

**COMMUNITY-POLICE
CONSULTATIVE GROUP
for LAMBETH**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

6 SEPTEMBER 2005

**ASSEMBLY HALL
LAMBETH TOWN HALL SW2**

PRESENT: GROUP OFFICERS Lee Jasper
Chairperson; Paul Andell, Wesley
Stephenson **Vice-Chairpersons;** Jim Toohill
Hon. Comptroller; Rev. Canon Ivelaw
Bowman **AFFILIATED MEMBERS** Nick
Abengowe **Herne Hill Forum;** Doye Akinlade
Brixton Society; Greta Brooks **Churches
Together in Brixton;** Wally Channon, Peggy
Tyler **Clapham Town N'hood Watch;** David
Corderoy **Lambeth Chamber of Commerce;**
Sheila Draper **St Matthew's TRA;** Marie
Hennelly, Irena Kowalewski **Lambeth
Leaseholders Council;** Ros Munday
Clapham Community Partnership; Paul
Reynolds **Herne Hill Society;** David
Tomlinson **Stockwell Park Residents
Assoc.;** Arulini Velmurugu **Lambeth Towers
and Lambeth Road T&R Assoc.;** Abdul
Sultan Virani **Lambeth Pensioners Forum**
Kathy White **Tulse Hill T&R Assoc.**
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS Lena James;
Richard Moore; Ann Savage; Fernando
Senior; Anna Tapsell; Jane Warwick
PERMANENT MEMBERS Neil Flanigan
Victim Support Lambeth; Lloyd Leon
Lambeth ICV; Sally Rance **London
Probation Service;** Marianna Tortell
Lambeth Crime Prevention Trust; John
Roberts, Hannah Sharp **MPA SECTOR
WORKING GROUPS** John Wainwright
Clapham CO-OPTED MEMBERS Peter
Clapton, Shane Collins **LAMBETH
COUNCIL** Cllr. Anthony Bottrall; Cllr. Robert
S. McConnell; Cllr. Peter O'Connell; Cllr.
Angie Meader; Cllr. Darren Sanders; Andy
Tarrant, Chris D'Souza, Katy Gibbons
(Community Safety Team);
METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE Ch.
Supt. Martin Bridger; Supt. Stewart Low
(Kennington), Supt. Rick Algar; Ch. Insp.
Suzanne Wallace (Community Safety); Det.
Insp. Dean Haydon; PC Jack Wilson; PC
Jason Hitchcock **BRITISH TRANSPORT
POLICE** Ch. Insp. Paul Wilson; Insp. Tim
Scott **SECRETARIAT** Ben McKendrick

Members of the Public who signed in: Hope
Barrett, Rod Brown, Kevin Cadogan, Michael
Freeberne, Rachel Heywood (BAF), Hazel
Watson, David Wilson-Carr

Apologies: Pauline Bower; Gary Dando;
Cllr. Bernard Gentry; Tessa Jowell MP;
Bushy Kelly; Gill Kenealy; Most Rev. Dr
Bancroft McCarthy; Rev. Rosemarie Mallett,
Dr Brian Mantell; Josephine Metcalfe;
Mehmuda Mian Pritchard (IPCC); Valerie
Shawcross, Michael Somers; George Tuson;
Supt. David Zinzan

Members of public/press were also present

Introduction

1. Lee Jasper welcomed Nick
Hardwick, Chair of Independent
Police Complaints Commission
(IPCC), Commander Bob

Broadhurst (MPS), Gloria
Gomez (Latin Front), Fazil
Kawani (Refugee Council),
Toaha Qureshi (Lambeth Muslim
Forum), Supt. Andy Ball and Ch.
Insp. Paul Wilson, British
Transport Police (BTP), Neil
Hunt and Digby Griffiths,
Immigration Service (IS)

