

Racial harassment, racial attacks and racial murders constitute the most fundamental threat to and denial of the human rights of black people in British society. The state has consistently demonstrated its failure to protect those rights. The work of Newham Monitoring Project and of communities in resistance to such attacks is critical if the well being and fundamental freedoms of black people are to be protected.

Gus John

Director of Education, London Borough of Hackney.

Member of the Macdonald Inquiry into racism in Manchester schools.

"Newham Monitoring Project has for a remarkable length of time sustained a record of commitment to principle, compassion, campaigning, and reform of injustices in our society where they are at their most extreme and where such work attracts few popular plaudits or appreciation. Its strength comes from its hard work, its intelligent caring workers, and its respect for the community in which it is based".

Gareth Pierce

Birnberg & Co.

Solicitor for members of the Guildford Four, Tottenham Three, and Birmingham Six.

"...Without NMP my case would never have been reopened and I would have stood no chance of justice".

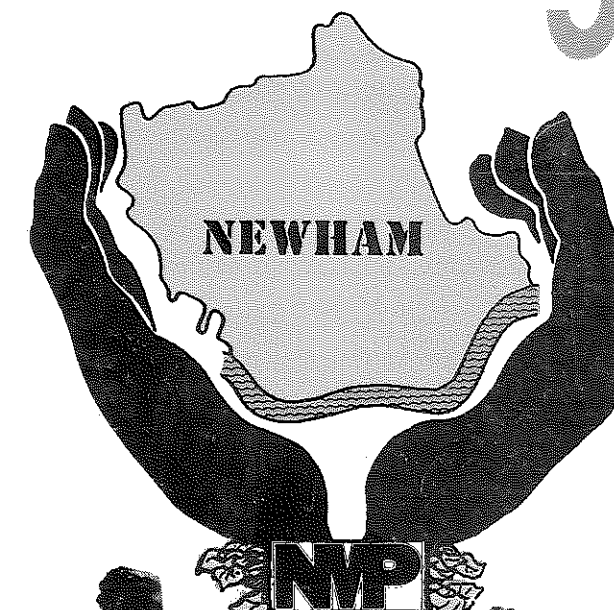
Victim of racial attack.

"When the police beat me up, nobody did f... all except NMP. They're on the side of the community and they supported me."

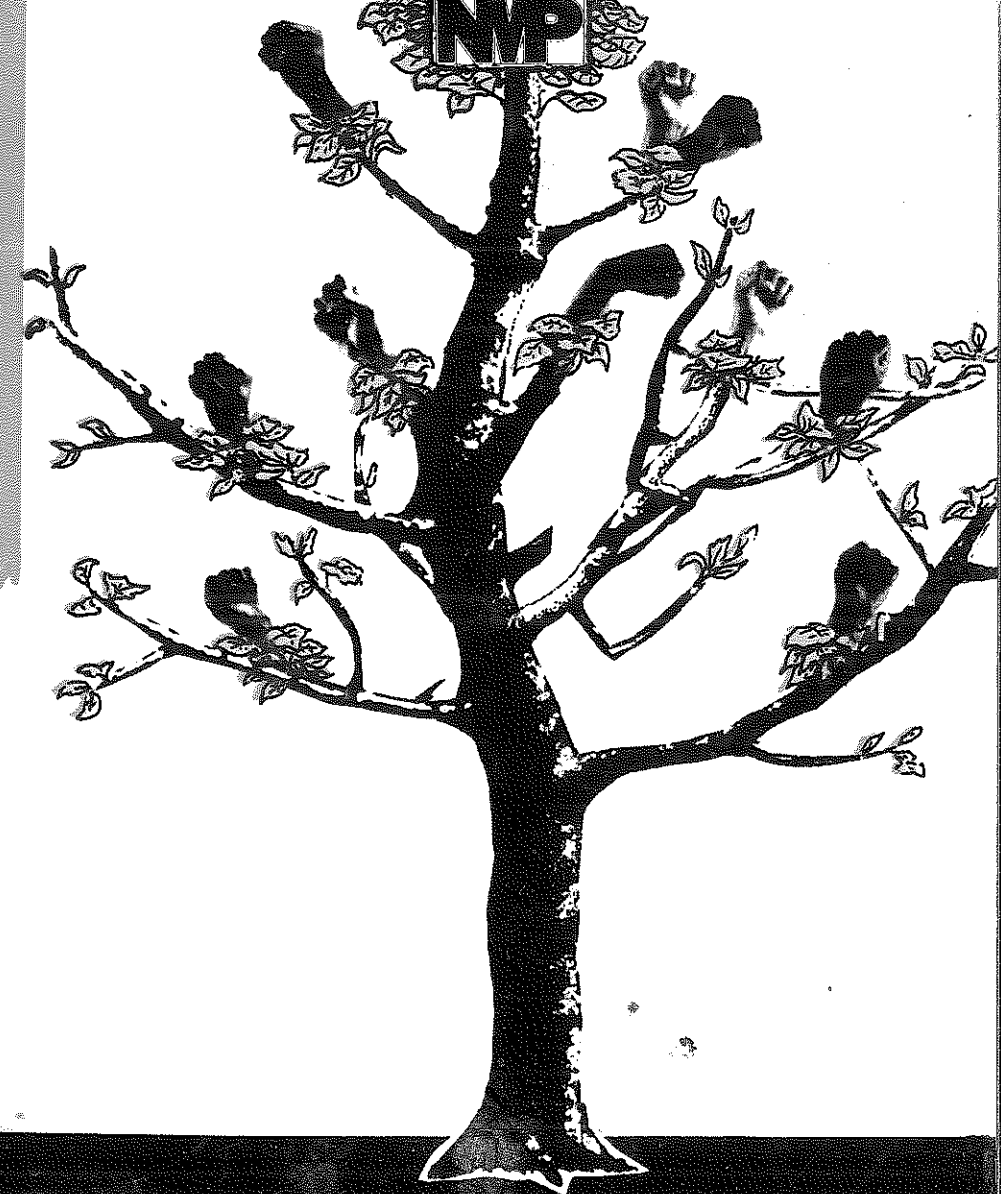
Victim of Police Assault.

Annual Report 1989

To Strength



into the 1990s
From
Strength



Ten Years of

NEWHAM MONITORING PROJECT

DEDICATION

We dedicate this report to Mr C Lathigra – a long-standing supporter and Management Committee member of Newham Monitoring Project and General-Secretary of Gujarat Welfare Association – who tragically passed away on 22 April 1989. His contribution to the struggles of the local black community will be dearly missed.

NEWHAM MONITORING PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 1989

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1 INTRODUCTION

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF NEWHAM MONITORING PROJECT

Ten years have passed since the formation of Newham Monitoring Project (NMP). Ten hectic years, full of incident. Campaigns have come and gone, in some cases having a profound and deep effect on local politics, but through it all NMP has remained solid and dependable in times of adversity.

Few, perhaps, outside Newham's black community can instinctively comprehend the real importance and significance of an independent anti-racist organisation like Newham Monitoring Project. For the family and friends of Akhtar Ali Baig, murdered in a racist attack in East Ham on 17 July 1980, there was no such organisation to turn to. Horror and outrage – and above all the feeling that no such murder should ever again be tolerated on the streets of Newham – led to a spontaneous eruption of anger, particularly among young Asians who formed the Newham Youth Movement. Local people marched in their thousands down Green Street in a demonstration that took them to Forest Gate Police Station. The police's initial response to this tragic murder had been to deny its racist motive and dismiss it as an ordinary mugging that went wrong.

From out of the Akhtar Ali Baig Committee and the Newham Youth Movement came the Newham Monitoring Project – a concrete and durable expression of black self-organisation. The initial aim of NMP was to monitor racist attacks, but it was not long before the issue of police racism and the criminalisation of the black community became central to our agenda. Since 1983 we have provided a 24-hour Emergency Service for victims of both racist violence and police harassment.

The two areas of our work are inseparable. Families who live in fear of petrol being poured through their letterbox, of allowing their children to walk the streets, and who are forced to adapt to a barrage of racist abuse and harassment, should, in a democratic

society, be able to turn to the police for protection. In Newham, as in most poor black areas of Britain, this is not the case. In Newham, the police are one of our main persecutors – their record of arresting the victims of racist attack, interrogating them as to their immigration status, even attacking and brutalising them is well-documented in this year's Annual Report, as it has been in each of our yearly documents since we started reporting in 1982.

For the Newham 8, police indifference to racism was a fact of life that led them to act for themselves, instigate regular patrols, escorting younger children to and from schools to avoid racist attacks. The Newham 7 knew too that, after an orgy of violence on the streets of Newham in 1984, which included a partially disabled boy being assaulted with a hammer, the police would take no action. So they protected the community themselves – only to be arrested, as had the Newham 8 before them in 1982.

The family and friends of Eustace Pryce, tragically murdered after he defended a friend from a racist attack in Plaistow, were also well aware that no measure of justice could be gained from the police. Eustace's brother, Gerald, had been arrested. He had not killed anybody but he was treated more severely than the white killer of Eustace. From all these struggles, and many more, NMP learnt important lessons both in terms of community action and effecting institutional change.

The experiences of the Newham 8, Newham 7 and Justice for the Pryce Family Campaigns shaped the attitudes of a whole generation of young people in Newham both to the police and to the education authorities – and NMP was there to support them, helping them find a campaigning, organisational edge to their anger. One of the things that the youth put on the agenda was the blind eye that schools were turning to racism. On 17 November 1983, 500

local school pupils staged a strike in support of the Newham 8 – the first ever strike of its kind in this country. Six years later, and schoolchildren in Newham, this time at Stratford School, were protesting again over racism. From out of the Stratford School students' protest, NMP initiated its own investigation into just what was going wrong with Newham's anti-racist/multicultural initiatives. The result of that investigation, *Racism and Racist Violence in Schools: Towards Establishing Effective Anti-Racist Policies and Practice in Newham*, has just been published as part of our 10th anniversary programme.

If there was cynicism towards the police at the time of the Newham 7 and Justice for the Pryce Family Campaigns, that cynicism soon turned to burning anger when the police behaved like a colonial army of occupation in containing the demonstrations that followed. Newham was one of the first testing grounds for the Metropolitan Police's District Support Units who attacked a peaceful demonstration outside Forest Gate Police Station, leaving many injured. Following this, in order to assert the right to march at all, NMP helped organise a second demonstration only to find the Metropolitan Police's paramilitary squads chasing us across Plashet Park on a sunny afternoon.

Since 1984, and these campaigns, police methods have risen to an even higher and more militaristic pitch. The tendency of the police to act like a colonial occupying force affects black people everywhere: in their homes, where raids like that which led to the Defend the Plaistow 4 Campaign are becoming more commonplace; on the streets; and at the workplace, where police 'fishing raids' such as the one that led to the arrest and threatened deportation of Dora Oppong – another issue taken up by NMP – are becoming more commonplace.

NMP's analysis, over the last ten years, of policing means that organisations and journalists from all over the country look to us for an independent perspective on institutionalised police racism. So cutting, and to

the point, have NMP's criticisms of the police been that the police are now forced to make attempts to still our voice – by pressuring our funders and by threatening black people who report attacks to us – and even to marginalise and criminalise us. In November 1987, the then Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Wyn Jones, referred to NMP as 'the most sinister, damaging and divisive group operating in the borough today.'

But whatever the police might say or do, they cannot silence us: our roots in the black community are too much for them to do so. Nor can sections of Newham Council, who, as we go to press, are rumoured to be attempting to cut our funding, dampen our resolve to fight racism. Over the years, NMP has done a lot to bring about institutional change – through endless phone calls, letters, campaigning and organising, we may have helped shake up local bureaucracy, making it more responsive. Through our advocacy of a proactive Racial Harassment Policy in housing, for example, NMP has helped make life a little bit more endurable for those under attack.

But far too much remains to be done – and there is always the danger that without constant criticism from NMP, past gains will be rescinded. More middle-class black people are working at an institutional level, but racism disproportionately affects the poor, jobless and working class black communities. Racism is still in Newham today and it is this that black people and their white colleagues working in local authorities need to address. There are still too many areas where working class black people cannot set foot. Pubs and clubs, although they may be more subtle about it, still operate colour bars. Fascism still thrives on the crude racism that exists in areas like Canning Town. Racist attacks and police harassment happen every day in Newham. Newham Monitoring Project has been there, fighting against it, for ten years and no matter what the attitude within the police or various bureaucracies is towards us, we will not be deterred. Come what may, NMP is 'Here to Stay'.

2 CASEWORK

Over the last ten years, the practical support and advice that NMP has provided to people suffering from both racial and police harassment has remained central to our existence – with casework providing the starting point from which our campaigning and educational work is determined. Our approach to this casework is not based on what could be described as the traditional patron-client approach of most social advice agencies but is more fundamentally community-based, reflecting the experiences of the black community, and in turn strengthening the Project.

The approach we take to each individual case is determined by the 'needs' and 'wishes' of the individuals and families themselves. We seek to provide a structure whereby continuous dialogue and feedback between the victim and the various agencies and individuals involved can allow the people at the centre of the case to have real control over their lives and the direction of their struggles. NMP has consistently maintained that the fight against racial and police harassment has to be based on a strategy that builds on our casework to facilitate community self-organisation and action. The ever-increasing number of cases reported in Newham demonstrates the failure of the institutional approach that attempts merely to 'contain the problem' without strengthening the community. The struggle must be taken out of the town halls and back on to the streets and into the community.

period, on average, of six months, and the original incident reported is usually one in a series of repeated harassment. Therefore, in essence, each case may represent in itself five or six separate cases.

FRAMEWORK OF CASES

NMP, in completing its first decade of service to the black community, is continually reappraising its work and the ways that we can improve it. The basic framework remains as follows:

In all **racial harassment** cases our role has been to:

1. Adequately support and advise the victim.
2. Bring as much pressure to bear on the police to try and ensure that they take action, arrest the perpetrator(s) and bring the correct charges.
3. Pressurise the local authority and other relevant agencies to meet their responsibilities to local black people, whether they are council tenants or not.
4. Get councillors and MPs to intervene and ensure that cases are handled satisfactorily by the police and local authority.

*While these cases do not fit neatly into either racial or police harassment, they are related to more general problems which disproportionately affect the black community of Newham, on both a race and class basis. The type of cases we have dealt with highlight the widespread institutionalised racism that the black community is facing in relation to issues ranging from poor housing to bad education.

In all **police harassment** cases our role is to:

1. Try and secure the release of a detained person as soon as possible or, if this is not possible, to make

BREAKDOWN OF CASES

Cases reported to the Project

Racial Harassment	138	(47%)
Police Harassment	109	(37%)
Other*	47	(16%)
Total	294	(100%)

If figures for the last ten years are taken as a whole, then NMP has literally dealt with a new case every day. Each case in itself usually lasts for a



- sure they are legally represented.
2. Make sure that those involved receive proper legal advice from a sympathetic solicitor.
 3. Ensure that people who sustain injuries during police detention receive immediate medical attention once released from custody.
 4. See that any necessary photographs are taken of injuries incurred while in police custody.
 5. Make formal complaints on behalf of the victim.
 6. Pressure council officers, councillors, MPs, etc, to investigate police malpractice with the view to making sure that officers who perpetrate racial harassment and beat up black people are penalised.

REFERRALS

This year, in comparison to 1988, a higher number of referrals came from our 24-hour Emergency Service. The majority of cases, however, were brought to our attention either directly by people visiting our office or through referral from other agencies.

Direct	174	59%
Emergency Service (during non-office hours only)	70	24%
Other (advice agencies, Housing Dept etc)	50	17%

The main source of referrals remains through the informal network created by our outreach work. Many people visit us after seeing our rights cards or posters in libraries, youth and community centres or other statutory offices.



THE EMERGENCY SERVICE

The Emergency Service continues its unique and central role in the Project's work, providing help specifically to victims of racist attack and police harassment.

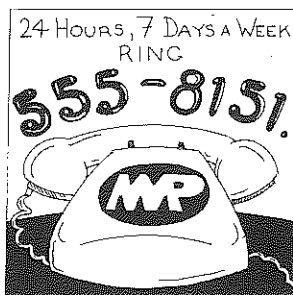
Twenty-four per cent of our cases in 1989 came through the Service. Two points need to be stressed here: statistics detailed here refer specifically to those cases received during non-office hours when the Service comes into operation. Additionally, the statistics do not show emergency help provided to people whose cases the Project is already handling.

In 1990, we intend launching a major drive with new publicity literature to advertise the Service and recruit more volunteers, for the Service is still not being used to its full capacity. It remains our objective that as part of our 10th Anniversary celebrations we make an all-out effort to ensure that every black person in Newham who suffers harassment knows that there is a 24-hour helpline for them to ring.

The vital role of volunteers in running the Emergency Service needs emphasising. All are local people (at present we have 40 people participating with another ten waiting to be trained) who participate out of a sense of commitment. Few have any legal training in how to deal with calls, but are armed with our Volunteers' Handbook which gives them all the information necessary to deal with an emergency call. Training sessions, held at appropriate intervals, update the volunteers on any changes in procedure, law, etc. Many of them are already involved in other aspects of the Project's work, and they all participate in publicising the Project, providing support for its activities and giving help whenever required.

