

# THE TERRORISM FILES

**'Get someone to assassinate the prime minister, the new one, next year's one. Just been in office five days, bang . . . Yeah John Key . . . just drop a bomb.'**

Today *The Dominion Post* reveals the secret evidence police amassed while investigating suspected terrorism activity in New Zealand. Compiled from hundreds of hours of covert surveillance, this is the intelligence that led to armed police conducting their controversial raids. This is the public's first chance to fully assess the merits of the police investigation.

SECRET surveillance of Urewera bush camp trainees reveals discussions about killing people for practice, throwing Molotov cocktails into gas-filled buildings, blowing up power stations, television networks and the Waihopai spy base.

Electronic bugs also revealed United States President George W Bush as a possible target, and a discussion about assassinating National leader John Key.

Police say their bugs also picked up talk of copying IRA and Iraqi guerrilla tactics by using hit-and-run squads for bush and urban warfare.

*The Dominion Post* has obtained the 156-page affidavit presented by police to Manukau District Court. The information in it was used to obtain search warrants when police suspected terrorist plots were under



Phil Kitchin

## WE SAY

*The Dominion Post* has not taken lightly the decision to publish material from evidence gathered by the police in Operation Eight.

We believe we are acting within the law.

We also believe we are acting in the public interest. We know that publishing the material could have huge repercussions, and we considered the issues at stake carefully before deciding to go ahead.

**EDITORIAL B4**



### **RUATOKI October 15**

A police officer in riot gear mans a roadblock. Seventeen people were arrested in raids across the country.

way. It provides details from hundreds of bugged conversations and text messages, descriptions of police video footage — and the reasons why police believed people were training to be terrorists.

The affidavit was sworn on October 10 by a detective sergeant from special investigations, a unit that scrutinises radical groups and issues of national security. Five days later, armed police raided the suspects.

The affidavit says that, between November 2006 and September this year, six “quasi-military training camps” were held in the Ruatoki area. Police say the trainees planned to use small squads to commit terrorist acts.

Bugged conversations recorded talk of plans for urban and rural warfare, of killing police, removing Pakeha farmers, assassinating politicians and committing actions so brutal that the public would think al Qaeda was responsible.

On August 16 this year, police intercepted a conversation between two suspects in a car. They discussed Mr Bush and speculation that he could visit New Zealand — and talked of using a sniper’s rifle.

The police affidavit says: “I believe this relates to a hypothetical conversation about how they could kill the president of the United States of America, George Bush, and a conversation about the effectiveness of firearms.”

In another bugged conversation, in a car on August 17, a suspect talks of killing Mr Key after the next election: “Get someone to assassinate the prime minister, the new one, next year’s one. Just been in office five days, bang ...

Yeah, John Key ... just drop a bomb ... Just wait till he visits somewhere and just blow them ... They won’t even find you.”

In another bugged phone call, on July 21 this year, a suspect says Tuhoë would go to war for the Ureweras “so we, we gotta make a plan how we’re gonna block in the bloody place, shutting the whole place down”. According to the affidavit, another suspect responds, “That’s what I wanna hear,” and another says, “So I got a couple of years to have fun.”

One suspect talks of a strategic bombing campaign and using violence so extreme it would divide New Zealand. Another talks of doing what the IRA did in Britain: “It’s all about guerrilla, guerrilla war ... It’s about hiding and being able to fight another day.”

Another talks of training for two years, focusing only on going to war, and handpicking an IRA-type cell to kill and create chaos, the affidavit says.

In other bugged conversations, police say they heard talk of making nail bombs, targeting Parliament and screening recruits. Conversations refer to IRA and al Qaeda training manuals and police say one suspect said he would show another how to make napalm.

One suspect is said to have talked of making a sniper’s camouflage suit and obtaining a rifle capable of killing from 2500 metres. Police say one suspect said 100 people had been through the camps, but that 50 would be enough to start a war if they were well-trained.

The affidavit says surveillance of training camps shows:

- Vehicle ambushes and military-style drills with live rounds.
- “Terrifying” counter-interrogation training, including holding guns to participants’ backs and accusing one of being a police informant.
- How to throw Molotov cocktails.
- How to extract colleagues under rifle fire.