2. Lee Jasper thanked Cllr.
Darren Sanders for his
assistance in acquiring the
Assembly Hall for the meeting.

3. The meeting agreed to allow
the meeting to be video-ed.

**Information from Group
Officers and Members**

4. Lee Jasper referred the
meeting to the Group's briefing
paper for September for
information from Group Officers.

Application to Affiliate

5. Group members approved the
application submitted by
Lambeth Leaseholders Council
to affiliate to the Group.

**Minutes of the Meeting 5 July
2005**

6. Minutes of the Meeting 7 July
were accepted with the following
amendments. Add Dr Brian
Mantell to those present

**Matters Arising from the
Minutes 7 July 2005**

7. *Matters arising for the
Meeting 7 July were carried
over to the next meeting.*

Lambeth Police Report

8. Borough Commander Martin
Bridger gave a PowerPoint
presentation on Lambeth police
performance, including crime
statistics from April 2004 up to
July 2005.

9. Mr Bridger reminded the
meeting that last month he had
told the Group of a significant
problem of street crime, which

this year had risen to
unacceptable levels. The police
had therefore instigated
Operation Maximus between 1
August and 4 September.
During this time there had been
266 street crimes compared to
369 during August 2004,
representing the largest
reduction in street crime in
Lambeth since 1998, and
making Lambeth the best
performing borough on street
crime in London during August.
**Mr Bridger agreed to provide
Lee Jasper with a copy of the
action plan for Operation
Maximus.**

10. Burglary during April to July
2005 was significantly down
compared to the same time last
year, which translated into 170
less victims. However, gun
crime, motor vehicle crime,
domestic violence offences, race
hate crime and overall Total
Notifiable Offences had risen.

11. In relation to motor vehicle
crime, Mr Bridger said reduction
was being sought through
partnership activity and that an
action plan was being put
together, which he hoped would
lead to him to reporting similar
reductions as with street crime.

13. Mr Bridger highlighted the
Summer Projects, run between 1
to 26 August, as a positive
enterprise during the summer for
650 children between 9 and 16
years. The projects had been
run by community volunteers
and the police. However,
despite their success, Mr Bridger
said that that the projects could
be even better developed in
order to provide greater
diversionary activities for the
youth of the community, the
investment in which would
benefit the community in the long
term.

14. In relation to gun crime, Mr
Bridger said he felt that the
community could do better as a
partnership, particularly in terms
of its investment in the borough's

youth via diversionary activity. Therefore, on 8 and 9 September, a group including representatives from the council, community and the police would be meeting to focus on the issues surrounding gun crime, e.g. enforcement, prevention and diversion, and to develop a long term sustainable strategy to reduce gun crime and gang culture in Lambeth. Mr Bridger added that it was important for the community to have ownership of the strategy rather than have one imposed upon it by the statutory agencies.

15. Mr Bridger reported a murder of a young male outside the Mass nightclub in Brixton on 1 August. CCTV footage of the incident had been available and one individual had since been arrested and charged.

16. Mr Bridger reported the opening of the community and police resource, 'The Beat', at 411 Coldharbour Lane on 1 August, which many at the meeting had attended.

17. ***In response to Arulini Velmurugu, Mr Bridger said that he would be able to collate statistic of crimes committed against disabled people.***

18. In answer to Ros Munday, Mr Bridger said that there was communication between neighbouring Operational Command Units and awareness of what each other was doing, although there was always room for improvement.

19. ***Mr Bridger told Anna Tapsell that he would be able to provide figures concerning the detection rate for domestic violence and their outcomes i.e. charges and convictions.***

20. In reply to John Wainwright, Mr Bridger said that there was a time during the summer when some Safer Neighbourhood (SN) officers were deployed outside

underground stations in the borough, but with a view to do so in their SN area. In terms of anti-Muslim activity, Mr Bridger said that there had been no significant increase, although he understood there may be more reported incidents from female Muslims.