We hope, over the following year, that these volunteers will become more integrated in the Project's work, all the better to ensure that the Project, in becoming more self-sufficient, develops a comprehensive support system, which not only offers support to victims but enables members of the Project to take up cases, and involve the immediate local community around the case. The volunteers are our 'eyes' and 'ears' in the community. We must thank them all for the way in which they have supported and built the Project and the Service. There can be no substitute for their dedication and commitment.

The volunteers are backed up by solicitors, photographers, and other local people who are prepared to be called out in an emergency - the second tier of the Emergency Service. They too play an indispensable role in the Project and we would like to thank them for all their help.



3 RACIAL HARASSMENT

During 1989, 138 cases of racial harassment were reported to us. A breakdown reveals the following.

Breakdown in terms of manner of referral

Direct	70
Emergency Service (during non-office hours)	39
Via other agencies	29

Breakdown in terms of gender and age¹

Female	67
Men	52
Children	19

Breakdown in terms of nature of racial harassment²

Physical	51
Verbal	56
Other ³	31

Breakdown in terms of location of attack⁴

Home	83
Street	18
School	14
Shop	17
Work	6

Breakdown in terms of area

Canning Town/Custom House	28
Stratford	17
Plaistow	17
Forest Gate	25
Beckton/North Woolwich	17
Manor Park	11
East Ham	10
Outside Newham ⁵	12

These figures show the consistent pattern of violent attacks in the borough. Over the last ten years, Newham has averaged the highest recorded level of racist violence in the country. These attacks first came to public attention with the murder of Akhtar Ali Baig in 1980 and have made a firm imprint on the lives of black people in the borough ever since.

Our work around racist violence over the last ten years has revealed how black people are not safe in their

homes, or when they walk the streets. Black children are not safe when travelling to and from school or social centres; mothers are not safe when they go shopping or travel to pick up their children from nurseries or schools.

Below we give reports, area by area, of the kinds of racist violence that have come to our attention over the course of 1989.

MANOR PARK

The problem of racist violence in Manor Park and the north east of the borough as a whole is still not generally recognised, despite the focus of the Project's first major campaigns (the Newham 8 and the First Avenue 11). This year, Manor Park was the scene of a horrific attack which not only typifies the brutal reality of racial harassment but also illustrates how the police have made absolutely no progress in the way they respond to racist attacks.

The case of the Altaf/Khan Family

For years the Khan family were harassed by two sets of neighbours, one living opposite, the other next door but one. On Monday 7 August at 8pm, the children of these families began knocking on the Khan family's door and chanting 'Paki bastards, go back where you came from'. When Mrs Khan's niece opened the door, she was struck with a bicycle chain. When Mrs Khan, who was nine months pregnant at the time, came out to confront them, she was struck with a dustbin lid and pushed by the parents of the children who had by this time arrived on the scene. When Mrs Khan defended herself by hitting them with her handbag, they began to repeatedly punch and kick her in the stomach. We do not need to emphasise the effect this could have had on a woman who was in the very final stages of pregnancy.

When Mrs Khan and her niece managed to scramble back into their home, the attackers then smashed the window with rocks and warned them that, later, when their sons arrived

Notes for statistical breakdowns

1. Our statistics in terms of gender and age represent the victim and/or the person within a family with whom we have had the most frequent contact or who notified us of the incident.

2. The majority of those who complained to us of racial harassment experienced more than one kind of harassment. We have therefore classified incidents in terms of what the major component of harassment was.

3. 'Other' includes all attacks on property from attempted arson to windows being smashed or excrement being shoved through letterboxes.

4. These figures refer to where the main incident which was reported to NMP took place. Most cases, however, occur in a variety of locations.

5. 'Outside Newham' represents neighbouring boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest.

'you'll be dead'. At this point, the Khans rang the police who did not arrive. Luckily for the Khans, Mrs Khan's brother, Mr Altaf, was passing by. But when he tried to intervene he was immediately attacked by six men wielding iron pipes and a baseball bat. Mr Altaf managed to crawl into the house but the men proceeded to grab flaming oil lamps from nearby road works and throw them through the window. Two of the men then kicked in the front door, ripped out the telephone wire and grabbed Mr Altaf from behind shouting 'kill the Paki, kill him'. When another attacker cut Mr Altaf and then tried to stab him, Mr Altaf avoided the knife and the racist thug accidentally stabbed one of his fellow attackers instead.

Many of the neighbours were watching and did nothing. It was at this point that the police finally arrived. When Mr Altaf attempted to explain what had happened, they told him 'shut your bloody mouth' and arrested him. As a result of protests by Mrs Khan's niece, the police reluctantly arrested two of the attackers, but were soon to release them without charge. Mr Altaf, however, was remanded in custody on a charge of grievous bodily harm (GBH).



The following morning, Mr Malik from the local mosque informed NMP of the harrowing details of this case and we immediately arranged for an application to transfer legal representation from the duty solicitor to Kapil Juj of Birnberg and Co. We then visited the Khan family where we saw for ourselves the damage done to their house during the course of the attack.

Despite Mrs Khan's resolute stance against the attackers, it was clear that she could not be expected to stay in the house a day longer given that she was expecting a baby within a week. We therefore proceeded directly to Manor Park Housing Office and demanded that the Khan family be awarded an immediate transfer and that eviction proceedings be taken against the attackers. Thus at our instigation, priority transfer status was

allocated to the Khans. In the meantime, however, they were forced to move into bed and breakfast accommodation - which meant, in effect, that they were driven out of their home whilst their attackers were left to stay. Thankfully, the Khans were soon permanently rehoused elsewhere in the borough.

Meanwhile, Mr Altaf was held in remand at Wormwood Scrubs Prison for three weeks before an appeal against bail conditions successfully resulted in his release. On his release, NMP immediately began publicising the case in the local press, distributing leaflets and circulating a petition in defence of the family. The central focus of the campaign to Defend the Altaf/Khan Family was that in a rapidly deteriorating environment of increasing racist violence, both the police and the courts have a fundamental duty to ensure that racist attacks are challenged with the full sanction of the law. Mr Altaf was the victim of an attempted racist murder yet he finds himself criminalised and awaiting trial. The action of the police in this case was all the more intolerable when one considers that Mr Altaf's attackers are actually being used as chief prosecution witnesses.

To date the campaign has received over a thousand signatures in defence of the family and many people including Mr Altaf's local councillor and Keith Vaz MP have written to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) demanding that the charges against him be dropped. At the time of going to press, Mr Altaf is still awaiting committal to the Crown Court and for legal reasons we have been unable to escalate this campaign until after the committal.

Although we are happy to report that despite the attack, Mrs Khan gave birth to a fine and healthy baby, her ordeal was still not over. Although no longer residing in Manor Park, the Khans' children continued to attend the same school. Whilst meeting her children from school, Mrs Khan found herself being spat at, racially abused, kicked and having stones thrown at her, by the same families who had previously attacked her. NMP workers immediately began accompanying her to the school gates and on our advice, Mr Khan reported the harassment to the police. Mr Khan was by now so familiar with the attitude of the Newham police that it came as no surprise when they expressed very little interest in recording the details of this harassment and were far more concerned with arranging a meeting with Mrs Khan (who does not speak English) regarding the charges pending against her brother.

The confidence instilled in the attackers by the actions of the police prompted them to write to the Project and protest against the campaign, stating that 'we accuse your organisation of being the racists not us, racialism against whites does exist'. This totally unremorseful and manipulative attitude only serves to strengthen our resolve that we must not rest until legal action is taken against

the attackers and a clear message sent throughout Newham that racism and racist attacks will not be tolerated and will be treated with the seriousness they deserve.

BECKTON AND NORTH WOOLWICH

Over the past few years Beckton has been one of the few areas in Newham where new council estates have been built. This housing stock is amongst the best in the borough, making it imperative that black people are also given access to the houses there. However, racial harassment in the area has now reached such epidemic proportions that it effectively acts as a deterrent to black people moving there.

Cyprus Estate

The Cyprus Estate has been the scene of some of the most terrifying and systematic harassment reported to us this year (see chapter 11). This is particularly so in the case of the D family who have been persistently and violently harassed by their next door neighbours. Although many of the white tenants in the area were also harassed and threatened by these people and their friends, it was the D family who were singled out for the most violent of the assaults and for racist abuse. Because of this, they had taken to barricading themselves inside their home, but their attackers overcame this means of protection by breaking through a partition in their adjoining loft and descending through the attic entrance hatch to burgle their house. This was followed by a catalogue of attacks on the D family over the ensuing months:

7-11 June: During these five days, the D family were made virtual prisoners in their own home. They endured racist abuse, were threatened with pick-axe handles, knives and a garden fork as well as having two rottweiler dogs let loose in their garden. Although the police attended the scene on the three separate occasions, it was not until the final attack, when the Ds had their back-door smashed down with a sledgehammer, that they chose to make an arrest. A High Court injunction was eventually served on the attackers.

14 July: D family threatened with physical violence and arson.

19 July: Mrs D threatened with a knife.

21 July: Two attempts made to physically attack the Ds' young children.

22 July: Mrs D saw her neighbours crawling out of their own bedroom window and attempting to break into the Ds' front bedroom window.

These incidents were followed by continual noise nuisance, rubbish being dumped outside the Ds'

house, car headlights deliberately being shone through their window at night and regular threats, such as one of the women attackers openly shouting that 'I want to kill her next door [Mrs D], I'm getting my £4,000 soon and I'll pay someone to kill her'. This same family have also slashed the tyres of Mr D's car and damaged its bodywork.

On first being informed of this case in June, we began regular support visits both during the day and late at night. On some evenings the D family were forced to turn off their television and their lights and only use candles in an effort to prevent their attackers knowing when they were in. An emergency panic button has since been fitted in their home which ensures an immediate police presence in the event of an attack.

However, despite this racist family's flagrant disregard for the injunction against them, none of them has been convicted of attacking the Ds and to date the Housing Department has yet to issue eviction proceedings against them. The D family have therefore been led to speculate that the authorities are reluctant to act on this case due to the family's rumoured connections to organised criminal elements in the borough. It is our assertion that this potentially life-threatening delay by the authorities in taking appropriate action is totally inexcusable.

Other attacks

This case is all the more disturbing when placed in the context of other incidents that have occurred locally. The sole objective of this seems to be to drive out every black family from the area.

- Mrs M has been continually racially abused and even physically attacked by the same people who have been harassing the D family. On one occasion she was told her house would be firebombed and in another she and her daughter were set upon by the two rottweilers that belong to the attackers. Her husband was also attacked with a baseball bat and a scaffolding pipe by a gang of over 18 people who surrounded her home. The police have arrested and charged several of the attackers in this case.

- The S family have suffered long-term racial harassment, both from their neighbours and from other gangs of youths, which has included racial abuse, rubbish being thrown into their garden, the children being attacked, harassing phone calls and threats of physical violence.

- On 16 May, HS and her sister SS were the victims of an unprovoked attack by their next door neighbours, during which they were punched to the ground and kicked in the ribs and stomach. HS suffered internal bleeding and required hospital treatment. The following day, whilst SS was in the garden, the same attackers

came through the back gate and slashed her three times across the arm with a knife, leaving wounds requiring six stitches.

In all these three cases (as with the case of the D family), the authorities have not shown a willingness to recognise the blatant racism behind these incidents; they have taken little action against the attackers, nor have they provided an effective and sympathetic support network for the families. In the case of HS and SS, police officers who arrived at the scene actually told them to shut up, and implied that all parties were equally to blame. They took no statements and made no arrests initially of any of the assailants. After concerted pressure from NMP, the police were forced to take action and arrest the perpetrators.

The role of the housing department

The failure of any of the statutory agencies to take swift and appropriate action in any of these cases has led to the formation of the Cyprus Ethnic Welfare Association, representing 47 local black families.

Mr K, the elected spokesperson for the association, has been scathing in his criticism of the local housing office. His family has also suffered racial harassment. After a forced entry into his family's home, which left it totally insecure, he was informed that the council was unable to afford the cost of securing the property. In a subsequent black tenants' meeting, Mr K spoke of his experience and was publicly told by a race officer that he was merely the victim of an attempted burglary. As Mr K quite succinctly put it, nobody left him a note informing him whether this was an attempted burglary or an attempted act of racial intimidation.

Most of the families in the Cyprus Ethnic Welfare Association share Mr K's complaints regarding the attitude of council officers who are not only slow to respond to allegations of racism but are unsympathetic and unsupportive in their manner. Race officers, in particular, have generally failed in their duty to provide the mechanisms whereby black families fully understand the council bureaucracy so that they are able to demand and receive the services to which they are entitled.

This situation can, in part, be seen as a failure to implement adequately the Housing Department's Racial Harassment Policy, which was introduced after a long campaign by NMP. The Project was instrumental in devising the policy and has since devoted much energy into ensuring it is properly implemented. Instead of enforcing the Racial Harassment Policy, council officers seem to be resorting to the old easy option of transferring the 'victim' to another property, thus failing to get to the root of the problem.

What is most revealing is the sentiments of black people like Mr K who have complained that whilst race officers have acquired their jobs on the



basis of the suffering of black people, some of them seem to have forgotten that experience, treating black people in a condescending and aloof manner. What is becoming clear is that many officers see themselves as responsible only to each other and in no way accountable to the black community. It only remains to be said that all workers who represent black people in both the statutory and the voluntary sectors are there as a direct result of the struggles of black people. They are there to fight for the demands of black people, not act as a barrier to them. This lesson must not be forgotten as we enter the 1990s.

FOREST GATE

For a number of years we have documented the upward trend in racist violence in Forest Gate. In 1987 it was the scene of the brutal murder of Saranjit Singh Atwal which led to our initiating the Atwal Family Support Committee. This year Forest Gate has been second only to Canning Town in terms of the level of racial harassment documented by NMP.

The case of ST

On 22 March, whilst ST was walking in Fowler Road with her 4-year-old nephew, two white boys began calling her a 'f...ing Paki bitch' and threatening to 'smash her face in'. The boys' mother then appeared from a friend's house, but instead of reprimanding her sons, she grabbed ST by the throat, punched her and pushed her up against a nearby van. A friend of the white children's mother appeared with her teenage children and proceeded to knock ST to the ground, and punching her as they did so. Once she had finally escaped, ST phoned the police and an officer soon arrived. However, he took no written statement, merely saying that he would report the incident as a common assault. ST had to take a minicab by herself to Newham General Hospital where she was seen by a Dr Cramp. Her back was badly

bruised and her ankle badly swollen, a ligament having been torn inside.

The next day we accompanied ST to Forest Gate Police Station where she was interviewed by DC Cowans. After ST had fully cooperated and reported the facts to DC Cowans, he assured her that the police were taking the matter seriously and that all five perpetrators would be charged with unlawful disorder. We asked DC Cowans why they were not going to be charged with assault as well. He replied that they would be if the medical evidence justified it. It was not until several weeks later when we phoned DC Cowans that we realised to our surprise that nobody had been arrested and charged for the racist assault on ST and that DC Cowans had referred the matter to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

The police had clearly deceived ST when they promised to take action. This is no supposition on our part as we were present when DC Cowans made assurances that the attackers would be charged. Consistent pressure by NMP eventually resulted in two of the perpetrators being charged with minor offences. But when the matter came to court, the police advised ST to allow her attackers to be bound over to keep the peace. ST requested to speak to an NMP worker who was in court but she was prevented from doing so and reluctantly agreed to this wholly unsatisfactory conclusion to the case. With ST having positively identified her attackers, this was an opportunity for the police to bring them to justice and send out a warning to all other potential racist attackers. Unfortunately, they failed again and the problem of racial harassment in the area remains unresolved.

Dames Road Estate

Ever since moving onto the Dames Road Estate when it was completed in 1987, many black families have had to endure racial harassment. This problem was brought to the Project's attention on 20 March following which we took immediate action. A meeting on 22 March was organised where we met with representatives from six of the black families. All of the families had experienced harassment, all could identify the perpetrators, all were determined not to move, and all wanted their perpetrators dealt with severely by the council and the police. The harassment ranged from racist abuse to property damage (including theft) to physical assault (including a stabbing). The meeting ensured that from then on these families were collectively able to use NMP as a channel for exerting direct pressure on the authorities. The Housing Department responded by threatening the perpetrators with eviction and along with NMP pressured the police into warning the racists.

This prompt action resulted in an overall lull in the harassment from May onwards. However, in December the situation exploded yet again. Mr A,

one of the black tenants who had courageously stood up to the racists and supported other black families in the area, was racially abused by his next door neighbour who proceeded to smash all the windows of Mr A's car and then openly threatened him with a gun. Mr A immediately contacted NMP and the Housing Department and following our intervention the police subsequently arrested the attacker. They found an imitation gun in the house of the attacker but Mr A maintained that it was not the gun with which he was threatened. The attacker was eventually charged with criminal damage and threatening to kill.

