

The Daily Dirge



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A New Holy War

June 24, 2007

Following the riots May 11, many followers of the street prophet Lucasta have turned to a new tactic to solve their doctrinal debates – the holy war.

Although citywide gang violence spiked earlier this year, culminating in what is popularly known as the Battle of Staten Island, it has quickly dropped off after that. This trend is reversing, however, as more and more would-be Lucasta worshippers turn to violence.

Particularly sensitive points of contention are whether or not Lucasta is still active, whether or not he was responsible for the elaborate drug-augmented light show put on over the Hudson May 11 and whether or not the world is currently experiencing its final days. While Lucasta followers who disagreed over these points previously settled their disagreements with words and remarkably persistent street preachers, Lucasta-inspired violence is on the rise.

“It is crazy how people who claim to follow a message of peace and brotherhood suddenly turn around and start shooting each other, but that’s what is happening” said police spokesman Gregory Masterson. “We’ve seen a huge

and quite frankly we expect it to keep going up as long as these wackos are making the rounds.”

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Neighborhood Watch Announced

July 2, 2007

NYPD Chief of Community Affairs Eric Kraus officially launched the New York Neighborhood Watch program last night at a moderately well-attended celebration held at the New York Hilton. At the event, dozens of the programs newly minted ‘Watch Leaders’ joined organizers from the NYPD, representatives from the Mayor’s office and New York City Chamber of Commerce Spokesman Harold Trotski on the stage.

“We could not allow the events of the past year to go unanswered,” remarked Ziegler. “This program puts needed resources in place to help those in New York’s most vulnerable neighborhoods. Thanks to our dedicated watch leaders, New Yorkers of all walks of life may rest easy knowing that in the event of any problem, New York’s finest will be there.”

Despite the optimistic outlook expressed by Kraus and other watch organizers, others doubt whether or not the new program will be effective. “These programs are notorious difficult to establish and maintain,” explained police reform activist Professor Mary Sue Yonkers. “New York is not the first and will not be the last to attempt to coerce citizens into doing their job for them. These programs, however, are notoriously difficult to maintain. Yes, they got it off the ground, but how long will it last?”

This is not the first time a program such as this has been attempted in New York. Faded and vandalized signs can still be found in parts of the city proclaiming that the streets are being watched by vigilant

residents. More often than not, however, previous programs of this type have faded away within a few months.

In addition to practical challenges, the program also faces legal difficulties. The ACLU has already attempted, unsuccessfully, to shut the program down as a gross constitutional violation.

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OP-ED: Who Watches the Watchers?

July 7, 2007

Last night’s banquet at the Hilton was quite an impressive spectacle. NYPD organizers met, many of New York’s best known socialites mixed with ‘Watch Leaders’ from all walks of life in toasting the new Neighborhood Watch program. This is not entirely surprising – the NYPD and city government have certainly done their best to encourage fear mongering following the events of the past year. However, the Neighborhood Watch program is not the answer.

In a time like this, the city needs to examine the underlying causes of its recent problems. Yes, there does appear to be an increase in violent crime and antisocial behavior. However, the answer to these trends is not to turn New York into a police state.

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OP-ED: It’s Time for a Change

July 20, 2007

The past few weeks have proven quite busy for members of the recently inaugurated Neighborhood Watch program. Although the program does have its flaws (which have been previously discussed in these pages), it is showing

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increase in assault cases in the past month,

promise. Already, neighborhoods enrolled in the program are experiencing a drop in reported crime and an increase in convictions for crimes that are reported. Further, in contradiction to our earlier predictions, the program is still gaining momentum rather than beginning to slowly fade away. Although it pains us to say it, it appears we may have been wrong about the program.

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Mutilated Bodies Found in Quarry!

September 4, 2007

Early this morning, detectives following leads generated through the Neighborhood Watch program, found the mutilated bodies of the Lunez family in a quarry outside the city.

The Lunez case, first reported missing over two months ago, is the first major cold case solved through tips developed by the Watch.

According to a detective familiar with the details of the case, the murders were particularly grisly, and a cult associated with the Lucasta movement may be responsible.

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Lunez Scandal Shakes NYPD

September 5, 2007

Following the discovery of the bodies of the Lunez family early yesterday morning, one question was on the minds of the former friends and neighbors of the tragically murdered family – ‘Why?’

According Watch Leader Marielle Downing, who is responsible for the apartment building where the Lunez family lived, the family was first reported missing in May. However, efforts by concerned friends and neighbors to get the police to investigate the disappearance were met first with first police indifference and then scorn. “Once the Watch started up, we naturally started passing word along,” said Downing, “we’ve been at it

for over a month now.”

Downing is not the only one asking questions. In a public appearance yesterday evening at a vigil for the Lunez family, Deputy Police Commissioner Luke Paulson expressed concern over the incident, and promised that the matter would be investigated. “Quite frankly, I’m appalled that this kind of thing could go unnoticed for so long. Fortunately, the Watch was set up. Murders like this are precisely the sort of thing that the Watch is set up to prevent, and are also the sort of thing it is very good at gathering information on. Needless to say, we will be looking into what steps are needed to prevent this sort of problem from occurring again.”

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Neighborhood Watch Grows

September 14, 2007

In the wake of the Lunez scandal, one thing is clear – the Neighborhood Watch has come into its own.

Previously, it was unclear just how long the Watch would last. Yes, it enjoyed the enthusiastic support of many stakeholders in New York, including the city government, this and other local papers, the NYPD and several federal agencies offering matching funds for the program. Despite all this official support, the success of the Watch has come from an entirely different source – that of everyday people willing to spend an hour or two of their time in order to help their community. They have different names, different faces and may not even be officially recognized Watch leaders. It is through their dedication, however, that the Lunez case was broken, and it will be through their efforts that the Watch’s future successes arise.

The political response to the Lunez case has been staggering and reflects a growing awareness in the city government of just how dedicated Watch members are. Whereas NYPD Commissioner Quentin previously was uninvolved with the Watch program, in the last few days he has spoken out strongly in support of the initiative and has been very visible at the

meetings being held to recruit new Watch Leaders. Likewise, the mayor’s office and the governor’s office have also expressed interest.

It is still not entirely clear what was done this time that previous efforts to establish a Watch failed to do. Perhaps it was the degree of organized support behind the effort. Perhaps it due to rising concerns over cult activities. Perhaps it was in response to the rash of violence against New York’s most vulnerable citizens. But forever reason, the people of New York decided that enough was enough, and the city will never be the same again.

Horoscopes

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Don't be too cocksure. You are about to be in serious need of a stiff drink.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) The future is a terrible thing, much like a storm is terrible. There remains a strange beauty to the whole process of destruction

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You're as strong as everyone thinks you are. Don't let the bastards get you down.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Even if you're not superstitious, avoid instances of the number 13 if possible.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You're about to lose if you keep this up. No hard feelings this time. I'm serious.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You're an obstinate person. Don't hesitate to take a break when somebody offers it to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) I wish you well.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Sometimes they all really are crazy.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) The world may seem wonderful. Treasure this moment while you have it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) If you're not careful you could get burned. Take that anyway you like.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) How the hell did you and/or your butler manage that one!? Christ.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) The words “tensile strength of twinkies” are going to be words you'll wish to avoid over the next week