21. In response to a member of the public, Mr Bridger said in relation to displacement of drug dealers in Coldharbour Lane and Brixton town centre more generally, police were well aware and an action plan had been devised to deal with it. Mr Bridger added that two months previously police had carried out a successful drugs operation against dealers in Coldharbour Lane.

22. ***In response to Wesley Stephenson, Mr Bridger said that in respect to offences of violence against the person and robbery and snatches he believed them not, in the main, to have been committed under the influence of alcohol. However, he added that if it was useful for the Group he could find out.***

23. In relation to guns and gang intervention, Mr Bridger told Fernando Senior that there was some money available and that after the meeting between police, Council and community representatives he hoped there would be more.

24. In respect of the drug rehabilitation centre planned for Brixton, Mr Bridger said to Lloyd Leon that there was some debate as to its location and the effect on the local community. Mr Bridger added that people needed treatment to get them off a cycle of drug abuse to stop them offending, and if the borough could contribute by providing such a facility it was a positive move.

Lee Jasper reinforced Mr Bridger's comments stating that

it was absolutely vital to have increasing numbers of rehabilitation and treatment centres to help reduce crime and fear of crime. He added that for every £1 spent on treatment saved £3 on enforcement.

25. In answer to Rev. Canon Ivelaw Bowman, Mr Bridger agreed that there were many more young people in the community than the 650 catered for. Nevertheless, the issue for him was not necessarily one of numbers but getting the right youngsters i.e. those on the cusp of criminality on the Summer Projects and providing for them. However, he said the police could improve in identifying the right people for the projects.

26. Paul Reynolds commented that it was not only the police who were involved in the Summer Projects and there were other bodies such as Lambeth Council Education Department that could be challenged with regard to the number of places made available to young people.

27. ***With regard to his gun report, Mr Bridger said he was willing to make a copy available to each member of the Group.*** In respect of the people who were going away on the gun crime meeting, Mr Bridger said that those people who had gone to Los Angeles to study gang intervention would not be attending.

28. In reply to Richard Moore, Mr Bridger said that as far as community engagement was concerned, much more was undertaken by those officers not in cars than those who were. Mr Bridger suggested that officers perhaps needed to get out of their cars more often.

Lambeth United

29. Lee Jasper said that the events of 7 July, and those subsequently, were meant to divide us and had affected

everyone without exception. However, he said he was proud that the community had remained united and that it would continue to do so.

30. Prior to discussion, Mr Jasper invited the meeting to join in an act of remembrance for those who had died as a result of bombings in London and for Jean Charles de Menezes Toaha Qureshi, Rev. Canon Ivelaw Bowman and Gloria Gomez gave readings, the text of which was tabled, accompanied by projected images of those who had been killed.

31. Mr Bridger offered his gratitude to the community for the support given to the police during a very difficult and unprecedented time over the summer as a result of terrorist activity in London. Mr Bridger also commended the community for staying together despite the difficult times and issues that arose.

32. Mr Bridger said that the local police response to 7/7 and beyond had been to enhance police visibility by deploying officers from non-essential tasks and recalling officers on leave to provide immediate reassurance across the borough. The police also established liaison with St Thomas' Hospital and, together with Lambeth Council, gave multi-faith and community briefings. Joint police and community statements were also issued and daily strategic meetings held. To further reassure the community, the police made visits and sent patrols to places of worship, particularly local mosques.

33. In response to an article published in the Evening Standard about Brixton Mosque, Mr Bridger said that a joint police and community statement was issued stating that police were working closely with the mosque and that there was no

intelligence relating any mosque in Lambeth to terrorist activity.

34. In relation to the sad events surrounding Jean Charles de Menezes, Mr Bridger said that something had clearly gone wrong for an innocent man to lose his life in such circumstances. In order to establish the facts and separate them from innuendo and rumour, Mr Bridger said that the IPCC had to be allowed to complete its report before any comment or judgement of the incident could be passed.