However, the whole event had so terrified Mr A's family that he was forced to accept a transfer to alternative accommodation. It is a tragedy that a man of such determination had finally been driven out of the area by a particularly vicious brand of racism. The only consolation for those black families left on the estate is that these events have led to the strengthened resolve of the Black Tenants and Residents Support Group which will hopefully serve as a community base in the area for those black families NMP is already supporting.

UPTON PARK

Upton Park lies at the heart of the black community in Newham and yet is still not free from racial harassment. In 1984 it was the scene of a series of racist attacks that led to the Newham 7 case at the Duke of Edinburgh pub. During this year we have seen the worrying trend of increasing robberies of Asian shops in the area. Although the motive for these robberies is clearly financial, it is important to view these crimes from a much wider perspective. The Asian shops are being targeted because they are seen as 'easy pickings'; criminals have far less qualms about stealing from a black person than from other traders and they must also know that the police do not provide the same protection to black traders as to white traders. And although theft might be the primary motive for the attack, they are often accompanied by racist abuse. It is in this context of racism that these robberies must be viewed.

Many of these factors contributed to the tragic circumstances leading to the death of Kulvinder Singh in July. Four white youths robbed Kulvinder's clothes shop on Green Street and ran to a waiting car. Kulvinder gave chase and grabbed onto the car but as the youths drove away he tragically fell off, hitting his head on the kerb and receiving fatal injuries. On hearing this news, NMP, other black groups and community leaders met to discuss what would be the most appropriate response. It was agreed that since the police had already made an arrest and the aggrieved family did not wish to

pursue the matter in the form of a campaign, our approach should simply be one of sympathy and solidarity with Kulvinder's family.

SHOPKEEPER KILLED TRYING TO HALT THIEF'S CAR ESCAPE

YOUTH'S RACE JIBE OVER DEATH

A TEENAGER who bragged after killing an Asian shopkeeper "Oh well, that's another Paki gone!" has been sentenced to three years' detention.

Lee Lambeth, 16, of Hartsworth Close, Plaistow, remarked later to a friend: "There are enough of them in Upton Park. It should be called Paki Park!"

His indifference to the death of Kulvinder Singh Uppal, 26, led to his arrest, the Old Bailey heard on Friday. His friend Lloyd Evans "shopped" him.

Have-a-go hero Mr Uppal gave chase after Lambeth and another shoplifter stole two pairs of jeans and a shirt from his Green Street shop.

Mr Uppal, of Chadwell Heath, hurtled himself at the getaway car and clung on as Lambeth accelerated. But Lambeth deliberately swerved "to loosen the shopkeeper's grip," said prosecutor Linda Stern. Mr Uppal fell, hitting his head on the kerb in Pine Road, Plaistow. He was dead on arrival at hospital.

Other motorists tried to block Lambeth, but he swerved past. Lambeth dumped the stolen vehicle and was collected by his friend to whom he made the racist remark. The court heard he had been convicted of 'harming another Asian shopkeeper in 1987, and sentenced to a one-year supervision order.

Lambeth admitted manslaughter and theft of the jeans. Mr Justice Waterhouse told him it was "highly regrettable" his earlier conviction failed to teach him a lesson, but accepted he was "genuinely remorseful".



Mr Uppal

Throughout, NMP maintained the stance that the possibility that there was a racial dimension to the attack should not be ruled out. This has always been the Project's position, despite opposition from the police. We were also clear that the white youths in this case should be charged with murder. Only one of Kulvinder's assailants was eventually charged with manslaughter. If this charge of manslaughter against defendants known to be guilty is compared to the charge of murder brought against an innocent black man Samuel Ricketts (see chapter 6) - a case which also involved a death as a result of robbery - then the double standards between the charges brought to bear against black and white defendants is unmistakable.

During the trial of Kulvinder's assailant, it was revealed that he was a known racist who in 1987 had been convicted of GBH on another Asian shopkeeper on Barking Road. Even more disturbing was the revelation at the trial that after Kulvinder had died, the youth had bragged 'oh well, that's another Paki gone'. For everyone associated with NMP, those words had a chilling ring, for exactly the same comments were made by the skinheads who murdered Akhtar Ali Baig in 1980! The lesson is clear: whilst not assuming that all attacks on black people are racist in intent, never rule out a racist motive.

OTHER AREAS IN THE BOROUGH

Stratford

Last year we reported on the growing problem of racial harassment on the Waddington Estate in

Stratford, and this year the problem has escalated with the same gangs of teenagers harassing all black families living on the estate.

The case of the K family is typical. They have been racially abused, spat on, stoned, and windows of both their home and their car have been deliberately smashed. The overall situation has led to five black families being transferred off the estate this year, with two more awaiting transfer. As far as we are aware no arrests have been made, despite the gang's regular presence in the area. It is our assertion that the problem on this estate must be prioritised by every agency concerned before all the black families are driven away.

East Ham

As the first black person on her block, VC was not warmly received by her neighbours living directly below her. As a young single mother, she was perceived as very vulnerable. Her neighbours chose to harass her systematically in a very specific way. By playing on the racist stereotype of the noisy West Indian, they persistently made complaints of the noise nuisance they were supposedly suffering from her. When pressed to explain what this noise consisted of, their list included running a bath during the evening and watching television.

After failing to substantiate their 'allegations', VC's neighbours offered to pay money to get rid of her and when this failed they turned to violence, kicking the door and threatening that 'I'll burn you out!'. The evening after this particular attack occurred, a friend visited VC and his car mysteriously burst into flames outside.

Alarming, the initial response of the Housing Department was to support the neighbours and threaten to evict VC. It was only due to the intervention of NMP that they were made to realise that these complaints of noise nuisance were unfounded and the motive was sheer racism. Despite the Department's comprehensive race structure, we were still required to advise the officer concerned of the varied and subtle forms in which racial harassment might manifest itself. It was only then that VC began to receive the support she was entitled to and the legal department is now looking into VC's complaints.

Canning Town

The problem of increased racial attacks in Canning Town will be discussed at greater length in the chapter on Racism and Fascism in South Newham. We would again point out, however, that the pattern of harassment and robbery of black shopkeepers in the area points to the conclusion that they are viewed as 'easy targets'. Take the case of Mr A who suffered regular attacks on his shop in Star Lane. When 15 young white men robbed his shop on 14 September, he was able to identify several of them as living locally. However,

rather than investigating the case, the police told Mr A to simply contact Plaistow Police Station if he saw them again. It is this indifferent attitude that has led to the frightening rise in the level of racist violence in the area.

Plaistow

In 1985 we reported on NMP's campaign for 'Justice for the Pryce Family' after Eustace Pryce was stabbed to death whilst defending a friend in a racist attack outside the Greengate pub, Plaistow. The police arrived immediately, but instead of arresting the racist murderer they arrested Eustace's brother, Gerald.

● In July of this year a black youth, David Rosemond, had his throat slashed by white youths after he had previously intervened in a vicious racist attack on a friend. The wounding of David Rosemond took place on Prince Regents Lane, opposite the Greengate pub.

Community demands: Justice for the Pryces!

The trial of Gerald Pryce and four other black youths is due to commence on October 8.

The sixteen-year-old West Indian youth is charged with affray for fighting back against racist thugs who murdered his brother. On November 29, 1984, white thugs provoked a confrontation in Newham, east London. Gerald's brother, Eustace, was not involved in the fight that ensued, but was nevertheless attacked by the racists who stabbed him in the back of the neck.

Eustace died almost immediately, but plain clothes officers who are alleged to have witnessed the incident from a passing bus failed to arrest the murderer, arresting instead Gerald Pryce on the grounds that he appeared to be preparing to do something dangerous.

Gerald was taken to Plaistow police station whilst his brother was dying in hospital. When an aunt tried to visit her nephew at the station she was refused entry by the police and it was only hours later that Gerald was eventually released only to find that his brother was dead.

RECORDED 13/10/89

TEENAGER KNIFED BY RACE THUG IN REVENGE ATTACK

A VICIOUS thug slashed at a teenager's throat causing a wound that needed 18 stitches. Police think the attack on David Rosemond, 16, was in revenge for him thwarting a hammer attack on a friend 24 hours earlier.

In that incident, David was walking with his friend to a bus stop when they were challenged by a youth who wanted to fight the friend.

He refused and a gang, including one thug armed with a hammer, came round the corner and chased them.

The friend was tripped up and the youth with the hammer was about to strike him when David intervened.

Racial taunts were hurled during the incident. Both David and his friend are black.

The following day, David was in Prince Regent Lane, Plaistow, when a white youth ran up, slashed him and taunted: "Where is your friend?"

David was taken to Newham General Hospital and discharged after treatment. His address is being kept secret.

Detectives at Plaistow say the attacker was about 18, 5ft 8ins, with very short light brown hair and wore a grey bomber jacket and light coloured jeans. Information to Det Sgt Craig Stratford on 0708 39311.

Five years on - same place, same attack, different names. How much longer will this be allowed to continue? Our figures (and even the police figures) indicate that Plaistow is an area of ever-increasing racist attacks. The only solution is for the authorities to cease viewing these attacks in isolation, and place them in the larger area-wide context they demand.

Mile End tube station

Last year we documented the racist attacks on NM and her friends at Mile End tube station as they returned from school in October 1988. NM was dragged to the ground by her hair and repeatedly punched and kicked. Not only was she called a 'f...ing Paki' by the woman and five white men that attacked her, but the police officers who arrived at the scene said to NM and her friends 'C'mon you black bitches, get out of here'. After the arrest of three of the attackers, we were able to identify

them as National Front activists. For a few days after the attack, black pupils and some of their teachers were followed to their homes; some were taped on video camera, as other suspected National Front activists began to organise surveillance to further intimidate NM and her friends. NMP organised photographers to photograph some of these activities and we witnessed some of these men communicating to one another with walkie-talkies.

In October of this year the case finally came to Crown Court. Remarkably, the assailants were acquitted by the jury on the grounds of self-defence against the school girls. NM's father was scathing in his criticism of the way the case was handled by the police and the Crown Prosecution Service: "This case is a disgrace. Innocent girls are beaten up and then treated like criminals in Court. The prosecution was pathetic, it proves that the CPS don't take racial harassment cases seriously".

RACIAL HARASSMENT NATIONALLY

This pattern of increasing racist violence in Newham has been mirrored all over the country where there have been at least five racist murders during 1989.

January: Ahmed Abukar Sheikh, a Somalian refugee, was attacked and killed by a white gang in Edinburgh. A National Front supporter accused of his murder was acquitted at the trial despite being proved to have repeatedly punched Mr Sheikh.

July: 14-year-old Tahir Akram died in Oldham from a brain haemorrhage after being shot in the eye with an air pistol by white youths in a passing car.

September: 66-year-old Mohammed Mussa Saleh died of a heart attack shortly after being physically attacked and racially abused on a bus while travelling between Rotherham and Sheffield. Two white men were arrested for the attack and charged with minor offences.

November: 35-year-old Kuldip Singh Sekhon, a taxi driver, was murdered after picking up a white man in Southall. He was stabbed 54 times, including in his head, stomach and chest.

December: 11-year-old Tasleem Akhtar was beaten to death with a brick by a white youth in Birmingham.

Whilst NMP will continue to devote maximum energy to the fight against racial harassment in Newham, the problem clearly cannot be seen in isolation. There is a desperate need for a national campaign against racial harassment and to this end we will continue to work within the London Alliance Against Racism and Fascism (LAARF) towards linking up with black community groups up and down the country who are engaged in the struggle against racism.

4 POLICE RESPONSE TO RACIST ATTACKS

On 6 February 1989 Sir Peter Imbert, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, launched a £400,000 publicity campaign against racial harassment. In spite of the fact that survey after survey, including one commissioned by the police themselves, had found that nearly 50% of people questioned thought these campaigns were a waste of time and money, the Commissioner was determined to promote the public image of the police and press ahead with yet another cosmetic exercise. Thousands of glossy booklets, printed in English and 12 other languages, were to be distributed door-to-door in eight London boroughs and made available in town halls, libraries and community centres in another 11 boroughs.

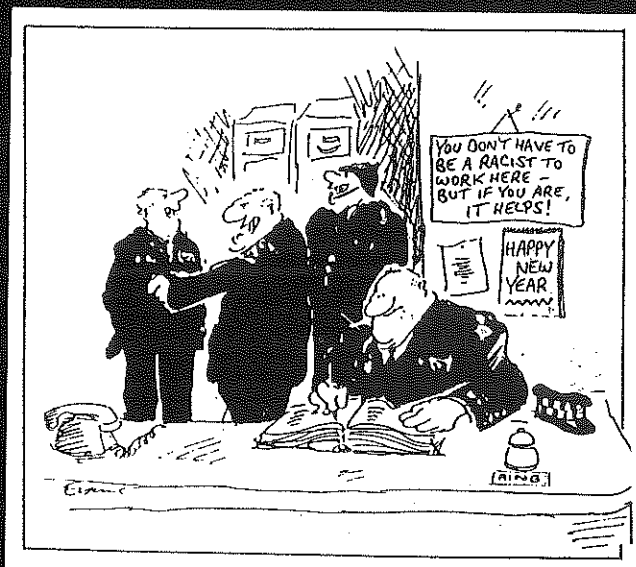
And then there were the wonderful 'Racial Harassment is a Crime' posters which were supposed to give victims of racist attacks confidence in the police and encourage more reporting. That such a campaign was doomed from the start in a climate where police racism and police violence continue to thrive from Newham to Guildford to Birmingham to Broadwater Farm did not seem to bother Imbert in the slightest.

Yet, six months later, Commander Richard Monk, head of Scotland Yard's community involvement branch, admitted that the campaign had been plagued by a number of failures. In seven of the eight boroughs targeted for door-to-door distribution, on average a mere 10% of households had booklets delivered. Commander Monk blamed Saatchi & Saatchi (who organised the Conservative Party's advertising campaign for the last three general elections) for failing to carry out delivery of the booklets as contracted. At the end of the day, however, this bureaucratic breakdown in distribution was to be the least of the police's worries during 1989.

THE YEAR OF SHATTERED ILLUSIONS

1989 will probably go down in history as the year that public confidence in the British police reached an all-time low, as the year that the myth of the friendly bobby on the beat was at last laid to rest. No longer was it simply the black community, the Irish community and other minority constituencies on the margins of society who were critical and distrustful of the police.

People from all walks of life, from all parts of the country, were speaking out against police malpractice. In Chapter 7, we look at the state of affairs nationally, in the wake of the Guildford 4 being freed, and how the police have been forced onto the defensive for the first time in many



"POLICE ANTI-RACIST CAMPAIGN"

years.

But first let us look at how the police in East London have dealt with racist attacks by analysing their response in concrete terms.

INJUSTICE AFTER INJUSTICE: 'DERACIALISING' RACIST ATTACKS

NMP dealt with a litany of cases in 1989 involving black people reporting racist attacks to the police and being arrested themselves and either charged or cautioned. Five such cases are particularly revealing in that they demonstrate unequivocally the extent that police practices on the ground fail to live up to police propaganda about combating racial harassment.

- Late one April evening, PB and his brother JB were working in their grocery shop in Ilford. Two young white men were standing around outside and one of them picked up a few apples. PB said to him that he could pay for the apples inside to which the white man replied that he was not going to pay and ran off with his friend. PB and JB then went after them. The white men got into their car and started driving off. PB tried to stop them. All of a sudden, the two white men stopped

their car and got out - one was wielding a butcher's knife over a foot long, the other a hammer. Not having anything on hand to protect themselves with, PB and JB retreated towards the shop. Unfortunately, JB lost his balance and was stabbed from behind by the man with the knife and hit on the lower arm by the man with the hammer. PB came to the defence of his brother and shielded him. The man with the knife tried to slash PB but could not as PB defended himself. In the scuffle that ensued, the rear windscreen of the attackers' car was broken. The attackers had had enough and drove off.

With the help of a few friends, two of whom had witnessed the attack, PB helped his brother back to the shop. He phoned 999 twice and gave the registration number of the attackers' car to the police. Officers from Ilford Police Station arrived half an hour later with the two attackers in tow. One of the police officers asked JB whether he needed an ambulance. PB answered that of course he did. After the ambulance had come and taken JB to hospital, the police arrested PB for breaking the window on his attackers' car. The attackers were arrested as well. The next day PB and his attackers were charged with violent disorder. JB was also charged with violent disorder, on being released from



hospital a few days later.

This case was referred to NMP by PB's and JB's uncle who lives in Newham. It is a classic example of the police distorting the facts by representing a vicious attack on two black men as just another fight between two opposing parties. PB and JB had every right to defend themselves and their property: their attackers stole from their shop and physically attacked them with weapons. JB was stabbed, and his brother was fortunate not to have sustained more serious injuries. Yet in spite of all the evidence, the police chose to charge PB and JB as well as their attackers with violent disorder (which carries a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment).

After sustained pressure from NMP in conjunction with legal counsel, the charges against PB and JB were dropped. It remains to be seen whether the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) will vigorously pursue the prosecution of the attackers. Considering their criminalisation of PB and JB, it is the least one can expect.

