “he was found not breathing” in his cell an hour later. "Although the post-mortem . . . revealed that he had died of heart failure, the inquest into his death showed that he had been held face-down with his hands cuffed behind his back on four different occasions.<sup>18</sup>

This case sparked off what became known as the Brixton Riots: "Violence was triggered by a standoff between the police and about 100 demonstrators. Witnesses have reported hearing groups of black youths shouting "Killers, killers" at the police."<sup>19</sup>

Most adults are aware that the British State commit acts of terrorism in the privacy of overseas countries. They may quibble on the terminology and definitions but not on the essentials. They will accept that it is very difficult to disassociate the history of the British Empire with the history of terrorism. Some cannot accept that the State also commits acts of terrorism at home upon sections of its own population; in general black people; people from the Indian-subContinent, immigrants and asylum-seekers. Yet there is nothing more clear when the evidence is examined. In the late 1980s Amnesty International published a report which includes their summation of what constitutes a political killing:

Political killings are carried out by order of the government or with its complicity in different parts of the world and in countries of widely differing ideologies . . . [We call] these unlawful and deliberate killings political because victims are selected by reason of their real or imputed beliefs or activities, [their] religion, colour,

<sup>18</sup> "New Wayne Douglas inquest ruled out". *BBC News*. 30 July 1998.

<sup>19</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1995\\_Brixton\\_riot#cite\\_note-4](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1995_Brixton_riot#cite_note-4) for further information.

sex, language or ethnic origin. [It] flouts the absolute principle that governments must protect their citizens against arbitrary deprivation of life, which cannot be abandoned under any circumstances, however grave. It is [their] duty not to commit or condone political killings, but to take all legislative, executive and judicial measures to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice. Governments are responsible for these crimes under national and international law.<sup>20</sup>

Not only are British State authorities not "taking measures to prevent further deaths," on the contrary, the measures they are taking continue to set the conditions that more people will die, that more "extrajudicial executions" will go unpunished, in the line of duty.

The denial of justice amounts to an attack on those who seek it. Attacks can be physical assaults, violent assaults, including killing people. Obvious examples of State employees paid to defend injustice in this extreme manner are the police and the military; security agencies and so-called "elite units" like the Territorial Support Group (TSG), which replaced the one that killed Blair Peach. A report from 2010 indicated that "TSG officers had been the subject of 5,000 complaint allegations – mostly for 'oppressive behaviour' – between 2005 and 2009. Only nine – less than 0.18% – were 'substantiated' after an investigation by the force's complaints department . . . "<sup>21</sup> The uniformed and civilian-clothed criminals who perform these acts of barbarism on behalf of the British authorities are using practices and procedures laid down by the British authorities themselves.

In the identification of illegal immigrants racial origin is the primary piece of circumstantial evidence. Tens of thousands of ordinary citizens are

<sup>20</sup> *Political Killings by Governments*, introduced by Theo C. van Bowen, former Director of the United Nations Division of Human Rights (Amnesty International, 1983).

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/aug/12/metropolitan-police-territorial-support-group>

conscripted into the British State security system as paid-informers. This is not a secret service activity. It is just a job. It is part of their job description that they are to be racists, 8 a.m. through 6 p.m. The British State pays them to be racist as others are paid to drive buses. Are those who are paid to be racist expected to stop being a racist at the end of the working day? Do they return to humanity on their way home from work?

Home Secretary Michael Howard should have been prosecuted on a charge of fomenting racist violation. Through the work of that particular piece of legislation hundreds of thousands of people walk in fear of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Difference is suspect. Anyone who is different is under suspicion. Anyone who looks like 'them' rather than 'us' is the primary target. This is what hundreds of thousands of people are paid to do. And if they don't like it they should look for another job, or get used to the split-personality syndrome.