35. Speaking about the police firearms policy, 'Kratos', Commander Bob Broadhurst said that he could only refer to what was in the public domain. At the same time, while the IPCC was still investigating the tragic shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes on 22 July, he said the case was subject to *sub judice*.

36. Cmdr. Broadhurst explained Kratos was the operational name for a policy designed to deal with terrorist determined attacks. Kratos, he added, was not a new policy but one that had been developed as a national policy following the 9/11 attacks in New York. The policy was owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) Terrorist Committee with the MPS having made a large contribution.

37. Cmdr. Broadhurst said that he was one of a small number of senior officers who had received training over two years ago in how to deal with deadly terrorist attacks, particularly suicide attacks.

38. Cmdr. Broadhurst stated that, in essence, the Kratos policy differed little from police policy on the use of firearms. Furthermore, he said that it was the same highly trained police firearms officers who regularly attended firearms incidents that were called upon for Kratos. In relation to the police use of

firearms, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that all armed police officers had to comply with the current legislation and policy requirements, specifically human rights legislation, and their actions had to be proportionate, legal, accountable and necessary. In addition, officers had to comply with Section 3 of the Criminal Law Act.

39. Cmdr. Broadhurst said that where Kratos did differ from current police firearms policy was with the presence of a senior officer, such as himself, at the end of the decision making process. However, before reaching the stage of involving a senior officer, information would go through a filtering process and actioned in some way. In the immediate aftermath of 7/7, police had received over 100 calls for several day regarding potential suicide bombers. Most were dealt with locally, but seven had been referred to a senior officer.

40. Nick Hardwick, the IPCC Chairperson, stressed the independence of the IPCC from the police, politicians and other interest groups that had something to say about the Jean Charles de Menezes case. He also clarified the powers possessed by IPCC investigators which included access to premises, seizure of evidence and interview under caution.

41. Reiterating Cmdr. Broadhurst's comments, Mr Hardwick said that he could not give any detail of how the investigation was going. However, speaking of accounts in the media immediately after Mr de Menezes' death on 22 July, he said that many people jumped to conclusions, accepted some things as true and made judgements without the knowing the full facts. Now, there were different accounts in the media, but Mr Hardwick said it was still too early to early to make judgements and he would

not draw any conclusions until he was sure he had the full picture.

42. Mr Hardwick said that the IPCC were seeking answers to three main questions: What happened to Jean Charles on the way from his place of residence to Stockwell Tube Station where he was shot?; Why did people make the decisions they had?; What conclusions could be drawn about the policy under which people were operating?

43. Mr Hardwick stated that the IPCC had a good picture of what had happened but was trying to verify it from more than one source, e.g. witness accounts, police accounts, CCTV footage and forensic material, through cross checking one source of evidence against another. Furthermore, he said that he believed he was receiving the fullest cooperation from the police and other organisations involved, with nothing being held back, and that he wanted to be absolutely sure before a pronouncement was made.

44. Mr Hardwick said that the IPCC would probably make its conclusions by December 2005, after which it would enter a legal process that would certainly lead to an inquest. Therefore, there would be some pause between the completion of the IPCC investigation and matters entering the public domain.

45. Mr Hardwick said that the IPCC were due to meet with Mr de Menezes' family, having had good liaison with their lawyers up to the present. Also, he said that a community reference group had been established which was to meet immediately following the Group meeting.

46. In response to Paul Andell, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that it could be arranged for the Group to receive an account of the National Intelligence Model at a

future date. On the matter of intelligence he said that one of the main issues was the question of where community intelligence came from, and how, for example, Safer Neighbourhoods could play a part, which would be a test of trust and confidence in the police.

47. Cmdr. Broadhurst reiterated that Kratos policy was specific to particular times, and in order to protect the public the police needed some form of policy. Since events in July, however, he said the policy was being reviewed but remained as the sole policy in respect of dealing with individuals believed to want to kill or maim innocent people.