● In March, another shopkeeper, in Walthamstow this time, was criminalised by the police following a racist attack. Mr K had sold a skateboard to a white woman. She returned a few weeks later with the skateboard broken, demanding her money back. Mr K offered to replace the skateboard or give her credit for its value. She refused and became abusive, calling him a 'black bastard' and telling him to go back to where he came from. In spite of all this, Mr K agreed to refund her money if she returned late in the day when he had more cash to spare. But she would not listen and stormed out. A few weeks later, two men entered Mr K's shop - one of them, who was carrying the broken skateboard, said he was the white woman's husband. His wife was standing outside, keeping watch. He said that he had a letter from the consumer board. When Mr K asked to see it, the man raised the skateboard to strike Mr K on the head. Mr K reacted quickly and took the blow that followed on his lower arm. The other attacker grabbed Mr K by the throat and punched him in the face. Meanwhile the white woman was outside the shop screaming 'kill him', etc. One of the attackers tried to grab Mr K's money from the cash till. Mr K defended himself and was able to get the attackers out of his shop. One of them threatened to teach Mr K a lesson and burn his shop down. The incident was witnessed by Mr K's assistant and a customer.

Mr K phoned Walthamstow Police Station but was told that the police did not have time to come at present. Yet they arrived some 15 minutes later and after hearing what happened, said that there was nothing to investigate but

that if there was ever any trouble again, to call the police. Two other officers returned later in the day and asked Mr K to close his shop and accompany them to the police station. They eventually agreed to let Mr K come the next morning.

When Mr K walked into Walthamstow Police Station the next morning, he was arrested and charged with actual bodily harm (ABH) and possessing an offensive weapon.

This case was referred to NMP by Newham Rights Centre. It is yet another example of the police arresting the victim of a racist attack who actually reported the attack to the police in the first place. Even worse is the fact that his attackers were to be prosecution witnesses against him.

Repeated attempts over the following months to reason with the arresting officer were, not surprisingly, in vain. Nevertheless, after successful negotiations with the CPS and the judge assigned to deal with the case, Mr K was granted a bindover, and a verdict of not guilty was entered. The fact that Mr K's attackers had no objections to Mr K being offered a bindover indicates that they too were not confident about arguing their case before a jury.

● On an August evening, WK phoned the police when a drunken white neighbour came banging on the front door, shouting racist abuse and complaining about a baby (WK's niece) making too much noise. When two officers arrived, WK explained to them what had happened. His mother was standing next to him, holding the baby. All of a sudden, the white neighbour reappeared. He shouted 'you f...ing black c..t, you think you can do anything you want around here' and charged toward WK's mother and the baby. The police did nothing so WK stood in front of his mother and the baby to protect them. It was only then that the police physically intervened and grabbed the neighbour, who resisted violently.

The police called for reinforcements who arrived swiftly. They restrained the neighbour and took him away. But just as WK was going back into the house, the police arrested him as well, apparently for disturbing the peace. Another white neighbour who had seen the entire incident asked the police why WK was being arrested as he had not done anything. One of the officers pushed her away and WK was then taken to Plaistow Police Station.

NMP received a call on the Emergency Service, and we immediately sent two of our volunteers to Canning Town where the incident had taken place. After being briefed about what had happened, they went to Plaistow Police Station, where the inspector in charge informed them that the officers involved maintained that WK



and the white neighbour were fighting in the street, which of course was untrue. Three hours later WK was released after being cautioned. He told our volunteers that he had not been given any explanation of what a caution meant, that he was told he would be charged unless he accepted a caution, and that he had not been informed that our volunteers were there, although they had specifically asked the inspector to do so. Our volunteers tried to persuade the inspector to rescind the caution on the grounds that WK was not informed of the implications, but to no avail.

This case, like others discussed in this report, is typical of how the police fail to respond to racial harassment in any serious, meaningful way. WK phoned the police for help, yet three hours later he walked out of a police station with a caution, which in legal terms represents an admission of guilt and remains on record for several years. Such a travesty of justice remains all too common.

● In October, Mrs R was walking home along Romford Road. In front of West Ham Swimming Baths, she was suddenly set upon by two white women, one of whom was swinging a dog chain. This unprovoked attack continued for several minutes, throughout which Mrs R tried to escape from her attackers by running along Romford Road. Although it was rush hour, nobody stopped to help. Mrs R finally managed to break free by scrambling into a passing car. Mrs R, a student at the Polytechnic of East London (PEL), suffered head injuries as well as cuts, bruises and bites. After seeing her GP, who prescribed a tetanus injection and painkillers, she reported the attack to Forest Gate Police Station. There she was told that because she had been attacked on the 'wrong

side' of Romford Road, West Ham Police Station would have to deal with the case and that officers from there would visit her at home shortly.

Three days later, Mrs R was visited by officers from West Ham who took a brief statement. The same day they telephoned her and told her that her attackers had accused her of assaulting them and stealing a gold chain. She was asked to come in to West Ham Police Station which she did. There she was interrogated for eight hours. Her statement filled 36 pages. A month later Mrs R and one of her attackers were both charged with disorderly behaviour.

This case raises many questions about the way that police officers behave towards black people. Mrs R was treated disgracefully throughout the case, culminating in being charged herself, in spite of being the victim of a cowardly racist attack. On several occasions, police officers told her not to associate with NMP, implying that she had to choose between cooperating with NMP and cooperating with the police (something which is becoming increasingly common in Newham). And the police passed on their version of what happened to Mrs R (without asking for her permission) to the *Newham Recorder* who published a thoroughly twisted article. In fact, a police spokesperson is quoted several times in the story, which ironically portrays Mrs R as a victim of an attempted mugging (another example of the police 'deracialising' crime against black people) and asks for witnesses to come forward. We must ask ourselves why Mrs R was later charged if the police believed her to be the victim of a crime. And is it surprising that black people are so apprehensive of reporting racist attacks to the police when the police so readily breach their confidentiality and criminalise them?

With the assistance of the Polytechnic of East London (PEL) Students' Union, NMP has traced an independent witness who was driving by when Mrs R was being attacked. However, even this has yet to convince the police and the CPS to drop the charges against Mrs R.

● In November, SY walked out of his sister's house in Plaistow. For no reason whatsoever, he was jumped on by a 15-year-old white boy who lives on the same road. The boy punched SY in the face and knocked him to the ground, shouting, 'I'm going to kill you, Paki, I've got you now.' SY's brother came running out of the house and dragged the white boy off. The boy's mother and step-father had come out of their house by this time and were also shouting racist abuse. The boy was bragging about what he had done.

Officers from West Ham Police Station arrived soon after, having been phoned by SY's sister.

5 RACISM AND FASCISM IN SOUTH NEWHAM

South Newham has a long history of racist violence, but it also has a long history of black resistance to racism. Indeed, there has been a significant black presence in Canning Town ever since the Victoria Docks were built in 1855. Initially a fairly good relationship seems to have existed between the black and white communities, but any complacency about this was shattered by the 'Riots' of 1919. On 16 August, the *East London Observer* carried the headline 'Serious Rioting in Canning Town' and reported on confrontations between blacks and whites after a West Indian, Thomas Pell, had been set upon by a crowd of whites. Similar riots had occurred in other dock areas of black settlement like Cardiff and Liverpool.

The Second World War devastated Canning Town and the old community were forced to move out. In the 1960s, however, some new black residents, chiefly immigrants from the Indian sub-continent, moved into an area which had been largely rebuilt since the War and where most of the accommodation was council housing estates. Attacks on this black community have gradually escalated over the years to the point where, for the last ten years, NMP has consistently documented Canning Town (regarded as an area of severe social deprivation with a unique sub-culture in which crime and violence abound) as having the highest incidence of racist attacks in the borough.

Black people in South Newham are, however, far from passive victims of this racism. A brave and uncompromising struggle has led, since the 1960s, to black people successfully establishing themselves within the area. The result has been that during the 1980s racist violence has been directed at those black families who are perceived to be newcomers in the area. And the horrific nature of these attacks has led to Canning Town becoming a virtual prison, a 'no-go' area for many of its own black residents. For ten years NMP has fought against this tide

of racism, but the level of attacks throughout 1989 suggest that the struggle is far from over.

FASCISM IN SOUTH NEWHAM

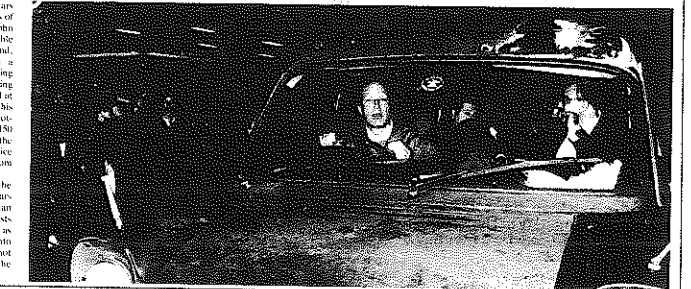
There is always the danger that racist violence in South Newham will tip over into outright fascism. During the 1970s National Front (NF) activity led to Newham South consistently having the highest NF vote in the country, at its peak nearly three times the national average. Throughout the 1980s the area continued to serve as an organisational base and as a focus for fascist activity. It came as no surprise, therefore, that Canning Town was one of the areas chosen by the British National Party (BNP) in 1989 to test out a new found strength.

On 27 February, the BNP organised a meeting in Tidal Basin, Canning Town. At very short notice NMP managed to mobilise over 150 anti-fascists to demonstrate outside West Ham tube station where the fascists were due to assemble before being escorted to their meeting place by the police. In the event, this large police presence ensured that the counter-mobilisation could not prevent the fascist gathering taking place. Seventy-five fascists attended the meeting to discuss setting up a central branch in South Newham (see Chapter 8 for more details)

BNP INVASION OF NEWHAM

For the first time in two years rain disrupted the streets of Newham, and London, as John Tyndall, on his final tour of the land, invaded the borough with a gang of 40 thugs. The evening was not an overwhelming success for him, as on arrival at their destination point in Tidal Basin, National Party boys were met by more than 150 anti-fascist activists. Once the rapid deployment of the police had saved the night from a very warm welcome.

The meeting was held in the Tidal Basin Tavern. It appears that the publican, Brian Hasbany, wanted the fascists had been swept out to sea, as they had conned their way into his pub. They certainly will not get a second meeting there, he said.



BNP's John Tyndall touring Newham

SY's face was badly bruised and both his knees were badly cut. When SY explained what had happened, the police promised him in front of several family members that his attacker would be arrested.

When SY pointed out his attacker, the boy's parents began protesting and shouting that it was SY who should be arrested. The police, retracting what they had earlier promised and ignoring SY's visible injuries, said that unless the matter was resolved there and then, both parties would be arrested. The white boy, proud of what he had done, was unrepentant, however, and refused to comply. As a result, both SY and his attacker were arrested.

SY was offered a caution which he correctly refused. He was released on bail pending an investigation. A few days later, SY received a letter from Newham Victims Support, offering assistance. The case had been referred to them by the police who openly acknowledged that SY was the victim of an assault. Yet when SY returned to West Ham Police Station nearly a month later, he was charged with actual bodily harm (ABH), as was the boy who attacked him.

This case is astonishing for several reasons:

1 SY had visible injuries. His attacker had none, except for bruised knuckles which he got from punching SY. How could the police charge SY with ABH when his alleged victim had no relevant injuries?

2 If SY was guilty of ABH, why was he referred by the police to Victims Support as a victim of an assault?

Perhaps the police and the CPS realised the absurdity of their case against SY. For when the case came up for committal, the charges were dropped against SY and unfortunately against his attacker as well. The possibility of taking out a private prosecution against SY's attacker is currently being examined. What is clear, however, is that the police acted abhorrently during this case and once again collaborated with a violent racist against an innocent black person.

UPDATE FROM 1988

Below we look at a case documented in last year's Annual Report which explodes the myth that racist attacks and police malpractice are confined to deprived areas within inner cities.

● MM and LM bought a house in 'respectable' Redbridge in 1986. They have hardly had a day's peace since. Their white neighbours have organised a campaign of hate that has bordered on the obsessive. The harassment has taken many forms:

complaints about noise nuisance culminating in a petition signed by all the neighbours and an injunction; complaints about MM washing his car in public too often; and regular visits from the police and Redbridge Council's Environmental Health Department where the general thrust of what was being suggested was that MM, LM and their young child should move out of the area and let things get back to 'normal.' Matters deteriorated to such an extent that MM was arrested and charged with grievous bodily harm (later reduced to common assault on a police officer), disorderly behaviour and criminal damage. Although he was convicted on all three counts at Redbridge Magistrates Court, he appealed and was later acquitted of the one remaining charge at Snaresbrook Crown Court, the police and the CPS having dropped the other two charges.

Throughout the ordeal of the trial, MM and LM rented out their home and lived in Hackney instead. When they moved back to Redbridge in November 1989, the trouble started immediately. A new next door neighbour falsely accused MM of assaulting him and went so far as taking out a private prosecution against MM. MM was recently acquitted of this charge as well and intends to pursue the matter through the courts. The same neighbour has also threatened MM, LM and their young child with his rottweiler and regularly blocks their driveway with his car.

MM has also been regularly stopped and searched by the police. In November 1989, he was pulled over while driving in Hackney. When the officer put his name through the computer, he was incorrectly informed that MM was convicted of grievous bodily harm on a police officer. MM rightly denied this, having been acquitted of the charges against him. Nevertheless, the officer ordered him to get out of his car so that he could search it. MM, who had a fireplace poker in the car, found himself charged with possessing an offensive weapon. We await the decision of the court with regard to this charge.

The predicament of MM and his family is a stark indication that 'moving up in the world' is no escape from the racism of British society. Racism clearly continues to fester away in suburban Redbridge, totally unchallenged by the local council, the police and other relevant agencies. Indeed, the response of the police at every level has been atrocious. They have done nothing to deter the white neighbours from constantly harassing MM and his family. In fact, they have been part and parcel of the problem themselves by criminalising MM on several occasions. And what is the use of being acquitted on appeal if the police continue to accuse you of something that the court has found you innocent of? Something must be done about such a blatant violation of basic legal rights.

able to identify those responsible for the harassment. Volunteers involved in the campaign also began regular weekend leafleting sessions in Rathbone Market, E16, to advertise our presence and publicise the campaign.

To complement this work we produced articles in local publications, visited local groups and statutory agencies around Canning Town, Beckton and Custom House, including SOCATACH, Housing Managers and the Director of Social Services. Whilst few people we spoke to were openly dismissive of the aims of the campaign, it was noticeable that many of the anti-racist and anti-fascist posters we put up all over South Newham had to be constantly replaced as they were defaced or torn down.

PUBLIC MEETING

On 31 July, the Working Party organised a Public Meeting at the NACA Centre, Barking Road, E13, to publicise the aims of the campaign and provide a platform for local people to voice their concerns. The venue was chosen partly for security purposes in the event of a BNP backlash to the anti-racist and anti-fascist message contained in the campaign's publicity material. The meeting was attended by over 150 people, many of whom were residents in the area, but also including representatives from schools, community groups, councillors, council officers, and active anti-racists.

The meeting was addressed by Gerry Gable (editor of *Searchlight* magazine, an anti-fascist monthly), Barry Mussenden (NMP), Sabdar Ali (Canning Town Muslim Welfare Association) and Rita Sexious, a local white woman with black children and grandchildren who had experienced racial harassment from the moment she moved into the area.

Rita Sexious told the meeting how the harassment against her family had begun with neighbours referring to her as a 'nigger lover' and calling her children 'black monkeys'. This abuse then escalated to the point where a black friend had ammonia sprayed into his eyes; threats were made against Mrs Sexious' life, culminating in an arson attempt on her home in June.

Mrs Sexious' experiences epitomise the local fight against racists. She has a long history of anti-racist work and direct confrontation against racist attackers which has in the past led to her being arrested and charged when she has acted in self-defence. Undeterred by this, and by the fact that she is disabled and has a daughter who suffers from cancer, Mrs Sexious continued with her brave fight. At the meeting she spoke of how she witnessed the brutal attack on DS and, utterly disgusted with the attitude of the police, she had referred him to NMP.

Following these contributions, the discussion

was then opened up to the floor, sparking lively debate as to what demands the campaign should make on the authorities. At this point Superintendent John Ball, Newham's Principal Community Liaison Officer (CLO), demanded to speak (on the grounds that he had to leave) in front of six other people who were waiting in turn to be called by the Chair. He was offered the platform on the basis that he would then accept questions from the community. This he arrogantly declined to do and his patronising behaviour naturally angered those present.



Superintendent Ball then seems to have used local people's objections to his chauvinistic behaviour as an excuse to storm out of the meeting in what appeared to be a deliberate action, stage-managed to divert attention from the real issues, most importantly the threat of further racist attacks. (It should also be noted that the police officers outside who were assigned to 'protect' the meeting from any possible fascist attack irresponsibly stormed off with him!)

