

French police murder Chinese immigrant Liu Shaoyo in Paris

By Alex Lantier
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On Monday evening, French police murdered Liu Shaoyo, a 56-year-old father of five children, in front of his family in an apartment in a working class district of northeast Paris. According to Liu's family, police battered down the door of his apartment and immediately gunned him down in cold blood, before any physical contact between Liu and the police could occur.

"Around 8 p.m., my younger sister heard a knock at the door. She looked through the peep hole, and she saw two men and a woman with weapons," one of Liu Shaoyo's daughters stated at a press conference Monday night. "My father arrived at the door with the scissors he had to deal with a fish he was cooking. The knocks on the door got louder and louder. I shouted, 'Calm down, please make less noise,' but that had no effect at all. They rammed down the door, the shot rang out, and my father fell to the floor."

At 10 p.m., Liu's wife and children received the news that he had died at the hospital. "We will meet police tomorrow. But we will bring a lawsuit," Liu's daughter added.

Several hundred people protested in front of the police commissariat of the 19th district of Paris Monday night, placing candles on the ground in memory of the deceased. They then clashed with riot police units deployed around the commissariat building; one police car was destroyed when it caught fire, and several police were injured.

The Liu family's lawyer, Calvin Job, said: "Everything points to police brutality. Was the use of force proportional? They did not even issue a warning. It causes great concern."

The head of the Representative Council of Asian Associations of France, Jacques Sun, declared that he would join in as a plaintiff in the suit: "We would like

to understand what took place. This is a fragile family, the children are devastated. This is an immense shock."

The state presented multiple, self-contradictory versions of events to explain how police killed Liu. A team of three policemen was reportedly sent to their residence in the Villa Curial, either due to "domestic disturbance" or because police had been notified that an armed man was present in the area. "As soon as the door was opened," police claimed, a man rushed at one of the officers to attack them with a bladed weapon, forcing another to open fire.

According to the first version of events presented by the police, the wounded officer was then taken to a hospital "in a relative state of emergency." This triggered two investigations: one from the 2nd District of Judicial Police (DPJ) of a supposed attempted homicide directed against a police officer, and the second from the General Inspectorate of the National Police (IGPN), on the use of a firearm by a police officer.

Later accounts provided by public authorities confirmed, however, that Liu did not wound anyone during the confrontation. The policeman allegedly attacked by Liu found himself in a medical emergency that was not only "relative," but imaginary. Nonetheless, the state is cynically insisting that Liu's murder was an act of self-defense.

A judicial official aware of the IGPN and DPJ investigations told *Le Parisien*: "The first indications are that it was indeed a case of legitimate self-defense. The only reason that the policeman who was attacked was not wounded was because he was wearing a bullet-proof vest." This extraordinary comment suggests that police now consider it to be legitimate to kill anyone who confronts them, even if the person facing them does not pose any physical threat

whatsoever.

In a communiqué, Interior Minister Matthias Fekl denounced the violence at the Monday night protest in Liu Shaoyo's memory, gave his "full support" to the police, and demanded calm, "so that the ongoing judicial proceedings can take place in a serene climate."

This horrible murder, only a few weeks after the police rape of Theo in the working class suburb of Aulnay-sous-Bois, underscores the deep decay of democratic rights in France. President François Hollande already has launched "homicide operations" to extra-judicially murder French citizens abroad. Now, after a year and half of a state of emergency that indefinitely suspends fundamental democratic rights and hands vast, unchecked powers to the security forces, police feel free to act arbitrarily and with impunity against the population.

China felt obliged to demand that France guarantee "the security and the rights" of its citizens and to shine "a full light on this matter." Chinese authorities also met with the French consul general in Beijing to discuss Liu's killing.

French Foreign Ministry spokesman Romain Nadal said, "The security of all Chinese citizens in France is a priority of the French authorities. Reinforced measures have been introduced in recent months, and every disposition has been taken to create for them the best possible conditions of security and welcome."

It is not hard to predict that this statement—made above all to maintain the inflow of Chinese tourists to France, which sees in them a key source of revenue—will have no significant impact on official investigations of Liu's murder, which will aim to produce a cover-up.

The French presidential elections are taking place amid sullen and explosive social anger against the Socialist Party (PS) government. As in countries all across Europe, devastated by austerity and constantly monitored by a vast network of increasingly aggressive intelligence and police forces, France is on the verge of a social explosion.

The PS crushed protests against its socially regressive labor law last year and hopes to prevent the eruption of mass protests before the elections. The PS is relying on its allies, the trade unions and pseudo-left parties like the New Anti-capitalist Party, to suppress growing

anger among workers.

In 2005, the death in the Paris suburbs of two youth fleeing police, Ziad and Bouna, provoked riots in France's major cities that led to an all-out confrontation between youth in working class suburbs and the security forces. Since 2005, successive governments of all political stripes have tried to militarize the police, boost its staffing levels, and encourage far-right moods. The police force is now a center of support for neo-fascism, with half of police officers reportedly voting for the National Front.

The PS and the police will seek to whitewash Liu's murder in order to prevent a shift in public opinion that could provoke explosive protests across France.

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