48. In response to Anna Tapsell, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that even if police had a database and visual identification of everybody at an address, people did not always stay at the same address. He added that the police did not have a foolproof way of saying that a person coming out of a house was a particular person, and it was similar to the identification problems police had with street robbery and burglary. However, in the case Mr de Menezes, he said that the tragedy was that someone innocent lost their life.

49. In response to a journalist from the Socialist Workers Party newspaper, Nick Hardwick said the IPCC did have concerns about how the Mr de Menezes case was referred to them, but that material would be disclosed in any subsequent proceedings. In respect of the IPCC's powers, Mr Hardwick said that these did not extend to influencing anti-terrorism policy. However, the IPCC could make recommendations arising out of its investigations, sometimes while the investigation was progressing.

50. In respect of people correcting statements and misunderstandings, Mr Harding said that he personally tried to discourage people from making public statements, whether it was correcting them or not, as it added to the confusion more than it clarified.

51. In response to Cllr. Angie Meader, Mr Hardwick said the IPCC had received a very good response to a witness appeal and were trying to identify who was where and did what at the time of Mr de Menezes death. He added that if anybody had information the IPCC would be grateful if they would contact them on the **Witness Appeal Line on 020 7166 3995 or at stockwell.incident@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk**.

52. In response to a member of the public, Cmdr. Broadhurst said he could accept the emotion and tension concerning the tragic shooting of Mr de Menezes, but millions of people had to continue going about their lives and moving around London. Police, he said, could not tell the public neither to behave in a certain way and they would not be shot, nor if they did behave in a certain manner they would. All the police's experience of the behaviour of suicide bombers was from other parts of the world, mainly Israel, which showed that suspected bombers exhibited activity born out of great stress, but which was only a small part of the intelligence picture.

53. Cmdr. Broadhurst said that since 7/7 fear had been raised in everybody's mind about when and where there may be another attack. Sadly, the only intelligence police had on who may be committing these attacks were the people who had committed or had attempted to commit the attacks. However, should there be further attacks the police could not say what the perpetrators' backgrounds would

be or if they use the same methods. He added that it would be naïve of the police to assume that those responsible for such acts would all be of Asian appearance and carrying backpacks.

54. In relation to Kratos, Cmdr. Broadhurst said the policy only kicked in under extreme circumstances, and the two or so weeks of July were a hitherto unknown experience. Therefore, all the decisions taken had to be put in the context of what had happened at that time i.e. 56 people killed in four bombings on 7/7, four further but failed attempts on 21/7, and the sad and tragic loss of an innocent person's life on 22 July.

55. Cmdr. Broadhurst said that he was not seeking to justify the actions of the police on 22 July but was trying to explain policies. However, he said he made no excuse for trying to point out some of the difficulties involved in responding to events.

56. In response to Jim Toohill, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that Lord Stevens had looked to other parts of the world to find out how they dealt with suicide bombings. However, he said he did not know how many innocent people had been killed in other countries (as compared to suicide bombers effectively stopped), as result of Kratos type policies, but if better ways of dealing with the situation were proposed the police look at them. At the moment he said that the Kratos policy was all they had but stressed that shooting anybody was always the last resort.

57. Cmdr. Broadhurst agreed with Mr Toohill that it clearly was not wise for unarmed officers to approach to stop and search persons suspected of carrying a bomb. He said that the main point of Stop and Search was to be disruptive. Police still needed to know how wide the bombers network was in terms of the

background of supporters, which may be across the spectrum, how they got their resources together, moved around and the places at which they stayed.

58. Peter Clapton said that at a previous meeting the Group had been told that SO19 firearms officers were not accountable to the local community. Cmdr. Broadhurst answered that SO19 officers were a resource for all Londoners and were accountable to the local communities, as with other MPS officers, through the Borough Commander, although he was not their commanding officer.