It was in light of the failure of the police to respond to racist crime in the area that the meeting agreed that the campaign should continue patrolling and leafleting estates in South Newham. One very beneficial result of the meeting was the drawing in of new volunteers to help with speaking to and working with community groups, tenants associations and schools.

MEDIA COVERAGE OF CAMPAIGN

Although *Time Out* magazine covered the public meeting, the immediate report in the local newspaper was not so favourable. The *Newham Recorder's* report of 3 August 1989 (which appeared under the headline 'Police Chief Storm' was followed by a more detailed article a week later in which John Ball's biased view of the meeting was given undue weightage. (see Chapters 7 and 11). Those who had attended the meeting were so outraged by the false impression given in this report that many wrote angry replies to the *Recorder*, two of which were eventually printed (see letter 'Lawman out of step on racism') after

complaints of censorship from NMP. However, on 31 August the *Recorder* printed an exceptionally long rejoinder from John Ball who again attempted to discredit the work of NMP.

Further coverage of the campaign was provided by Thames News who on 16 August filmed an evening patrol and interviewed four of the people who had experienced persistent racial harassment and violent attacks in the area. All were scathing of the police response to attacks and openly welcomed the work of the campaign and praised the support that had been given to them through the patrols. The five-minute feature on Thames News (screened the following day) included film of the Newham Organised Racial Incidents Squad (NORIS) discussing 'The Patel Case' and an interview with Deputy Assistant Commissioner Wyn Jones who attacked the initiative as being 'divisive' and accused NMP volunteers of being 'self-appointed', totally ignoring the fact that we were there solely at the request of those people who had been attacked. Wyn Jones also attempted to dismiss the patrols as being some form of 'vigilante' operation, refusing to address the question of our presence being required as a direct result of the total failure of the police to tackle the problem.

SUCCESSES OF THE CAMPAIGN

Despite Wyn Jones' remarks, the pressure the campaign exerted on the police meant that they were forced to come up with some sort of response, reopening those cases we had identified. However, in a completely misguided effort to 'crack down' on racist attacks, they began to attempt their own patrols - but in a mobile station van. With remarkable similarity to an ice-cream van touting for custom before moving on to the next area, this initiative completely failed to convince black people that the police were now taking racist attacks seriously. The police had clearly become no more sensitive to the needs of the black community, a point which was further emphasised when the shopkeeper opposite Eastlea School rang Plaistow Police Station to report another incident. The officers took over an hour to arrive. When he dared to complain, he was told by a WPC that if that was his attitude then he could forget it and she proceeded to leave without taking a statement.

Fortunately, the regular presence of the campaign's supporters led to this shopkeeper and other local people, becoming far more confident about confronting their attackers. Representatives from the campaign were also invited to report to local schools, and, through regular liaison with Eastlea School in particular, shopkeepers were able to identify those pupils who were responsible for harassment and they were immediately suspended.

Through speaking at the Eastlea Community Association we found out that many local white residents were already aware of the problem and supported the aims of the campaign. Regrettably, the local Labour Party ward was not willing to wake up to the seriousness of the problem.

One of the most obvious successes of the campaign was the lull in racist violence in the immediate area, although this in no way represented the end of the attacks since assaults continued in surrounding areas. One example of this was a horrific attack on a black staff nurse caught in a traffic jam on the Canning Town roundabout. As far as we are aware, no arrests have ever been made for this.

Attacked nurse may lose an eye

BY TIM MURRAY

A STAFF nurse may lose the sight of one eye after a vicious unprovoked attack last week. Abraham Acheampong was attacked by a motorist as he sat waiting in his car in a traffic jam at the Canning Town roundabout.

One of the men then set about him with a metal pole, hitting and poking him in the face. They then sped off down Silvertown Way.

Mr Acheampong, who lives in South London and is a staff nurse at Newham General Hospital, was rushed to hospital with serious eye and face injuries. He had an operation on his eye and doctors fear he may lose the sight of the eye.

Police are appealing for witnesses who may have seen the incident and the red Breg Mitsubishi, which has a four in the number. It is believed to have had four people in it.

The driver of the car is described as being about 21 and quite fat. One of the passengers is described as being aged about 18-20, with blond hair and was wearing a pink T-shirt with white sleeves and blue jeans. If anyone has any information they should ring Det Con John Evans at Plaistow CID on 593 8232.

However, the campaign had now managed to fulfil one of its initial aims - the establishment of a community base in the Star Lane area with a network of local people monitoring the situation, and referring new cases to NMP. To complement our regular support visits, the Social Services Department pledged to create a temporary post for a racial harassment worker who would be partly responsible to NMP and assist us with this support work. Thus, while we maintained our anti-fascist initiative in the area, we were now able to focus the campaign more specifically on work within the tenants' movement.

BLACK TENANTS' MOVEMENT

Much of the racist violence in South Newham was clearly council estate-based, or took place around shops within these estates. Therefore the aim of creating black support networks in the area was

not only to establish a community base, but also to tap into existing tenants' associations (TAs), informing them of racist activity in the area and demanding that they support the black tenants.

With a view to creating a forum capable of encompassing the whole of South Newham, we entered into a joint initiative with the Housing Department and the South Canning Town and Custom House Project (SOCATACH). The result was the formation of the South Newham Black Tenants and Residents Support Group, the objective of which was to provide a single organisational voice for black tenants to urge the authorities and the TAs to take on board their demands.

At the same time NMP workers and supporters were making inroads into TAs in South Newham, meeting with tenants' representatives, informing them of the nature of the problems and demanding that they act. Despite the poor record of TAs in acknowledging the existence of racial harassment (and in some cases being racist themselves), we were surprised to find them fairly receptive. A sticking point, however, was their strong opposition to the concept of a black tenants' group. They tended to see the role of the campaign as encouraging individual black tenants to become more active within their local TAs, and were very hostile to the ideas of black self-organisation. This stance demonstrated their failure to come to terms fully with the fact that the prevalence of racism in South Newham has been one of the main reasons why black people are reluctant to join TAs.

Newham Tenants and Residents Federation also failed to appreciate this fact when they wrote in their December issue of *Federation Feedback* that:

There is a fear that the groups may be used as a stick to beat the tenants' movement with, that positive things that happen are ignored and the issue becomes political. There is also a fear that groups could be used as a jumping board for the establishment of exclusively black tenants' associations, something which we are definitely against.

This type of defensive reaction to the prospect of black tenants organising a forum to project common

demands must only reinforce the urgent need for a Black Tenants and Residents Support Group. Although the group's initial meetings attracted only a few tenants, wider publicity of the December meeting resulted in over 20 black tenants attending along with representatives from NMP, the Housing Department and SOCATACH. Throughout this meeting we remained adamant that the group should be totally autonomous, with the Housing Department helping to resource it without attempting to control it. Views varied as to what the immediate issues of concern should be, but there was no doubt that the priority had to be the problem of increasing racial harassment.

The anger of local tenants expressed itself in condemnation of the Housing Department for its poor record in dealing with their concerns and in support for the approach adopted by NMP's 'South Newham campaign'. However, the meeting came to a very constructive end, with commitments being taken to support those tenants who were being racially attacked and for a recruitment drive to be undertaken to draw more black tenants into the group.

For the past ten years, NMP has consistently advocated such groups as the way forward for tackling racist attacks against isolated black families. In 1987 the Project worked with the council to bring people together to form the Forest Gate Black Tenants and Residents Group. Similar groups are now emerging across the borough although we will continue to prioritise that of South Newham for all the reasons detailed in this chapter.

To sum up, the South Newham campaign has served as an example of how the Project can act as a catalyst for community action and self-defence: confronting racist elements in Canning Town; providing a support network for victims of racist violence; creating greater awareness of attacks in the area; and challenging directly institutions operating in the area. The campaign against racist violence in South Newham illustrates the role of black community organisations, such as NMP, which is to act as a resource for black people since ultimately it is the community that constitutes the base for resistance to racism, as it has done in South Newham for the past 100 years.



6 POLICE HARASSMENT

Racial harassment is an integral part of British society, rooted in a history of colonial oppression and ideas of white superiority. The police cannot be divorced from this reality. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of black people in this country are bitterly critical not only of the ineffective response of the police to racist violence but also of racist policing against the black community. Consequently, exposing police brutality and malpractice has always been a priority on NMP's agenda. For we are not talking about a few rotten apples in the barrel; we are talking about a rotten barrel filled with rotten apples.

CASEWORK

A total of 109 cases of police harassment were reported to NMP during 1989. Below we break down these cases in terms of manner of referral, gender, police station, area and nature of harassment:

Breakdown in terms of manner of referral

Direct	75
Emergency Service (during non-office hours)	21
Via Other Agencies	13

Breakdown in terms of gender¹

Female	22
Male ²	87

Breakdown in terms of police station

West Ham	41
Plaistow	15
Forest Gate	13
East Ham	6
Outside Newham ⁵	17
Unidentified Police Station ⁴	17

Breakdown in terms of area

Forest Gate	27
Stratford	22
Manor Park	16
Canning Town/Custom House	9
Beckton/North Woolwich	8
Plaistow	6
East Ham	4
Outside Newham ⁸	17

Breakdown in terms of nature of police harassment⁶

Assault/physical abuse	30
Verbal abuse	24
Stop and search	9
Traffic	9
Home raids	8
Immigration	8
Other ⁷	21

POLICE VIOLENCE

Below we document in more detail specific cases of police harassment and what measures NMP has taken to counter abuse of police power.

Police raids resulting in violence

● One evening in November, the police knocked on the door of the V family in Forest Gate, looking for PV in relation to an alleged offence. When PV came to the door, he was promptly arrested and put into a police van without protest. The police then demanded to search the house. When PV's mother, Mrs V, asked whether they had a warrant, they replied that they did not need one and that if she did not get out of the way, she too would be arrested.

All of a sudden, without the slightest provocation, officers started pulling Mrs V out of the way. One of Mrs V's daughter, LV, verbally objected to the way the police were assaulting her mother. For this, she was arrested and dragged away to the police van, wearing just a top and slippers. She was not even allowed to grab a skirt or trousers, and her sister's attempts to provide her with these items of clothing were also denied.

In the meantime, over a dozen officers stormed into the house, striking out indiscriminately. Mrs V was punched in the face, and her daughter BV was kicked in the shin. Many neighbours had gathered around, horrified to see police officers being so unnecessarily violent. Not a single officer tried to calm the situation down.

NMP, meanwhile, had been

Notes on statistical breakdowns

1. Our statistics in terms of gender represent the victim and/or the person within a family with whom we have had the most frequent contact or who notified us of the incident.

2. Four of these cases involve children under the age of 18.

3. 'Outside Newham' represents neighbouring boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest or police stations elsewhere in London where Newham residents were being held.

4. 'Unidentified Police Station' represents incidents of police harassment in Newham where we have been unable to identify police officers and their stations.

5. 'Outside Newham' represents neighbouring boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest or areas outside Newham where Newham residents have faced police harassment.

6. The majority of those who complained to us of police harassment experienced more than one kind of harassment. We have therefore classified incidents in terms of what the major component of harassment was.

7. 'Other' represents other forms of police harassment from police indifference towards racial harassment to victims of racial harassment being arrested and charged by the police.

telephoned by one of the neighbours. We went straight there and found the entire street was cordoned off with 11 police cars and two police vans. There were easily over 30 officers present, both uniformed and plainclothes. We asked to speak to the officer in charge who turned out to be Inspector McNicky from West Ham Police Station who in June 1988 led the raid on a christening party in Plaistow which sparked the 'Defend the Plaistow 4 Campaign'. When we asked him what was going on, he replied that the police were making a few arrests, that the matter was under control and that everything would be over shortly. We then asked him why there were so many police officers swamping the area. He became annoyed and told us to move out of the way or he would have us arrested for obstruction.

Soon after and for no apparent reason, half a dozen officers dragged SJ out of the house. In front of witnesses from NMP, he was kicked, punched and beaten to the ground whilst other officers were shouting racist abuse like 'black bastard.' There was tremendous commotion. The police made no attempt to control their behavior or hide what they were doing; in front of us all, they continued to assault SJ. SJ was eventually thrown into a police van along with the others taken away.

NMP proceeded to take several statements from those present, make note of the names and addresses of other witnesses. We also arranged legal representation for those arrested. We then went to West Ham Police Station with several members of the V family. It was not until the early hours of the morning that SJ and LV were released. SJ was charged with four counts of actual bodily harm (ABH) on police officers and LV with obstruction.

This raid was one of many reported to the Project during 1988. It was particularly outrageous in that the police officers involved were totally out of control. There was no need for the excessive force and heavy-handed policing that took place; nor were so many officers needed to arrest one person suspected of an offence. In addition, to arrest a young woman on a winter's evening and take her away in a semi-undressed state is disgusting. And to beat up someone in full view of relatives, neighbours, and other bystanders and then charge him with four counts of ABH is downright criminal.

It must be stated that such raids do more to ridicule the police's professed commitment to combating racial harassment and more to damage so-called police community relations than any report or action by NMP. Nobody who has ever experienced or witnessed such an abuse of power by the police could possibly trust the police again. It is, nevertheless, imperative that we continue to highlight and publicise examples of police violence

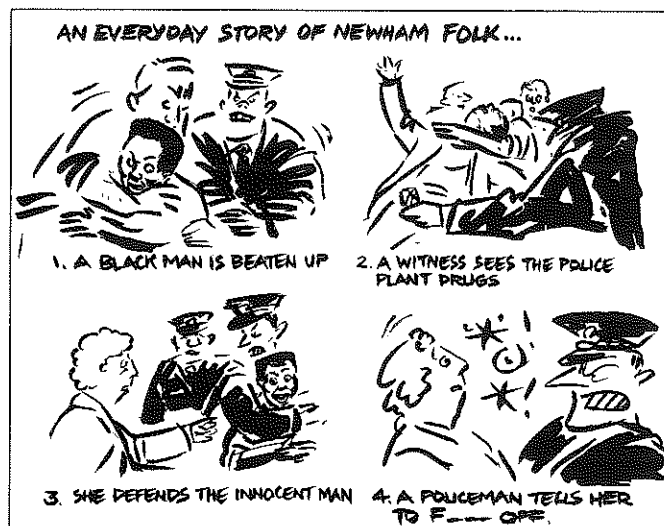
so that abuse of police power is not swept under the carpet.

Criminalisation of black people

● One afternoon in March, MS was doing some repair work on his car in Forest Gate. Two police officers pulled over and began harassing him, asking for his name and address. MS refused to give any information, which was his legal right as he had not committed any offence or been arrested for anything. The officers began racially abusing him, calling him a 'f...ing black bastard'. They then told MS to get out of the car and moved in on him so that they were unnecessarily close. MS told the officers to leave him alone and attempted to get back into the car. One of the officers kicked the car door shut on MS's hand, whilst the other radioed for back-up. Reinforcements soon arrived.

When a white neighbour who lives opposite and who had seen the whole incident came out of her house to tell the police that MS had done nothing wrong, she was told to 'f... off'. Soon after, one of the officers pulled out a bag and announced that MS was being arrested for possession of cannabis. He was roughly handcuffed and thrown into a police van. An officer continually knelt on his groin during the drive to Forest Gate Police Station.

On arrival, MS was subjected to further racist abuse. His trousers were stripped off and only thrown to him afterwards, all this while still handcuffed. Several hours later, MS was charged with assault on a police officer and possession of cannabis, and released.



Apart from the witness already mentioned, there were at least four other witnesses to this incident. NMP took statements from all of them and arranged legal representation for MS. The conclusion we reached from our investigations was that MS had been framed by the police. When the case came up at Snaresbrook Crown Court in October, MS was

acquitted of both charges against him. The judge, recognising the discrepancies in police testimony, proposed an inquiry into the case. To this date no officers have been suspended for this outrageous miscarriage of justice. We await the results of any possible inquiry. The officers involved in the case were PCs Robson, Szabo, Murphy and Wellington.

MS was fortunate to obtain such a favourable result. Who can estimate how many others like him have had similar experiences yet have seen their attackers get away with it? The lesson we must learn from this case is that, notwithstanding the limitations of relying entirely on the legal system for justice, it is worth vigorously fighting through the courts, if only on the off-chance of winning. We cannot afford the luxury of not doing so.

● In November MR and a friend left a pub in Plaistow to find a number of police officers standing outside. One of them grabbed MR's friend and began to manhandle him. When MR verbally objected to the way his friend was being treated, he was told 'alright Paki, you're nicked as well'.

Thrown into a police van, MR was forced to lie on the floor. Whilst one officer stood on his arm (which was already broken and in plaster), another officer forced his knee onto MR's neck, making it difficult for him to breathe. When MR, who is asthmatic, complained of breathing pains, he was kicked in the back.

On arrival at West Ham Police Station, MR was punched by an officer in the face and stomach, and his shirt was ripped off. He was seen by a police doctor who was unsympathetic and unresponsive. He was also denied access to a solicitor. MR's ordeal ended hours later when he was charged with drunk while disorderly and released.

