



Merseyside Black Police Association

MEDIA STATEMENT

21st March 2009

Dismissal of PC Stephen Bettley

The aims and objectives of the British National Party are totally incompatible with the duties and values of the British police service. The BNP encourages discrimination towards some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Merseyside Black Police Association believes that where it can be proven and is satisfied that a Police Officer or Police Staff member is a member or supportive of the aims and objectives of the British National Party, they should be dismissed from service.

Merseyside Black Police Association is satisfied that PC Stephen Bettley was either a member or supportive of the aims and objectives of the BNP and therefore commend the inevitable decision made by Merseyside Police to dismiss him from service.

We are satisfied that due process has taken place in a way that was both fair to PC Bettley, but also reflected the seriousness of the allegation made against him.

Merseyside Black Police Association will not celebrate the dismissal of PC Bettley but nor do we weep. It concerns us that we had a colleague who supported an organisation that espouses such hateful and divisive views. This episode is clear and demonstrable evidence for the need of the supportive and challenging role of the Black Police Association, not least for as long as such people move amongst us.

Racism and inequality damages all of society and not just those who are directly on the receiving end of it. Merseyside Police has a statutory duty under The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote good relations between different racial groups. We believe that if we all honour this, the work environment will be such that those supportive of bigotry will be exposed and either leave or be dismissed. Our aspiration is to contribute towards creating an environment whereby such people will not seek employment within the police service at all.

Institutional racism has not been eradicated from UK Policing, despite some views expressed to the contrary, but the dismissal of PC Bettley represents a significant seminal moment in the history of Merseyside Police, that bodes well for the future.

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