

London 2005 Bombings: Debunking “7/7 Debunking”. The Conspiracy Roadtrip

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Global Research, July 07, 2015

investigatingtheterror.com 9 October 2012

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#),
[Terrorism](#)

In-depth Report: [London 7/7](#)

This article was originally published by investigatingtheterror.com on October 9, 2012 and by Global Research on October 17, 2012.

The BBC recently aired their latest attempt to debunk the scepticism, questions, suspicions and alternative theories about the 7/7 bombings in London in 2005. The show was the first in a three-part series titled Conspiracy Roadtrip, following on from last year's highly popular and widely criticised pilot episode about the 9/11 attacks. That pilot episode drew a record high audience for a show broadcast on BBC3, the entertainment channel of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Work on the show began in April, when invitations were sent out by Renegade Productions, looking for hip young conspiracy theorists who wanted to be on TV. I was invited on the show, as were members of the [July 7th Truth Campaign](#), along with Keelan Balderson of wideshut.co.uk. J7 refused to be involved with the show, echoing their [non-compliance](#) from a few years ago when the BBC made a Conspiracy Files episode on 7/7. Keelan Balderson quickly tired of the frequent emails pleading for him to make an appearance, and he rejected their advances.

I took a slightly different route, in that I tried to give these people an opportunity to do the right thing. The different members of the production crew went to great lengths to try to flatter me and persuade me to be involved, from saying that they were trying to get Tony Blair to meet with the show's participants, to suggesting I take on the role of an expert talking head. I told them that I wasn't interested in playing the expert, and that for me to participate in the show I had two conditions:

- 1)** That we would talk to people actually involved with the official 7/7 investigations, both the police who looked into the bombings as a criminal matter, and the Intelligence and Security Committee who looked at what MI5 knew and when. I provided a list of possible candidates, but not a single one was secured.
- 2)** That I could run my own camera – I am, after all, a filmmaker. Given the crude editing job done when producing the [9/11 episode](#) – which removed almost all the serious questions asked and the answers given by the 'experts' – I felt this was a necessary protection. I was never given a straight answer on whether me running my own camera would be acceptable.

I never explicitly refused to be involved in the programme but instead of acceding to these

quite reasonable conditions and obtaining the involvement of someone who has devoted years to the unofficial 7/7 investigation Renegade Productions took a different path. They opted for a different type of participant.

First up was Tony Topping, a man best known for his beliefs about UFOs and extraterrestrials. Mr Topping also appeared on a very similar programme made by Channel 4 back in 2007 called [Conspiracy: Who Really Runs the World?](#) Second was Davina, a young woman who had recently converted to Islam who didn't get much screentime and didn't appear to be particularly interested in 7/7. Third was Jon Scobie of WeAreChange Birmingham, who evidently tried to ask some important and informed questions but was largely shot down and left on the cutting room floor. Fourth was Layla, a young lady who is a part time witch and Tarot card reader, and also a nude model and low-budget film actress.



(Charlie Veitch never stood in front of a door this well)

The first 'conspiracy theory' that the Roadtrip tried to shoot down was that the four alleged bombers weren't the type of person who would carry out mass murder. While the show did not make this clear, none of them had any history of serious violence, none of them were known as being particularly religious, none of them were thought to be politically radical by the people who knew them. The first stop on the roadtrip met with 'Sacha', a previously unknown woman who lived in Beeston, Leeds and knew the three alleged bombers who were from that area. She explained that in her opinion they were ordinary men who couldn't have done it.

'Sacha' is not the only person to have expressed such views. Hasina Patel, the wife of Sidique Khan, said in her sole [public interview](#), 'How you can be so calculated and cold and not have any emotions, how can people do that? Block out their... I don't know, he must have been... I don't know, I can't believe how... I still can't match the two things together, I can't comprehend it, how he could do such a thing.' She went on to add, 'Everyone that he knew can say that he just seemed like a normal person, in fact.' A [colleague](#) from the school where Khan worked said, 'It's a huge moral paradox. The more you think about it, the whole thing is totally paradoxical.' Hasib Hussain's [father](#) does not believe his son, allegedly responsible for the bombing of the number 30 bus, actually did it.

Of course, the BBC did not mention any of this, they just presented this woman no one has heard of before and showed presenter Andrew Maxwell saying it wasn't really proof of anything. If it wasn't proof of anything then why did they include it in the show? The revelations of 'Sacha' were followed by the considered opinion of expert talking head number 1, Russell Razzaq, a psychologist who apparently specialises in terrorism. Razzaq was shown talking about the Hamara healthy living centre in Leeds where the alleged bombers were known to have spent time. Razzaq claimed that they would meet their together, often staying late into the night as they discussed their radical beliefs. What he doesn't make clear is how he knows this, given that he wasn't there at the time and all these men are now dead so he can't have spoken to them. Razzaq used these 'secret meetings' as evidence of the men's radicalism, without offering any explanation for how he even knew about meetings that were supposedly secret.

The next charade was to have the four participants each try to recreate the journey taken by the alleged bombers on the morning of 7/7. This is a total red herring, because it is possible to take the journey presented in the amended narrative (i.e. where the non-existent 7:40 train was replaced by the 7:25), the question is how they managed to initially place the four on a train that didn't actually exist. To try to get the answer to this question I filed FOIA requests asking for pre-publication drafts of the official narrative from the Home Office, and communications regarding that narrative between the Home Office and the Met Police. The Home Office refused my request, the Met Police are still delaying and even used the Olympics as an excuse. In the event, the participants on the show actually missed the train they were supposed to catch from Luton, proving that even with the improvements to the service made between 2005 and 2012, it is possible but not necessarily easy to recreate the journey of the alleged bombers.