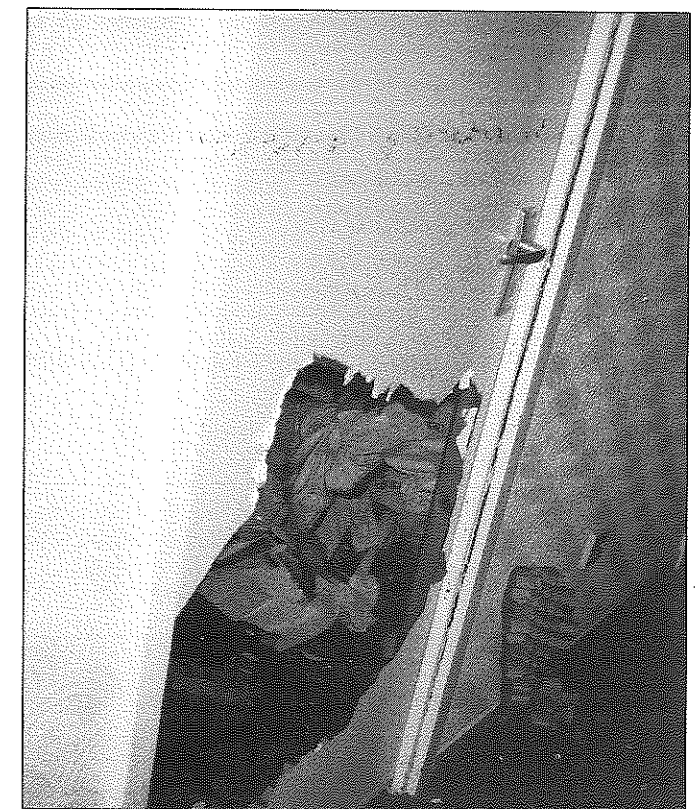
In NMP's experience, this type of case is all too common: grab a black person coming out of a pub or standing on the street, beat him up, criminalise him, and frame him for drunk while disorderly (a summary charge which cannot be taken before a jury but must be dealt with by magistrates). When such a case comes up for trial, it is usually dealt with like a lottery, totally unrelated to the facts of the case. Hopefully MR will be one of the lucky ones.

● JD who lives in Forest Gate has been harassed by the police since early 1988. He is regularly stopped and searched while walking on the streets and while driving. Once he was arrested and locked up for over six hours, on suspicion of an offence, before being released on bail. A month later, he was informed that no charges were being brought.

But it was in September 1989 that things began

to get well out of hand. JD was standing outside Barking tube station waiting for friends, when two police officers approached him and told him to move on as he was causing an obstruction. When JD explained that he was waiting for a few friends, the officers responded by grabbing him and dragging him along the ground. Reinforcements arrived, and JD was punched and kicked by the police. He shouted out for witnesses to no avail. He was thrown into a police van and taken to Barking Police Station. Unbelievably, JD was charged with assault on a police officer.

A month later, JD returned home one morning to find his front door boarded up, making it impossible for him to enter. Suspecting foul play, he went straight to Forest Gate Police Station to report the incident. To his horror, he was promptly arrested, searched and interrogated. Eventually released without charge, JD returned to his home and managed to remove the boarding. He found the front door smashed in and the house thoroughly ransacked. One of his neighbours then informed him that some 15 uniformed and plainclothes police officers were responsible.



The police have a smashing time!

JD and his mother came to see NMP. After making inquiries, we found that the police were justifying their break-in on the grounds of reasonable suspicion (although they did not find whatever they were looking for). They

(continued on p30)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 1989

JANUARY

- 8 Second annual torchlight procession through Hackney led by families of those who have been killed or brutalised by the Hackney police.
- 8 'Underground railroad' which provides sanctuary to asylum-seekers is subject of Home Office investigation.
- 12 24 police officers are charged with perjury, assault and conspiracy to pervert justice arising from Wapping dispute.
- 15 Trevor Monerville's grandmother charged with assault after she and her husband are dragged to Hackney Police Station in middle of night - charge later dropped.
- 16 Ahmed Sheikh, a Somali refugee, is murdered by National Front supporters in Edinburgh.
- 18 Police and immigration officers smash into Manchester church where Viraj Mendis has been in sanctuary for over two years. He is deported to Sri Lanka two days later.
- 21 London Anti-Fascist Action pickets shops in Carnaby Street that sell Nazi and racist merchandise.
- 27 Police charges against Plaistow 4 are thrown out of court.

FEBRUARY

- 6 Metropolitan Police launch another campaign against racial harassment.
- 11 Over 700 people demonstrate in Sheffield against racist attacks.
- 13 Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, announces plans to curb right of silence.
- 16 Dora Oppong is granted leave to remain in Britain after a successful NMP anti-deportation campaign.
- 22 Duke Daley is found badly bruised and hanged to death in a holding cell at Marylebone Magistrates Court.
- 27 Over 150 anti-fascist people picket West Ham tube station where the British National Party are congregating before a meeting in Canning Town.
- 27 Police and immigration officers raid factory in Hackney and arrest 38 Turks.

MARCH

- 2 Sir James Miskin, a senior judge at the Old Bailey, who referred to 'nig-nogs' in a speech, refuses to apologise. Society of Black Lawyers demand his resignation.
- 17 DNA tests show that hundreds of dependants refused entry to Britain were telling truth.
- 18 March in Tottenham on the third anniversary of the convictions of the Tottenham 3.
- 22 Government refuses to change immigration laws to admit more Hong Kong Chinese.
- 30 Winston Silcott is elected honorary president of London School of Economics Students Union.
- 30 Tribunal rules that it is racial discrimination to refuse Rastafarian a job because of dreadlocks.

APRIL

- 3 Ronald Bartle, a Bow Street magistrate, drops charges against six police officers involved in Wapping dispute on grounds that police officers cannot be expected to recall events that happened over a year ago.
- 4 Marion Gaima wins appeal against deportation after

successful NALGO anti-deportation campaign.

- 5 Four police officers are jailed at Old Bailey for plotting to frame two men who were taking part in protest march at Hyde Park.
- 12 Dermot McWard is awarded £8,700 damages against Metropolitan Police for breaking his leg during demonstration in support of miners' strike in 1985.
- 20 Home Office figures show that deportations rose by 50% in 1988.
- 23 Over 7,000 people demonstrate in Southall to mark 10th anniversary of murder of Blair Peach by police.
- 24 Irvine Chambers is awarded 5000 damages against Metropolitan Police for racist abuse, assault, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution.

MAY

- 3 Southwark Council to evict family for racially harassing neighbours.
- 16 Home Office is ordered to bring five Tamils who were wrongly deported back to Britain.
- 17 Labour Party leadership selects Kate Hoey, a white teacher, as its candidate for Vauxhall by-election, rejecting Martha Osamor, a black activist, who was chosen by the local party.
- 24 Police are accused of provoking 'riot' after raid on pub in Heathtown, Wolverhampton.
- 27 Anti-Fascist Action mobilises over 500 people to take over Speakers Corner where fascists from around Europe are meeting. Fascists are driven out.
- 31 CLR James, one of the great Marxist and anti-racist thinkers of 20th century, dies.

JUNE

- 16 Police Complaints Authority to investigate 18 cases of Notting Hill police planting drugs on black youths.
- 19 Samuel Ricketts is acquitted of murder at the Old Bailey.
- 22 Home Office admits that Kurdish refugees are being sent back to Turkey before even getting off the plane.
- 24 79 anti-racists are arrested following a Kirklees Black Workers Group counter-rally in Dewsbury.
- 29 Home Office admits that 3,050 immigrants were deported in 1988.

JULY

- 2 London Alliance Against Racism and Fascism is founded by active grassroots anti-racist organisations throughout London.
- 2 Jamie Stewart is murdered in Holloway Road Police Station.
- 5 Edwin Carr is murdered in Carter Street Police Station.
- 5 Home Office admits that three officers from West Midlands Serious Crime Squad who took part in Birmingham 6 interrogations have since been involved in cases where confessions were fabricated.
- 6 39 anti-racists are arrested following Tower Hamlets march in which 3,000 people protested at police indifference to racist attacks.
- 11 Kulvinder Singh is killed while chasing white youths who robbed his shop in Newham.
- 12 Vincent Graham is killed while being chased by police in Kings Cross.

- 18 Gifford Inquiry into racism and policing in Toxteth, Liverpool, is released. Retired police officer who gave evidence to inquiry is arrested.
- 20 Raphael Joseph nearly dies after being brutally assaulted by the police in Hackney.
- 26 14-year old Tahir Akram is shot and murdered in Oldham by white youths.
- 28 Dewsbury 82 Defence Campaign is launched at public meeting in Dewsbury.
- 29 Over 3,000 people march in Hackney in support of right of Kurdish refugees to stay in Britain.
- 31 NMP public meeting on racism in South Newham.
- 31 Nigerian woman awarded £8,000 damages after being sexually assaulted by a Metropolitan police officer.

AUGUST

- 1 Sullivan Barwani dies in Bow Street Police Station.
- 7 Mohammed Altaf is arrested and charged with malicious wounding after he and his nine months pregnant sister are attacked by racist neighbours in Manor Park, Newham.
- 9 Seamus Duffy, a 15-year old Catholic boy, is murdered by plastic bullet fired by RUC officer in Belfast.
- 11 Norfolk police admit mistake in 'blacking up' white officers for TV reconstruction of robbery.
- 13 Scotland Yard maintains that racist attacks are up by 60% over 1988.
- 14 Police Complaints Authority to conduct inquiry into corruption in West Midlands Serious Crime Squad.
- 14 1988 British Crime Survey concludes that black people are more likely to be victims of crime than white people.
- 17 Prison Reform Trust reports Afro-Caribbeans are nearly eight times more likely to be imprisoned than whites.
- 26 John Townend, Tory MP, calls for deportation of Muslims who do not accept publication of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*.
- 28 Notting Hill Carnival ends in unprovoked attacks by police in riot gear.

SEPTEMBER

- 7 TUC passes resolution that trade unionists found guilty of racism face expulsion.
- 12 Nearly 100 Asian pupils bussed to school by ILEA in Tower Hamlets to protect them from racist attacks.
- 19 Kent police sack one officer and fine five others for fiddling crime clear-up rates.
- 22 Police Complaints Authority to conduct disciplinary hearing against Detective Chief Superintendent Melvin who was in charge of investigation into Broadwater Farm uprising of 1985.
- 23 British National Party is prevented by anti-fascists from having rally in Bradford.
- 29 Over 400 police raid Broadwater Farm on the pretext of searching for drugs. 38 people are arrested.

OCTOBER

- 1 Memorial arch for Altan Ali, murdered in a racist attack, is unveiled in Whitechapel.
- 6 Siho Iyiguvem, a Kurdish refugee who was refused asylum, dies after setting fire to himself in Harmondsworth remand centre.

- 7 Over 500 people picket Tottenham Police Station on fourth anniversary of murder of Cynthia Jarrett and Broadwater Farm uprising.
- 12 PC Anderson, a Metropolitan police officer, convicted at Old Bailey of raping a black woman and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.
- 18 CRE survey claims that 1 in 4 black people in Glasgow has suffered racial harassment.
- 19 Guildford 4 are freed, after being wrongfully imprisoned for 15 years. Judicial inquiry and criminal investigation to be launched into Surrey police.
- 24 LAARF public meeting to launch united families campaign into deaths in police custody.
- 28 Over 3,000 people march from Stamford Hill to Westminster in memory of Siho Iyiguvem and in protest at Britain's racist immigration laws.
- 31 Akinwale Arobicke is awarded £35,000 damages for being wrongfully imprisoned for 17 months by racist police officers in Liverpool.

NOVEMBER

- 1 Black prison officer in Durham top security prison is transferred because of racial harassment from colleagues.
- 6 British Refugee Council endorses mandatory repatriation of Vietnamese asylum-seekers from Hong Kong.
- 11 Communities of Resistance conference in Hackney on implications of 1992 for black and refugee communities.
- 11 Kuldip Singh Sekhon is stabbed to death in Southall by white man - he had 54 stab wounds on his body.
- 12 Anti-Fascist Action mobilises over 800 people to prevent National Front from marching on Remembrance Day.
- 23 European Parliament votes for investigation of Birmingham 6 case by its legal affairs committee.
- 23 CRE wins leave to sue Tower Hamlets Council for continuing to discriminate against Bengali families in allocation of housing.

DECEMBER

- 5 Rupert Taylor is awarded £100,000 damages against Metropolitan Police for being planted with drugs by PC Judd from Notting Hill Police in 1984.
- 6 11-year-old Tasleem Akhtar is sexually assaulted and beaten to death with a brick by a 16-year-old white youth in Birmingham.
- 7 Courts and Legal Services Bill which proposes to abolish barristers' monopoly rights in higher courts is published.
- 9 March in Welling, Kent, to close down British National Party headquarters.
- 11 British government forcibly repatriates 51 Vietnamese asylum-seekers from Hong Kong.
- 11 Tony Marlow, a Tory MP, says in House of Commons that inner cities are full of 'allens' and warns of 'holocaust' if Hong Kong Chinese are allowed to settle in Britain.
- 13 MPs vote to prosecute Nazi war criminals found living in Britain.
- 14 Home Secretary signs treaty which will bring closer cooperation between European Community police forces.
- 20 Home Affairs Committee publishes report on racial attacks which criticises police for not recruiting enough black officers. Police response is to lower the height requirement which is supposedly a barrier to many Asians.

(continued from p27)

have agreed to pay for the broken front door window but deny being responsible for any other damages. And they are still quibbling over the cost.

JD is yet another young black man considered fair game for police criminalisation. There can be no justification for all the stops and searches, all the threats and intimidation he has suffered. And the police break-in is ample evidence that black people continue to be targets of police violence not only on the streets but in our homes as well. What the police call reasonable grounds is tantamount to taking liberties once again. We remember what happened to Cynthia Jarrett and Cherry Groce in 1985 and what can surely happen again as long as the police have the unbridled powers that they have today.

Hostility to victims of racist violence

● PS was walking home in Plaistow in late December. Out of the blue, he was physically attacked and racially abused by a gang of white youths. He was knocked to the ground and punched and kicked in the face and stomach. On escaping, he immediately phoned West Ham Police Station. Twenty minutes later he was visited by two officers who questioned him about the identity of the attackers. PS described one of his attackers in detail and gave them an approximate account of where the boy lived. At this point, one of the officers became rude and aggressive and actually grabbed PS by the throat, warning him that he would be arrested if he was not more helpful.

This case raises several issues. The police are always using the excuse of being unable to identify the perpetrators of racist attacks as the reason that arrests are not more forthcoming. In this case, however, they were provided with sufficient evidence to investigate the matter thoroughly and take action against PS's attackers. Instead, they were hostile and unsympathetic.

If PS was distressed by the initial response of the police, he was totally unprepared for what was to follow. A week after being attacked, he received a letter from the police saying that no further action was being taken and recommending a private prosecution as the best means forward. We must ask why black people should bother reporting racist attacks to the police if the police do not intend action other than to pass the burden back onto the victims themselves.

NMP immediately arranged a meeting with the officer in charge who happened to be a member of the Newham Organised Racial Incidents Squad (NORIS). He informed us that because the identified attacker had an alibi, no further investigation was planned. He added that the case was not being closed but that the police were awaiting further

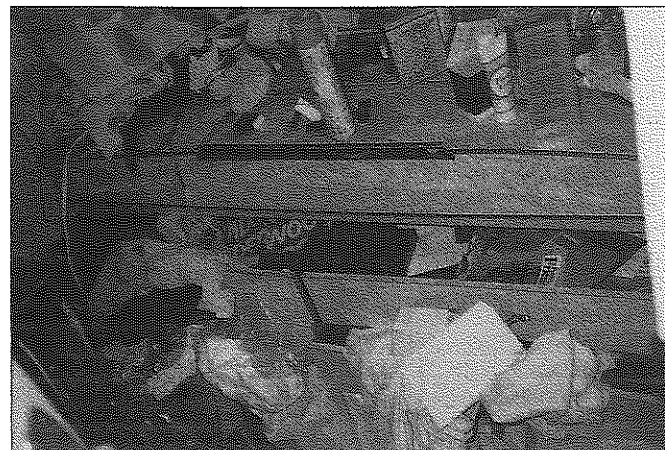
evidence. But who, what, when, where and how is this new evidence to be gathered if the police do not intend to investigate further?

It is hardly surprising that someone who commits a racist attack (or any other crime for that matter) is going to try and produce an alibi, if at all possible. It is a damning indictment of the police that an alibi is sufficient grounds to halt an investigation.

BLACK MOTHERS AND FAMILIES AT RISK

Police harassment of black mothers, who become caught up in the intimidation and violence meted out to their children, has been part and parcel of attempts by the police to 'contain' the black community. The murder of Cynthia Jarrett and the shooting of Cherry Groce (which left her permanently disabled) are stark reminders of what the police are capable of. Newham has been fortunate in not having to face a similar tragedy; however, there is no shortage of incidents where mothers have found themselves harassed, beaten up, arrested, and their homes ransacked and their property destroyed by the police. Below we document a few pertinent examples.