Oddly enough, this is how society operates, and how it has been operating. This is seen in other forms of infrastructural prejudice, as for example in the struggle by victims of industrial disease, accident or injury to secure what society had advised them were their rights and entitlements. Once they enter a claim in this regard they learn a more harsh reality. What society supposes and the British State proposes are completely different. One offers hope, the other dashes it. The State does not deny that these rights and entitlements exist: they simply place the burden of proof on the citizen to prove that such a right or entitlement applies to their own particular claim. If their entitlement is found then they have nothing to fear.

The idea of the split- or dual- personality of State employees is what we take for granted. It is a cliché. Everyone is familiar with the good cop, bad cop routine. Each bends the rules; one to favour the individual being punished, the other to increase the torment.

The important factor introduced by this is the idea that discretion exists. Discretionary powers are fundamental to the continuation of tyrannies. The existence of such powers create the idea that things will improve if we play our cards right. We mollify the bully. Society is based on this. We don't rebel too strongly against authority otherwise they'll set the dog on us, the bad cop. Better we take the bone, touch the forelock, allow ourselves to be pacified; here's a sugar-coated lollipop, there's a good fellow, just clock in from 8 till 6, after that you can live your life.

Public debate on politically sensitive areas are forced on the authorities. The value of campaigning lies in the spread of knowledge and making information available. It is the campaign itself that makes the news. Not the tragedy. There are countless tragedies. The world is full of tragedy. Avoiding tragedy is a daily event for hundreds of thousands of people. Immigrants and asylum-seekers are killed on numerous occasions. This is why demonstrations, days-of-protest, benefit events and other shows of solidarity are so important. There is no other way. Don't appeal to the perpetrator. Make them stop. Nothing changes by its own accord. Media coverage of crimes of racial harassment are sporadic, provoking little discussion, no discourse, no attempt at analysis. Individual incidents of racist violation might be reported but so what if nothing occurs beyond that? The State default position is silence and the mainstream media, in general, colludes in this by what it omits to discuss.

The one fact clearly established by the existence of the Lawrence Family Campaign was its necessity. Without the campaign there was nothing. The guilty parties were free and the State forces of law and order had escaped censure yet again. The dire reality of what the family of Stephen Lawrence had to endure would have gone unremarked.

Campaigns function on the commitment of individual volunteers. The elemental work, energy and emotion is expended on a voluntary basis. People commit to justice and to those who seek it, and this is why they lend support. There is one basic and, for some, strangely surprising conclusion to be drawn, that campaigns organized by families, friends and support groups have only one aim which is justice, they seek justice.

The quest for justice lies at the root of every campaign. One side seeks justice. The other side seeks to deny justice; there is no act of mercy; no sympathy, no empathy; no humanitarian instinct. No one denies justice through any humanitarian motivation. The side who act in defence of injustice do so in the line of duty. They get paid for their efforts. If a Department of State is tyrannical then its employees perform as tyrants during working hours. If a government department or institution is racist its employees perform as racists. This is no theoretical exercise. Their job is to beat justice, in the line of duty. This will be systematic, enmeshed in working practices, laid out in policy and strategy documents; advanced clinically and cynically, in the line of duty. They are paid to sublimate and ignore their own humanity, in the line of duty. Their employers are the British State.

Family campaigns for justice are never about "law and order". What comes first is the tragedy, not the lesson to be learned. The Whitehall and United Kingdom Governments are very aware of this but seem unable to act on it. This was illustrated by the flawed terms of reference of the MacPherson Inquiry. But was it a flaw? For British State authority it was basic to exclude human beings from the argument. Exclusion is its root, the very foundation, the heart of the whole benighted process.

It takes a while to grasp what clarifies eventually as the obvious: in any struggle for justice the British State is always the opposition. Its authorities act in defence of injustice until there is nowhere else to hide. They do it in

the line of duty. There is no alternative. It is their job. Whether they can return to humanity outside working hours is a weird kind of question. I'm sure somebody will have a go at answering. The worst is what happens within.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> For further information on what occurred beyond the Committal Proceedings in 1995 please check out <https://www.stephenlawrence.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Stephen-Lawrence-Timeline.pdf>.