The question of why so much CCTV, including any footage showing any of the alleged bombers within 20 minutes of their supposed targets, is missing was answered with a big fat 'don't know' by Brian Paddick (expert talking head number 2) one of the most senior officers involved in the 7/7 investigation. Paddick tried to make up for this by referring to the men's DNA being found at the scenes, but as per usual the details of how, when, where and in what state the alleged bombers remains were found is a mess of contradictions. This argument was made particularly well by Keelan Balderson in his video rebuke of the 7/7 Conspiracy Roadtrip:

The Roadtrip then went over some well trodden ground talking about the Peter Power training exercise and interviewing Dr Naseem of the Birmingham Central Mosque. This was all done to death years ago in the Conspiracy Files episode on 7/7 and only illustrates how little the show's participants had to add to the already existing discussion.

By this point in the show, Davina had largely been convinced of the wrongness of her scepticism about 7/7, as had Layla. The show then broached the same issue discussed in both of the previous 7/7 'conspiracy' shows, but one that maintains its force because there's an awful lot of evidence supporting it. The idea is that the bombs were not carried to the target vehicles in rucksacks, but instead were somehow built into or strapped onto the underside of the floors of the tube trains and the bus. The evidence for this - multiple holes in the floors of the bombed carriages, the preponderance of injuries being to the lower body and especially the lower legs and feet, reports of metal twisted upwards, tube trains hitting the tunnel ceilings and nearly derailing - is considerable.

The BBC dealt with all this by showing Layla misrepresenting this evidence - saying that those sitting down were more badly injured than those standing up - and then having a former intelligence officer and bomb expert dispelling this misrepresented argument. Chris Hunter, expert talking head number 3, explained that in his interpretation of a picture of the Aldgate bombing it showed most of the damage going down and up. Exactly how this refuted the notion of a bomb built into the floor of the carriage wasn't clear, but more fundamentally the picture Hunter referred to was not of the Aldgate bombing, but the Kings Cross/Russell Square bombing:



Whatever Chris Hunter's expertise, if he doesn't even know which train he's looking at then

that doesn't inspire confidence that he's actually looked into this before forming his assessment. Hunter even put his name to an old myth of 7/7 folklore - that the reason metal was twisted upwards into the carriages was because the explosive force rebounded off the floor of the tunnel beneath. A bizarre section of the episode, to be sure.

Nonetheless, this argument satisfied Layla resulting in her pronouncing the wonder of experts and the truth of the official story. Tony Topping proclaimed himself confused and on the fence, not at all sure of what he believed. This led to a very public falling out where Layla revealed to Tony Topping that she'd been making up nonsense theories in order to get him on camera saying they were astute analyses of the situation. It seemed very staged, but also set Tony on the way to renouncing his conspiracism. Precisely what Layla - the only participant to be given her own personal video highlight reel within the broadcast show - got out of this we can only guess.

The final theory the show sought to refute was that you can't blow up a bus using homemade explosives. The roadtrip paid a visit to an eccentric old explosives scientist, expert talking head number 4, who was quite amusing and - according to participant [Jon Scobie](#) - admitted to the possibility of, for example, 9/11 being carried out by the US government. He proceeded to put together a concentrated hydrogen peroxide and black pepper sludge, though the process by which he did this was not shown. We cannot, therefore, call this a 'homemade bomb' because it was, after all, put together by a man with several decades experience and we cannot confirm whether he did it in such a way that could be done in a small flat in Leeds. Naturally, the question of the lack of evidence showing that peroxide bombs were used, let alone that they were used by the four alleged bombers, was completely avoided. The makers of the show do know about this question, because I told them about it.

They successfully used this expert-made bomb to blow up a bus in a quarry, and though the resulting mess did look somewhat like the number 30 bus destroyed on 7/7 it bore greater resemblance to the 1996 Aldwych bus bombing. The most fundamental difference is that in the BBC's reconstruction the device was put on the floor (in the wrong place, at least according to official diagrams) where it created a large hole when it went off:



By contrast, on 7/7 the bus bomb did not blow a hole in the floor of the bus:



The 1996 bombing destroyed much of the bus including blasting holes in the floor/ceiling:



Video of the 1996 bombing aftermath is available [here](#) and [here](#) .

At the end of the show the four were shown in the middle of Westminster, the heart of the British government and the homeland of the authors of the official 7/7 story. Layla was shown first, doing a complete volte face from her starting position and saying, 'I don't think there's a conspiracy, I just don't.' Davina also said that she'd changed her mind and now believed that the four alleged bombers were truly responsible. Tony also expressed a major turnaround in his beliefs. Only Jon was resolute, refusing to accept that anything he had been shown was a reason to abandon his doubts and suspicions about the official story.

The BBC will no doubt see this show as a huge success, whereas in reality it was a tawdry exercise in dispelling nonsense that does nothing to quell the serious questions. The tactic of avoiding the real issues began very early on in the process, through the selection of participants not just in terms of hip young conspiracy theorists but also in terms of expert talking heads, neither of which really knew what they were talking about. It was an exercise in stupidity and futility and I for one am very glad I had nothing to do with it. For those who did, this is another example of why fame really isn't worth the price you have to pay.

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