● In June Mrs K returned from work to her home in Manor Park to find the front door smashed in, the house ransacked, and some valuable jewellery stolen. She phoned Forest Gate Police Station and reported the burglary. Before the police arrived, however, her son showed up and explained that officers from West Ham Police Station had damaged the door, searched the house, and arrested him. He had been released without charge. The police had left the front door open and someone or other must have come in and stolen the jewellery. The police have said that they will pay for the damage although nothing has yet been forthcoming. Mrs K intends to sue the police.



Police 'search and destroy' mission

● In September Mrs CP accompanied her son who is a juvenile to West Ham Police Station. When he objected to threats by the police to arrest him, he was promptly set upon by half a dozen officers. Mrs CP warned her son not to resist and told him 'don't say anything, this is police harassment, I will report it to Newham Monitoring Project'. One officer responded by accusing her of assaulting him although she had not even touched a single one of the officers present. She was subsequently arrested and charged with assault on a police officer. The whole incident was fully witnessed by Mrs P's niece who was in the foyer. Mrs CP's son was eventually released without charge.

● In July Mrs P was at her home in Plaistow when a number of police officers forced their way into the house and turned the place upside down. One officer commented 'what's an old woman like you want with so many things?' No explanation was given as to what the police were searching for and they left having found nothing.

Mrs P is sure that the raid must have been related to charges pending against her son. She has made an official complaint against those officers involved as this was but the latest in a series of incidents where she has been harassed by the police during the ongoing investigation of her son.

The case of a white family suffering police harassment also came to NMP's attention.

● In September, three police officers knocked on the front door of the H family in Manor Park. They asked to speak to IH who was sleeping at the time. His aunt who is a pensioner went upstairs to wake him. But the police would not wait - they rushed in, dragged IH out of bed and set upon him. A WPC kned him in the groin. IH's aunt protested and was handcuffed, threatened with arrest and called a 'f...ing old cow'. Then half a dozen other officers who had just arrived kicked in the front door and also rushed in. IH's mother, SH, was dragged out of her room and deliberately kicked in the shin and foot, causing a massive swelling which was later treated and bandaged at St George's Hospital, and bruising to her arm. Her daughter who has Downs Syndrome was screaming and crying. The WPC told her to shut the child up or she would be taken into care.

IH was thrown into a police van and taken away. He was charged with assault on a police officer and eventually released in the early hours of the morning without any money or shoes. Officers laughed when he had to walk home barefoot from West Ham Police Station. SH applied for compensation from the police for damages to her front door. She received a reply

saying that as the police had 'acted correctly and in the proper execution of their duty', no payment would be made.

CHILDREN UNDER ATTACK

Several cases have come to our attention of children being harassed by the police and denied their rights as juveniles.

● In July, 12-year-old LG was playing with some friends on a building site in Silvertown. A few of his friends were tampering with a caravan. A worker on the building site saw what was happening and grabbed LG to get him to identify his friends. Officers from Plaistow Police Station came and took LG away. LG's father was phoned. He went to Plaistow Police Station and refused to give the police consent to interview LG without a solicitor being present. But the police questioned LG anyway without his father or a solicitor being present, even though the building site worker himself admitted that LG had nothing to do with what had happened. After five hours in custody, the police released LG with a caution.

● In July, 13-year-old AK and 10-year-old RK were physically attacked and racially abused outside their home in Beckton by two white neighbours. They were told 'you Pakis have guts to come out of the house' and 'next time I'll stick a knife in your head' and set upon ruthlessly. AK suffered a black eye, a sprained knee and a bruised back and elbow. When the attack happened, their parents were both at work.

One of their friends who witnessed the whole incident phoned the police. Three officers from Plaistow Police Station arrived 45 minutes later. After interviewing the attackers, they came and questioned AK and RK although no adult was present. As they were leaving, one officer called the boys 'Pakis' and told them they deserved to get beaten up. As far as NMP is aware, neither of the attackers has ever been charged.

UPDATE FROM 1988

In last year's *Annual Report*, we documented two serious cases of police harassment which have since been resolved in the courts.

● In 1988, Samuel Ricketts, who always protested his innocence, was arrested and charged with murder. The case against him was based solely on the testimony of two prisoners on remand

for armed robbery who claimed that they had heard Samuel admit to the murder. After being held for over six months in custody, Samuel was released on bail.

The case came up at the Old Bailey in June 1989. The two prosecution witnesses admitted in court that they knew that by giving evidence against Samuel their cases would be treated more favourably and that the charges against them would be reduced (which is exactly what had happened). The trial lasted over two weeks. After deliberating for less than a hour, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty. Samuel was free.

Although justice was finally done, an innocent young man had wasted over six months of his life, locked up for a crime he did not commit, heartlessly framed by the police and the judiciary. As in so many other cases, most notably those of the Guildford 4, the Tottenham 3 and the Birmingham 6, the police had no qualms, in the absence of any genuine leads or suspects, about accusing an innocent person of murder. In this case, Samuel Ricketts took the fall but was ultimately acquitted. He was fortunate; many are not.

- In December 1988, 14 year-old O was the victim of a vicious racist attack outside her home in Stratford. The police arrived. But despite

witnessing one of the attackers throw a final punch at O, the officers went straight for her, slamming O up against a police car. When O was brutalised by the police and arrested, her mother begged the police to leave her alone. She too was struck and arrested. Meanwhile, the attackers walked away.

O was subjected to racist abuse and further violence on the way to West Ham Police Station and inside the station itself. She was charged with assault on a police officer, and threatening behaviour. Her mother was charged with obstruction.

When the case up at Stratford Magistrates Court, both O and her mother were convicted. The magistrates refused to take on board any of the evidence of police violence or of the initial racist attack. Unfortunately, the same thing happened at Snaresbrook Crown Court during the appeal; although O was acquitted of threatening behaviour, the charges of assault against O and obstruction against her mother were upheld.

A grave injustice has been committed. Not only have O and her mother been convicted but their attackers have gone free. Those police officers who collaborated with the attackers by assaulting and criminalising O and her mother have never been disciplined or publicly exposed.

7 POLICING UNDER SCRUTINY

In this chapter, we examine some of the more general policing issues, both local and national, that have arisen during the course of the year and are of particular interest to our work.

POLICE CORRUPTION EXPOSED

On 19 October 1989 the Guildford 4 were released after nearly 15 years in prison. Framed by the British police and judiciary for the IRA pub bombings in Guildford and Woolwich in October 1974, their case demonstrates, in the starkest possible terms, the extent of police corruption in Britain and the lengths to which those at the very highest of levels will go to cover it up.

The Guildford 4 were scapegoats, convicted purely on the basis of fabricated confessions beaten out of them. Although the government has announced a judicial inquiry and criminal investigation into the case, it is unlikely that those responsible at the very top for framing the Guildford 4 will ever be brought to justice. A few officers on the ground will probably be sacrificed, and the matter will be covered up and laid to rest.

Like the Guildford 4, the Birmingham 6 and the Tottenham 3 were convicted on no other evidence than their so-called 'confessions'. They remain in prison, serving life sentences for crimes they did not commit. It is essential that we do everything in our power to secure their release as soon as possible.

While the release of the Guildford 4 will be remembered as the seminal event on the policing calendar of 1989, there were hundreds of other cases - some publicised, others not - that revealed just how rotten the state of policing in Britain actually is. In fact, over the past few months, hardly a day has passed without coverage in the national papers of some scandal or another involving the police.

Take the case of Sir Geoffrey Dear, forced to disband the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad after evidence

that officers (some of whom had been involved in the interrogation of the Birmingham 6) had routinely fabricated confessions could no longer be ignored. An investigation into the work of the Serious Crime Squad, in particular 738 arrests made since 1986, is presently being carried out.



Exposing police corruption and police violence is the principal weapon available to those who have borne the brunt of oppressive policing. There is no substitute. We need to build on the gains of the last year to fight for genuine police accountability during the years ahead.

DEATHS IN POLICE CUSTODY

Below we remember the four black people who, to our knowledge, died in controversial circumstances while in the custody of the Metropolitan Police during 1989 (other black people have died in other prisons). They represent

the latest in a long list of black people who have met their death at the hands of the police. Not a single police officer involved in these crimes has ever been charged, let alone been indicted for murder. Too many questions remain unanswered.

■ Jamie Stewart

Jamie Stewart was stopped by the police in Islington on 1 July for an alleged driving offence. A witness claims that Jamie was strip-searched in the street before being arrested and taken to Holloway Road Police Station. A few hours later, Jamie Stewart was dead. A recent inquest heard that police officers had taken part in a physical attack on Jamie but that death was due to an overdose of cocaine. A wholly unsatisfactory verdict of death by misadventure was returned.

■ Edwin Carr

Edwin Carr was arrested on 5 July following a police raid on his home in Peckham and was taken to Carter Street Police Station, allegedly for possession of cannabis. An hour later, he was taken to King's College Hospital following respiratory failure and placed on a life-support machine. The police claimed that Edwin 'fell ill' while being interviewed. The life-support machine was switched off after a week. What exactly happened to Edwin remains unknown.

■ Vincent Graham

Vincent Graham died after being chased by the police in Kings Cross on 12 July. The police claimed that Vincent fell on his own knife and stabbed himself to death. A witness, however, maintained that a large number of officers punched and kicked Vincent, who was screaming for help. And Vincent's mother said her son's head was battered and bloody when she saw his body in the mortuary.

■ Sullivan Barwani

Sullivan Barwani died at Bow Street Police Station on 1 August. Arrested allegedly for being drunk while disorderly, the circumstances surrounding Sullivan's death remain shrouded in mystery. A police post mortem attributed the cause of death to a cerebral haemorrhage, which takes us no further to the truth.

Dire need for action

All four victims were Afro-Caribbean men, the section of the population disproportionately represented in the numbers detained in prisons, detention centres and police stations, and who receive the highest proportion of custodial sentences - up to eight times more than white people. Black people make up only about 4-5 per cent of the general population and yet account for 17 per cent of the national prison population. Such figures become even more alarming in light of the callous

disregard that police officers have towards black people's lives.

There is an urgent need to collate the experiences of all those closely involved with deaths in police custody; to keep the call for genuine police accountability on the political agenda; to arrange independent post mortems; to collect independent forensic evidence; to publicise the circumstances surrounding deaths in police custody; to be aware of the limitations of inquests, particularly the inadequacy of inquest verdicts in revealing the causes of death. This is important as inquests operate on preset verdicts and do not apportion blame to the institutions with which the deceased have had contact. It is obvious to black people and others that those who control these institutions must take some responsibility for the deaths that occur in their custody - and none more so than the police in whose 'care' so many have lost not only their freedom but their very lives.

MORE MONEY TO BEAT UP MORE BLACK PEOPLE

While the statutory and voluntary sectors in Newham are suffering massive cuts and redundancies due to attempts by the council to lower the poll tax, the police in Newham will be enjoying a hefty increase in their budget. In real terms, Newham's residents will be paying £8.1 million for policing in 1990/91 - a staggering increase of 26 per cent or £1.68m over what ratepayers paid during 1989/90. For the second year in a row, this increase is more than twice the present rate of inflation. It means that every Newham resident paying the poll tax will be coughing up £114.41 towards policing the borough.

What is so disturbing about this massive increase in police expenditure is that neither the people of Newham nor our elected councillors will have any say whatsoever in how this money will be spent. This is yet another example of how police officers are accountable to nobody except other police officers and the Home Secretary. Councillors and community representatives on the Police Community Consultative Group (PCCG) should take note of this.

SUPERINTENDENT JOHN BALL

In past annual reports we have discussed attempts by the police to discredit NMP and the service we provide. Most notable was the comment by Assistant Commissioner Wyn Jones (then Deputy Assistant Commissioner in charge of Area 2 East London) in 1987, that NMP is 'the most sinister, damaging and divisive group operating in the borough today'.

During 1989, anti-racist organisations across London and nationally have sustained renewed public and clandestine attacks by the police. Certain police officers have gone so far as to try to get local authorities to stop funding those who are critical of policing priorities and practices. Southall Monitoring Group, Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign and Mangrove Community Association have all endured such unjustified interference in and attacks on their work. NMP is no exception.

Superintendent John Ball, Newham's principal Community Liaison Officer (CLO), who is in charge of the Newham Organised Racial Incidents Squad (NORIS), has been consistently meddling in affairs which he has no right or authority to meddle in. On 31 July 1989, he attempted to disrupt an NMP public meeting on racist violence in South Newham. He failed miserably and made an utter fool of himself (see chapter 5 for more details).

More sinister and disturbing, however, are his regular attacks on NMP at PCCG meetings and his wheeling and dealing within local authority circles to try and get our funding cut. We intend to take this matter up at the highest level with the Commissioner of Police and the Home Secretary in order to ensure that Superintendent Ball desists from further interference in NMP's affairs. We include here the relevant minutes from the PCCG meeting of 7 December 1989 and the relevant agenda item from the Policing and Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting of 6 February 1990:

- Supt Ball also noted that NMP were funded by Newham Council, that Councillors were Co-opted Members of the Management Committee and asked Councillor McAuley for information regarding to whom NMP were accountable and what action could be taken to question their activities.
- Members' attention is drawn to Supt Ball's recurring emphasis upon NMP. Members' attention is drawn to repeated requests from Supt Ball that the Council consider action against the Project because it funds it. Members have consistently rejected this request as improper and tantamount to censorship of dissenting views. Supt Ball has been asked to provide evidence supporting his position. However, given the impropriety of the request - that Council fund only those groups which are supportive of police view - that Members may wish to take the issue up at a more senior level.

It is important that the activities of officers like Superintendent Ball are exposed so that the public is fully aware of the extent to which certain police officers are willing to go to discredit their critics.

LAY VISITOR SCHEMES

In our 1988 Annual Report we expressed our misgiving over lay visitor schemes. Recent events confirm the validity of these doubts.

Lay visitor schemes were first piloted in 1983 and later commended by the Home Office in 1986 as part of the 'consultative' process. According to Home Office guidelines, the schemes were designed to allay fears of police malpractice and promote public confidence in the police. They involved Home Office-appointed 'lay visitors' making unannounced weekly checks on conditions of detention in different police stations. Visitors then submit reports with their comments regarding the welfare of detainees to senior police officers.

In Newham there has been talk of introducing a lay visitor scheme for nearly three years - the delay largely due to the police's desire that no scheme should be introduced until a PCCG was established in the borough. However, since the formation of the PCCG, the police have refused to accept several points in the draft terms of reference and constitution. While most councillors and community representatives on the PCCG felt that conversations between lay visitors and detainees should take place out of the escorting police officer's hearing (except in exceptional circumstances), the police would not agree to this. They also would not agree to allowing lay visitors to make their reports available to outside agencies without the approval of the PCCG. Consequently, the respective clauses in the draft terms of reference and constitution have been amended to suit the views of the police, albeit with reference to dissenting local opinion. Whatever minimal credibility the lay visitor scheme might have had has thus been severely compromised. We await the introduction of the scheme in Newham with great scepticism.

The experience of Gloria van Cooten, who was a lay visitor in neighbouring Hackney, is revealing in this respect. Gloria became a lay visitor when the scheme was first introduced in Hackney in January 1988. She soon came across cases of detainees injured or beaten up during arrest or in custody, denied basic legal rights (eg the right to silence and being informed of their rights) or held in atrocious conditions. But when she complained to her fellow lay visitors and to senior police officers, nothing was done. She was eventually dismissed in September 1989 for rocking the boat more than the police could handle.

Gloria's experience is indicative of what lay visitor schemes are all about. Lay visitors are not meant to have any power; nor do they have any statutory right to pursue individual complaints of police misconduct. They cannot even make representations on behalf of detainees or advise detainees about their rights. At the end of the day, lay visitor schemes have no independent identity

outside the police force and are designed purely to diffuse public criticisms of the police. It would seem that, like the police-community consultation, lay visitor schemes are primarily a public relations exercise. Newham, beware!

CRIME PREVENTION AT ITS STRANGEST

In March Alan Blows, Chair of the London Association of Neighbourhood Watches and a Newham resident, launched a booklet called *The Active Watch*. Among many bizarre remarks made by Blows is the assertion that 'there are few racial incidents except those imagined by prejudiced people'. Although Neighbourhood Watch has always been applauded by the police as an example of 'power-sharing' and 'police-community consultation', Blows' ideas have proven too much even for the Metropolitan Police. Scotland Yard has distanced itself from Blows' views on 'active' neighbourhood watching, perhaps in fear of being associated with vigilantism. And David Owen MP (SDP) has resigned as patron of the London Association of Neighbourhood Watches. Even some of the other neighbourhood watch groups want nothing to do with Blows. Superintendent Ball, however, has on several occasions praised Alan Blows for various local initiatives to combat crime.

POLICE COMPLAINTS AUTHORITY

As mentioned in previous annual reports, the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) was established under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) in 1984. The PCA is made up of police officers who investigate complaints against other police officers. How anybody can argue that the PCA is independent, as some senior police officers and the Home Office do, is beyond belief.