In the background to the affidavit, police say one trainee using the codename Bl@ckmask hacked into the National Party website in 2004.

The affidavit says police watched or recorded trainees leaving their homes around the country and heading toward Ruatoki, often picking up others en route. Police say they stopped following the suspects once they drove into Ruatoki, for fear of being discovered, but they installed video cameras on accessways and at campsites, and bugged a camp meal room and sleeping room.

At the last of the camps, police say surveillance picked up 18 people and 14 firearms.

# WHAT THE BUGS REVEALED

**Suspect tells another it would be good to kill Pakeha to get trainees used to killing. Also suggests making their own tracer ammunition and using tungsten projectiles to go through a "cop vest" and through "his f. . . . . mate".**

Bug in vehicle, recorded April 6, 2007.

**"Get someone to assassinate the prime minister, the new one, next year's one. Just been in office five days, bang . . . Yeah. John Key . . . just drop a bomb . . . Just wait till he visits somewhere and just blow them . . . They won't even find you."**

Two suspects in bugged vehicle, August 17, 2007.

**"They want to start blowing shit up. You know, they want to blow up power plants, gas plants, Telecom, petrol f. . . . . places and shit like that."**

Two suspects in bugged vehicle, June 23, 2007.

**"You know like the IRA in England . . . it's gonna happen here . . . I'm ready to die, mate. I'm gonna hurt this country, I've had a gutsful . . . I wanna leave this planet making sure that I've done a f. . . . . huge amount of harm to this country."**

Suspect recorded on bugged phone, May 26, 2006.

**"It'd have to be a, some sort of f. . . . ., sudden f. . . . ., because what it'll do, it'll come down on the thinking of the people, they'll think it's al Qaeda . . . It's gotta be sudden and it's gotta be brutal."**

**Other suspect says: "Don't piss around with cities or doing the bush thing . . . just go to Parliament."**

Two suspects in bugged vehicle, August 17, 2007.

**"I heard you talking about the napalm shit." Response from unknown man: "I'll make some and bring some next time round, show everyone how to make it."**

Conversation in bugged vehicle, September 16, 2007.

**"No, I'm teaming up with the Maoris, we have to . . . I'll come and see ya, I can't f. . . . . take the white man on without the c. . . . . I'm declaring war on this country."**

Bugged cellphone, May 22, 2007.

**"Tuhoe wouldn't have popular support for a bombing campaign in New Zealand."**

**Reply: "It would in Tuhoe though . . . What about if we did a bombing campaign that blew up Waihopai spy base, power dams, gas facilities, TV stations and radios . . . It's a strategy that's gonna be f. . . . . urban warfare. We are training in the wrong place."**

**First speaker: "What's going to be the strategy?"**

**Reply: "Strategy will divide, will divide Aotearoa . . . extreme violence and extreme f. . . . . actions too."**

Two suspects in bugged vehicle, June 23, 2007.

**"I cut down all of my work, right down. Ah, I'm only focusing to go to war."**

Bugged suspect, April 26, 2007.

**"There's nothing in this country can stop you once you got it, you can kill anybody you want. They'll never be able to find you."**

Suspect talking in bugged vehicle about asking for sniper's rifle, August 16, 2007.

**"Wait till bullets start going through people, that's f. . . . . horrible . . . Wait till your mate's head gets blown off because someone dobbed us in and we get f. . . . . shot at."**

Suspect in bugged sleeping room, June 23, 2007.

**"There's about 10 manuals . . . There's the al Qaeda manual and that's f. . . . . good. That's right up to date."**

**Later another suspect says: "That last exercise was a bit freaky for me, having a gun in my back."**

**Response: "High level of secrecy, we needed, you know, we need to test people."**

Bugged training camp room, June 23, 2007.

**Suspect X tells Suspect Y he is tired of playing games. Suspect Y says they need good planning so they don't die on the first day. Both worry about the enemy within their ranks and talk about needing 20 small squads, such as in Iraq, carrying out their own missions.**

Bugged vehicle, April 4, 2007.