59. In response to Lloyd Leon, Cmdr. Broadhurst clarified that police had been following Kratos policy in relation to the shooting of Mr de Menezes and gave assurances that in following the policy there would not be another innocent person shot by police in Lambeth. With regard to Israeli style gunships being used in London, Cmdr. Broadhurst said he could not foresee that occurring.

60. In reply to Wesley Stephenson about Section 44, (the blanket authority to stop and search people under terrorism legislation), Cmdr. Broadhurst said that national and MPS statistics could be obtained. However, the MPS policy on Section 44 was owned by the Assistant Commissioner at the head of Specialist Operations who did not want to share the data on a borough by borough basis. ***Cmdr. Broadhurst said he would try to have some data available for the next meeting through Mr Bridger.***

61. In relation to ethnic profiling, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that the only ethnic information they had about suicide bombers was from the backgrounds of the 7/7 and 21/7 individuals, although he reiterated that it would be naïve for police to merely assume that any next wave of attacks would

be by people of similar backgrounds using the same technology.

62. In response to Arulini Velmurugu, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that the MPS was trying, and in many ways doing so, to work much more widely with disabled people on the wider issues that affect them.

63. In response to a member of the public, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that he did not know the extent of involvement of Lambeth people in the events of July but police could undertake to obtain those details.

64. Ch. Insp. Paul Wilson (BTP), who was responsible for Stockwell tube BTP station, said that the events throughout the summer presented a huge challenge to BTP, MPS and City of London Police. BTP, he said, had 2,500 officers policing the whole of British rail way system and the London underground.

65. Shane Collins said that there was a need to understand the roots of terrorism and the significance of deeply held convictions of injustice where, for example, peoples were subject to invasion or repression.

66. In response to Shane Collins, Cmdr. Broadhurst said that like everybody else he was shocked by the bombing and attempted bombings in July but not surprised. While he said it would be inappropriate for him to comment on the part played by the Iraq war on events, he made the point that those involved in the bombings appeared to be British citizens, which itself was very worrying. He said that the MPS had been working very closely with minority communities and particularly the Muslim community over several years around issues such as radicalisation. He added that the MPS's response to the terrorist issues may not have been the best but the police needed to

learn the lessons in order to improve their response and make London a safer place.

67. In response to a member of the public, Cmdr. Broadhurst said he did not believe that Kratos was contradictory to human rights policy, and whoever was involved in the killing of Mr de Menezes was still accountable to the law of the land, which meant accounting for human rights policy, criminal law and any other legislation.

68. Cmdr. Broadhurst said that asking police firearm officers to protect the public put officers in incredibly difficult positions that could lead to their suspension, lengthy investigations and court proceedings, which in terms of accountability was what society would want. However, in performing their duty on the public's behalf, firearms officer could feel as they have been "hung out to dry", which could put pressure both on individuals and the firearms unit.

69. For his part, Cmdr. Broadhurst said he thought firearms officers were highly trained, very brave individuals who put their lives at risk on behalf of the public. He added that the MPS would be seeking to increase the number of firearms officers from what was a relatively small number.

70. In response to a member of the public, Nick Hardwick said that whatever the position that people would like it to be, the individuals involved in the killing of Mr de Menezes would be subject to the laws as they were in force at the time of the incident. He added that police officers were accountable to the law in exactly the same way as everyone else, and if people were at fault it would be for a jury to decide that, which was the strength of the system.

71. In terms of how the IPCC approached its works in dealing

with a shooting, Mr Hardwick said that its start point position was not that of finding someone at fault but that of a need to know what exactly happened, with those involved needing to know they would be held accountable for what their actions. Furthermore, the IPCC would also address the lessons to be learned, the extent of any changes and how things could be improved for the future. With regard to local resolutions for firearms incidents being used, Mr Hardwick said that he was not aware of that having been the case in the past

72. Digby Griffiths of the Immigration Service (IS) said that the IS was very conscious of tensions over the past two months that did not exist before. In terms of immigration control, however, he said that it was not an issue of whether there should be control but how that control was exercised. The IS, he said, exercised control in a way which was effective and took into account humanity and community concerns. In relation to Mr de Menezes, he added that IPCC would likely comment on whether his nationality was of any significance to what occurred. Beyond that, the significance of the summer's event were quite limited in terms of the IS's operational basis.

