



Roger Sylvester Justice Campaign
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November 2003

Dear RSJC Friends & Supporters

Roger Sylvester Inquest Verdict

We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to you, the friends and supporters of RSJC. Next January will be 5years since Roger was so crudely snatched away and you have shared in our struggle since then.

You will know that it has been a long, stressful and tiresome time in which you have lended yourselves in so many different ways. Please share Roger's victory with us because we could not have reached this milestone without your emotional, physical, financial and spiritual support.

Well done RSJC Friends & Supporters - we salute you!!

Yours sincerely

R. Sylvester
S. Sylvester

Roger Sylvester Justice Campaign

'Against All Odds'

Truth But Still NO JUSTICE



'ROGER SYLVESTER was killed unlawfully'

It took 11 jurors, just 2 hours to pronounce their unanimous satisfaction, beyond reasonable doubt, that Roger's death amounted to an unlawful killing. They came to this decision on 3 October 2003 after hearing 4 weeks of evidence.

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restrained and the duration of his restraint was fatal.

- The fatal restraint amounted to the use of more force than was reasonably necessary on the part of the relevant police officers.

- The fatal restraint amounted to a breach of the duty of care which those officers owed to Roger.

- Also, the fatal restraint reflected a failure in the training and guidance given to those officers on the use of control and restraint techniques.

- The officers gave a false account of that restraint in their incident report books and in their evidence on oath at the inquest in an attempt to cover up the wrong that had been done.

The Jury Pronounced

'At about 22:25 on 11/01/99 in room 136 at St Anne's Hospital Tottenham. The deceased collapsed whilst awaiting medical assessment. The deceased was lawfully detained except as set out below when more force was applied than was reasonably necessary causing significant contribution to

the adverse consequences of restraint.

1. Held in restraint position too long
2. Lack of medical attention
3. No attempt was made to alter his position of restraint
Roger Sylvester was killed unlawfully'

What this Tells Us About the Criminal Justice System

Had this been at a criminal court, on the evidence heard by the jury and the directions they received from the Coroner, the officers would have been convicted of an 'Unlawful Act Manslaughter' resulting in a custodial sentence.

The Sylvester Family feels let down by the Criminal Justice System. Roger's case is a good example of how the Criminal Justice System allows the Crown Prosecution Service and the police operate to prevent police officers from being prosecuted. How could a process, in which the CPS and the police play instrumental roles, be used to prosecute rogue police officers? In Roger's case:

- Evidence went missing.

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- Disclosure was controlled by the Metropolitan Police Service, who were the police force under investigation.
- All roads led to an inquest; the evidence was aired in this safe arena where no one can be blamed for their actions.
- The evidence has been aired so the 8 Police Officers are now able to prepare themselves should the CPS allow the case to go to a trial. The CPS may say that this prevents a realistic prospect of a prosecution.
- The inquest took place 4 years and 7 months after Roger's death. This delay seemed deliberate as it undermined the evidence against the police. It also tells us the authorities are happy with this state of affairs, they are not serious about putting real sanctions in place when officers do wrong and are reluctant to make root and branch changes.

the incident a Federation rep was called and he was present while the 8 officers debriefed themselves and constructed their incident report books.

- The Family believes the Fed played a role in ensuring that the officers were not interviewed for several weeks after the incident.
- The Fed played a role in the officers giving 'no comment' when the interviews eventually took place.



Crown Prosecution Service

In November 2000 the CPS decided that on the balance of probabilities, Roger's death was due to restraint asphyxia. However they decided there was insufficient evidence for a realistic prospect for prosecution. Roger's Family believes the CPS simply did not want to prosecute the officers.

The Jury at the inquest found that there was sufficient evidence, beyond reasonable doubt, that Roger was killed unlawfully. The family now feels vindicated.

The CPS announced it would review the case.

A decision could be reached within months, however it is not uncommon for the CPS to take almost 2 years to reach a decision.

