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The Green Party
The Biscuit Factory
A Block (201)
100 Clements Road
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Dear Mr Bartley

RIGHT TO WORK UNDER THREAT IN LANCASHIRE

I write in response to an unsigned copy of a letter, printed on plain paper, hand delivered to my office in Lancashire yesterday by two people, one of whom I now understand to have been yourself and the other who appeared to be live streaming at the time.

Given the absence of official Green Party headed paper and signature and the unorthodox means of delivery I was initially unsure if your letter was genuine. I have now seen that the letter has been placed on the Green Party website with an accompanying media statement.

Your letter and its lack of awareness about the reality of much of the protest at our Preston New Road shale gas exploration site shows the same scant regard for the facts that has characterised the Green Party's approach to and policies on UK shale gas. If you cared to acquaint yourself with those facts you would be aware that much of the protest activity, carried out by a small hard-core of national activists, is very far from peaceful or in many cases lawful. Police Officers and Cuadrilla's employees and contractors at our site have been subject to daily abuse and intimidation. Local suppliers have been harassed at their workplace and abused online and the A583 Preston New Road has been frequently illegally blocked causing huge inconvenience to local road users.

The evidence that these protests are far from lawful or peaceful is freely available on the Fylde Police website where you can see that 169 protestors have been arrested and charged, including for serious crimes such as assault, carrying a knife and threatening Police Officers and our security guards. If you were aware of the facts you would also know that to date 23 protestors have been convicted with many more cases yet to be heard by the Court.

You ask if I am aware of two specific allegations.

The first relates to an incident on the morning of 4 July, where I am aware that there was an altercation between a protestor and a member of our security team. My understanding is that the protestor became aggressive, was appropriately restrained, and then handed over to Police, who were present throughout the brief incident. The matter is now in the hands of the Police and we will assist them in any investigation which follows.

You may not be aware that since the incident, the security member concerned and his family have been subjected to unacceptable harassment and intimidation, which is also under investigation by the Police. Cuadrilla does not tolerate any behaviour which puts our employees, our contractors or law abiding members of the public at risk. Our security team and the Police are trained in dealing with protestors and are committed to ensuring that situations such as this are dealt with in the correct way.

With regards to your second very serious allegation that a member of the Cuadrilla staff hit a protestor with a moving vehicle, you should again check your facts before writing, a recurring theme I'm afraid. No member of Cuadrilla staff was involved, the driver in question did not drive away from the scene and you, or anyone else, can read the Police account of the alleged incident on the Fylde Police Facebook page. The Police statement makes clear that the protestor concerned declined to speak to the Police and that the driver had taken evasive action to try and avoid the person who came into contact with the vehicle.

I hope that clears up the matters that you have raised and I would invite you to join with me in unreservedly condemning all unlawful and aggressive protest activity of the type we have sadly seen all too frequently outside the Preston New Road site. Protestors' democratic right to lawfully protest should not and does not over-ride workers and companies' right to lawfully go about their daily work free from abuse, intimidation and road blockages.

Yours sincerely



Francis Egan
CEO