73. Lee Jasper thanked everyone for their contribution to the discussion. In relation to the aftermath of the July attacks, Mr Jasper said that Borough Commander Bridger and his staff had played a critical and positive leadership role in maintaining community relations, and commended them for the excellent way they had responded to the issues, stresses and strains that were evident in the days following.

74. Mr Jasper said while everyone had a different opinion, with the capital having faced a substantive loss of life as a result

of the bombings, it took a brave individual to second guess what was in the best interest of safety of Londoners. The job that the community was asking police to do in protecting it from terrorist was an enormous and complicated task.

75. Mr Jasper stated that the killing of Jean Charles de Menezes was a tragedy and that Sir Ian Blair, MPS Commissioner, had apologised. However, he continued to say that there was great faith in the MPS, but human error was a characteristic of all organisations and it had played its role. Mr Jasper said that he looked forward to a strengthened policy.

76. The community, particularly in Lambeth, having campaigned many years for an independent police complaints authority, Mr Jasper said that the IPCC should be given the opportunity to do the job, which will be a unique challenge for them. Knowing individuals working for the IPCC, Mr Jasper said that he had every confidence of them proving that they were capable of getting to the truth of the matter.

77. However, Mr Jasper said that the community was deeply concerned about Kratos and its application, despite the explanation of it being a policy utilised in very particular circumstances. He added that police needed to reassure the Latin community who may feel like they were object of police investigation and instill confidence.

Any Other Business

There was no a.o.b.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.00 p.m. Tuesday

4 October 2005

Lambeth Accord

336 Brixton Road SW9

* Minutes shown in ***bold italic*** indicate action points

Remembrance

Oh Mankind!

O mankind! We have created from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you despise each other). Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).
(*Al-Quraan, part 26, chapter 49, verse 13*)

That if any one slew a person unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land It would be as if he slew the whole mankind.
And if anyone saved a life
It would be as he saved the life of whole mankind.
(*Al-Quraan, part 6, chapter 5, verse 32*)

Read by Toaha Qureshi, Chair Lambeth Muslim Forum

Someone

someone today is leaving home on business
saluting, terminally, the neighbours who will join in the cortege,
someone is paring his nails for the last time, a precious moment,
someone is putting out milkbottles for a day that will not come,
someone is writing a cheque that will be rejected as 'drawer deceased',
someone is making rash promises to friends,
someone's coffin is being sanded, laminated, shined
who feels this morning quite as well as ever
someone if asked would find nothing remarkable in today's date
perfume and goodbyes her final will and testament
someone today is seeing the world for the last time
as innocently as he had seen it first.

Taken from 'Someone', Dennis O'Driscoll

Read by Canon Ivelaw Bowman, CPCG

Un Mundo Desconocido

Nuestra misión como seres humanos es aceptar
Nuestra venida a un mundo desconocido
En nuestras manos un billete de ida y vuelta,
Sabemos a donde llegamos pero no sabemos a donde vamos
Nuestra llegada es llena de expectativas
Nuestra ida nos deja huellas de nostalgia y soledad.
Los que quedamos solo pensamos en el Ser que se aleja.
El que se aleja no avisa de su ausencia que deja.
Nuestro tiempo en el mundo es tan corto y misterioso,
No entendemos porque ni con quien competimos
El camino de hoy nos pone en prueba
En un saber convivir y en un poder compartir

Nuestra misión comienza al nacer y termina al volver

Un Mundo Desconocido, Gloria Gomez

Read by Gloria Gomez, Latin Front