Comments made on the verdict

'We are naturally relieved by the outcome of our son's inquest,

however the verdict has come as a bittersweet victory for our family. We have always believed that there was wrong doing on the part of the eight officers involved in Roger's detention. It is a shame that we had to wait almost five years to reach this stage in the process' – Mr and Mrs Sylvester

'Throughout the inquest, Roger Sylvester's Family has had to endure a concerted attack upon his character on behalf of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner and the officers involved in the fatal restraint. The attack, conducted by repeated and persistent references to his supposed 'violence' and 'exceptional strength', is of course very familiar to INQUEST and other families who have lost loved ones under restraint in custody, with the object of shifting attention away from the contribution of restraint to the death.' – Deborah Coles, Co Director of INQUEST

'The verdict of unlawful killing vindicates the concerns expressed by the family over the years and the MPA would welcome further enquiries that may result from this verdict.' – Toby Harris, Chair of the MPA

"I offer my condolences to the Sylvester family after what must have been a very difficult time for them. Trust and confidence in our police service is vitally important to ensure effective partnerships in tackling crime.' – Ken Livingstone, Mayor Of London.

'Health warning! Police arrests may cause respiratory arrests, cardiac arrests and deaths.' – UFFC Supporter

Message to the Sergeant Anderson, PC Clohosy, PC Creevy, PC Kiernan, PC Matharu, Sergeant Newman, PC Smith and PC Steedman. "Go straight to jail, do not pass go, do not collect your pension." – From the RSJC.

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RSJC DIARY OF EVENTS 03

January

Demo outside Tottenham police station followed by the Screening of the INJUSTICE film organized with the Churches Commission for Racial Justice
Memorial service for Roger on the 4th anniversary of his death
Family meets with the coroner at St Pancras Coroners Court

February

Mrs Sylvester speaks at the NAAR Conference

March

Family attends pre-inquest hearing at St Pancras Coroners Court
RSJC attended UFFC organized IPCC meeting with IPCC Chair Nick Hardwick
Disciplinary hearing of the initial CIB investigators into Roger's death

April

Met inform family CIB officers found guilty of neglect of duty

May

Inquest venue changed from Hampstead to St Pancras Coroners Court

July

Mrs. Sylvester attends Black Londoners Forum QA session at City Hall
Family attends meeting at House of Commons, Chaired by David Lammy
Tracey Sylvester speaks at Respect festival

August

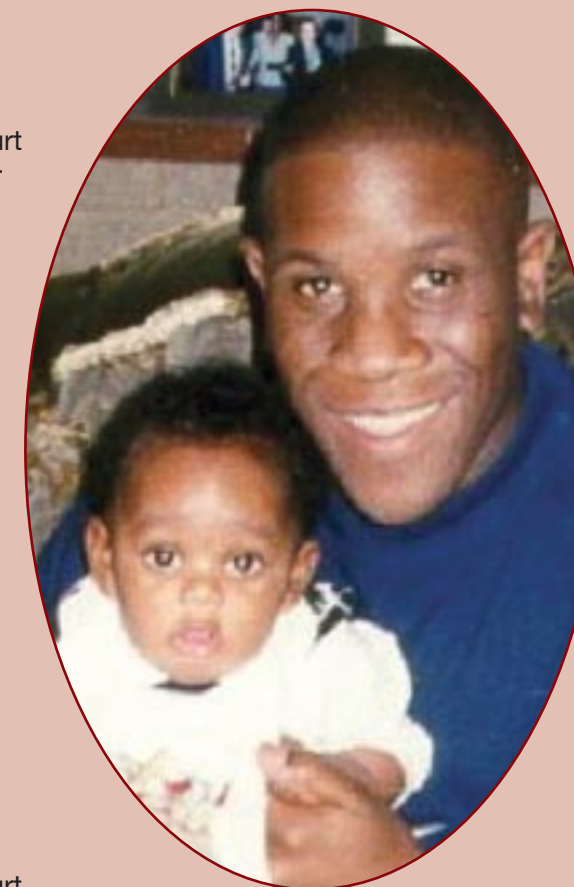
Family attends pre-inquest hearing at St Pancras Coroners Court

September

Inquest begins

October

Inquest ends with an unlawful killing verdict
Met suspends all 8 police officers
CPS decided to review the case
CPS requests a meeting with Roger's family



Roger's family do not qualify for legal aid. The RSJC will therefore have to continue to raise funds to meet all legal costs. All donations will therefore be gratefully received.

I would like further details about the Roger Sylvester Justice Campaign:

Name/Organisation _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

Email Address _____

I wish to donate £..... to the Roger Sylvester Justice Campaign
All cheques should be made payable to: **Roger Sylvester Justice Campaign.**

Account No: **31238892** Sort Code: **40 03 33** Bank Name: **HSBC**