Contrary to popular opinion, the PCA does not investigate all complaints against the police. As statistics for 1989 are not yet available, let us look briefly at statistics for 1988. Of the 5,294 official complaints made against the Metropolitan Police, only 1,039 were actually referred to the PCA, who only supervised the investigation of 166 by members of the public. Less than 14 per cent of all complaints resulted in some form of action being taken against the accused officers. And a mere 22 complaints resulted in either a conviction for a criminal offence or dismissal. Interestingly, the PCA has complained that many officers facing disciplinary action are taking early retirement on health grounds (thus escaping punishment) and has asked the Home Secretary to amend police regulations to block this loophole.

Considering that most people who complain against the police choose not to go through police channels, out of distrust for a system that involves police officers investigating other police officers, 5,294 complaints in one year is an astronomical figure. Furthermore, the inordinate length of time it takes to have even the most basic complaint (ie those in which there are no *sub judice* restrictions and no absent witnesses, complainants or defendants) investigated, let alone resolved, is enough to put off even the most patient of people.

Clearly the PCA does not command the trust of the black community, or other sections of the community for that matter. In addition to being ineffective, making an official complaint to the police can result in further harassment or in threats of legal action for defamation if the complaint is not substantiated (as has happened on several occasions).

The current complaints system needs to be replaced by a genuinely independent system. Whereas such a demand would have been readily dismissed a year ago by the media and the establishment, in the current climate, where cases of police malpractice receive more publicity, it is no longer seen as subversive.

Far from responding to criticism over the PCA's lack of independence, the police are closing ranks, so fearful are they of public scrutiny. Indeed, the Police Federation (which represents over 100,000 officers up to the rank of chief inspector) delivered a resounding vote of no confidence in the PCA at its annual conference in May 1989. Not because of its ineffectiveness, but due to the 'fact' that police officers were being persecuted and their civil liberties were being violated!

Some senior police officers are also calling for the abolition of the PCA. Assistant Commissioner Wyn Jones denounced the PCA for criticising the policing of the Wapping strike in 1987 at the time when he was in charge. In a recent report, the PCA argued that the police command structure broke down and that some police officers used their truncheons indiscriminately on the night of 24 January 1987, the first anniversary of the strike. The House of Lords is to rule soon on whether 26 officers should face criminal charges for their conduct during the Wapping dispute, magistrates having previously thrown out several of the cases on the grounds that police officers cannot be expected to recall events that happened over a year ago. A most startling verdict!

Despite the futility of the current complaints system, NMP is more than willing to assist those who wish to make an official complaint against the police. However, notwithstanding the racism and pro-policing record of the criminal justice system, complainants stand a better chance of gaining redress if they sue the police directly through the courts.

8 FASCISM

As part of the East End of London, Newham has always witnessed battles between the fascists and those opposed to them, from the days of Mosley's attempted march through Stratford during the 1930s onwards. Newham has also had in the past the highest National Front vote in the country and has often been the focus for fascist activity (see chapter 5).

For the last ten years, Newham Monitoring Project has fulfilled an important dual role in both monitoring and mobilising against the ever-present fascist threat at a time when much of the traditional anti-fascist opposition has become complacent.

THE CHANGING FACE OF FASCISM

Margaret Thatcher's infamous 'swamping' speech during the 1979 general election (British people, she warned, felt 'rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture') not only ensured that race was central to the Conservative Party's agenda but also undermined the electoral strategy of the National Front (NF). This blow to the NF's electoral appeal of the 1972-79 period was further compounded by the success of the Anti-Nazi League in pinning the label of 'Nazi' upon the Front, thus destroying their semi-respectable image.

However, the weakness of the ANL was that it always looked to the past, specifically to German atrocities during the Second World War, for their analysis of fascism - thus ignoring the changing face of fascism with its greater emphasis on anti-black racism, racist attacks and murders. This fundamental mistake has been repeated by left organisations over the years.

However, for the black community, it has been self-evident that the fight against fascism remained as pertinent as ever and that it has moved to a new and more dangerous phase.

1989: THE STATE OF BRITISH FASCISM



National Front

Led by former Polytechnic of North London (PNL) student Patrick Harrington, the National Front advocates a so-called 'third position' - neither capitalism nor communism'. They believe in creating a cadre of political soldiers, trained both ideologically and militarily through links with fascist, terrorist groups such as the Italian MSI and the Protestant UVF. Their aim is to create violent destabilisation of the state, and then to mirror the Nazi seizure of power in Germany. Although the NF are presently wracked by internal splits, plans are afoot to create a new organisation based in France. We are awaiting developments - but to all intents and purposes they seem an organisation heading into oblivion.

National Front Flag Group

Led by Ian Anderson (a Newham resident) and Martin Wingfield, this group is moulded on the old style NF but with a more blatant Nazi edge. They also have links with the UVF, 'Blood and Honour' and the 'Chelsea Head-Hunters'. With an alleged membership

of around 4,000, the Flag Group claims to mail over 1.5 million items of Nazi propaganda, mainly to schools, every year. They have been active around the 'Salman Rushdie' issue and advocate a 'crusade' against the Muslim community in Britain. The Flag group are moving ever closer to the British National Party (BNP), with speculation that they may merge, creating a powerful and dangerous new fascist movement.

British National Party

Widely regarded by the anti-fascist movement as, currently, the most dangerous and up-and-coming group on the right, the BNP have recently set up new headquarters in Bexley, Kent, which gives them their first proper organisational base for years. They have of late been the most active and visible fascist force on the streets, and have attempted a number of attacks on black communities throughout Britain. It has only been the vigilance of Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) nationally which has ensured that the BNP were given a 'proper' welcome everywhere they went.

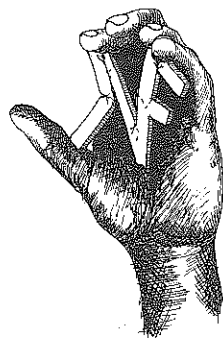
Blood and Honour

Led by Nazi Ian Stuart Donaldson, this group is based around the growing skinhead movement. It attempts to use Nazi bands such as 'Skrewdriver', 'No Remorse' (previously known as 'Dead Paki in the Gutter') to create a new fascist youth sub-culture. It has networks throughout Europe and the United States. In 1989 it suffered serious setbacks through the closure of its base in Carnaby Street and the breaking up of its European Nazi gig.

ANTI-FASCIST ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT 1989

Campaigns against fascism have remained alive and vibrant within the black communities. Black community organisations, of which NMP is a foremost member, began to formulate new strategies rooted in community action. They have also made the links between fascism, racism, particularly institutional, popular and state racism. Black organisations are also well aware that fascism is international and that fascists respect no boundaries.

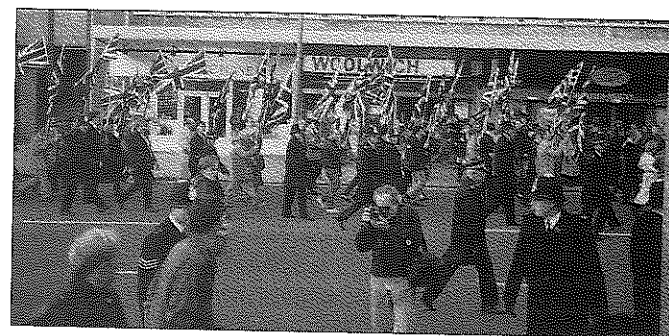
Black groups in alliance with genuine anti-racist, anti-fascist groups and individuals came together in 1985 to launch Anti-Fascist Action (AFA), which despite its recent internal reorganisation remains active in tackling fascism, politically, ideologically and physically.



THE STATE OF PLAY: AFA IN ACTION

- **December: Anti-Fascist leafleting against Newham NF at Leyton Orient football ground.**
- **January: Successful pickets of Merc M and Cutdown (fascist shops in Carnaby St). The fascist shops were used as a base for both London and European skinheads, as well as 'Blood and Honour'. Merc M closes and Cutdown moves.**
- **February: Successful picket of 'The Store' pub, favourite watering-hole and meeting place of European neo-Nazis. NMP mobilises over 150 anti-fascists against the BNP meeting point at West Ham tube station. BNP scuttles away under police protection.**
- **March: Picket of new fascist shop in Carnaby Street.**
- **April: NMP speaks at international rally against fascism, alongside speakers from the United States, France and West Germany.**
- **May: Massive counter-mobilisation against international European Nazi gig organised by 'Blood and Honour'. The gig never takes place, the fascists are in disarray. Cutdown is shut down (permanently!).**
- **June: Black community mobilises against fascist march in Dewsbury - 82 anti-fascists arrested for protecting their community against attack.**
- **July: NMP holds anti-BNP meeting in Plaistow.**
- **September: BNP prevented from marching in Bradford.**
- **November: 800 anti-fascists mobilise against National Front march on Remembrance Sunday in central London. BNP prevented from marching in York by anti-fascists.**
- **December: Anti-fascists march against BNP headquarters in Welling.**

Anti-fascists 13, fascists 0.



Fascists march through central London

THE BNP ACROSS LONDON

Bexley campaign

The British National Party was able to establish its first-ever organisational base earlier this year,

with the opening of a 'bookshop' in Bexley, Kent, which also acts as its new national headquarters. Since the building, based at 154 Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, was opened, the BNP have increased its activity throughout London, including in Newham, where there has been an increase in racist attacks and racist graffiti. In Welling, Kent, BNP thugs smashed up a public meeting, held in Welling library, leaving nine people needing hospital treatment.

Newham Monitoring Project, recognising the danger posed by this 'bookshop' to black communities everywhere (including in Newham), immediately helped facilitate a campaign against the BNP. This campaign was based on a dual strategy of harnessing community anger against the headquarters and attempting to force the council to refuse planning permission to the BNP.

Unfortunately, two lobbies of the Conservative Council by over 200 people failed to influence the Council. The next stage of the campaign therefore was to hold a demonstration against the BNP headquarters in Bexley. This took place on 9 December 1989, when over 300 local anti-fascists held a rally and march at which NMP was one of the keynote speakers. In 1990 the campaign must be a priority not only for the local Bexley community but also for anti-fascists throughout the country; for fascism is like a cancerous growth, it must be immediately 'cut out' or the whole 'body' will be poisoned.

Newham

Over the last year, Newham has witnessed a resurgence of fascism within the borough. This has been reflected not only in a reappearance of the British National Party and its insidious racist propaganda but also in the increase in fascist violence. The case of the R family is one of many that demonstrates this re-emergence of a worrying trend.

- The R family from East Ham suffered a sustained hate campaign by fascist neighbours who were intent on driving them out of their home. This campaign included windows being shot at by air rifles, stones being thrown through windows, and loud fascist music being played, which contained lyrics threatening to kill black people. The R family have also had to suffer continuous racist abuse with comments like 'Pakis out', 'we'll get them out', 'zeig heil mein fuhrer, to name a few.

Fascist groups have also been active throughout Newham, particularly in the Green Street, Romford

Road and Stratford areas, not to mention Canning Town (see chapter 5 for more details). In all, fascists have distributed stickers, leaflets and graffiti. To counter this fascist campaign, NMP has launched its own sticker campaign.

NMP mobilise against BNP invasion

Newham Monitoring Project's monitoring of the fascist threat paid dividends in February when we became aware of a BNP plan to hold a meeting in Newham on 27 February. With only a week's notice of the BNP plan, NMP managed to mobilise a counter-demonstration of over 150 anti-fascists at the BNP redirection point outside West Ham tube station. One-fifth of Newham's police force were made available for duty to ensure the meeting could take place. And it later emerged that the police vans, driven away at high speed, which were used to shepherd the fascist to their meeting place were actually vans belonging to the Newham Organised Racial Incident Squad (NORIS). Hardly the correct way to advertise the Squad's duties! NMP surveillance teams, however, managed to follow them to the secret BNP meeting place at the Tidal Basin Tavern in Canning Town. The meeting, which was addressed by BNP leader, John Tyndall, told of the 'strong tradition of nationalism in the East End going back to the days of Sir Oswald Mosley', as well as of their plan to launch a Newham branch of the BNP.

In response to this, NMP immediately stepped up its anti-fascist work in the area. The brewery, Fullers, were contacted over the use of the pub for the meeting, as well as the licencees. They stated categorically that 'if the BNP ask again they will not get another booking'. They also stressed that 'if the police had told us about the meeting it would have been stopped'.

NMP as part of its anti-fascist work held an anti-BNP meeting in the area during July, and initiated patrols at the request of black families in the area (see chapter 5 for more details)

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

With the advent of 1992 and 'Fortress Europe', the international fascist movement is gearing itself to make major inroads throughout Europe. We in the anti-fascist movement must be ready to do likewise. This means rejecting the 'liberal', paternalistic approach of organisations like SOS Racisme (in France) and learning from those black communities across Europe for whom racism and fascism have been a matter of life and death.

9 RACISM, IMMIGRATION AND 1992

'The Single European Market may open up Europe's borders to blacks, but a racism that cannot tell one black person from another, a citizen from an immigrant and an immigrant from a refugee - and classes all third world peoples as immigrants and refugees and all immigrants and refugees as terrorists and drug dealers, will make such movement fraught and fancy.'
(A Sivanandan)

1992 is the year set for the next stage in the development of the European Community (EC). The Single European Market will remove all barriers to the free movement of money, goods and people between the 12 member states of the EC. The British government has done a lot to publicise the benefits of the Single European Market to business people. They have done nothing to explain what it means to the black communities, immigrants, migrants and refugees.

Secretaries of the EC countries began to hold secret meetings of what is known as the 'Trevi Group'. The 'Trevi Group' was set up to develop policies to protect the open Europe from 'terrorists, drug traffickers and illegal

immigrants' (sic). The 'Trevi Group' is planning to create a fortress Europe, a Europe whose borders are closed to migrants and asylum-seekers from the Third World by common immigration policies and ever-increasing restrictions on the right of entry for asylum-seekers. For people from the Third World living in Europe, the 'Trevi Group' is planning a greater use of internal immigration controls to deny them access to welfare services and to monitor their movements.

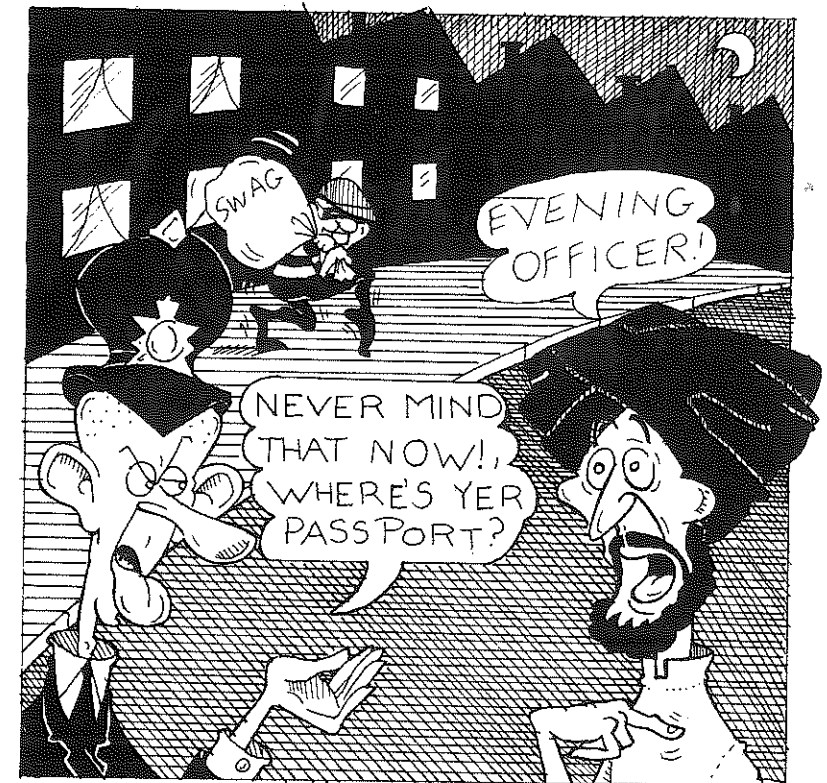
There are several aspects of the Single European Market that directly concern NMP:

Across Europe legislative attacks on the rights of immigrant workers as part of the run-up to 1992 have led to the rise of fascist parties who have made spectacular electoral gains on the basis of this appeal to popular racism. All these parties have greater legislative attacks on immigrants as a key part of their election manifestos. Predictably this upsurge in fascist popularity has led to increased racist attacks and murders across Europe. In every European Community country racist attacks are rising as whole communities find themselves under siege from fascist skinhead thugs. There is ever-increasing evidence of cooperation and organisation of these fascist groups across Europe.

As can be expected police forces across Europe have done nothing to defend the communities under attack. Instead, using increased police powers to identify and arrest 'illegal immigrants', the police have increased their attacks on the communities. In London we have witnessed illegal fishing raids where dozens of workers have been picked up at their workplaces. There has also been an increase in the number of people being deported following arrest for minor offences, eg parking on double yellow lines. At this year's Notting Hill Carnival, police officers from France, Denmark and West Germany were working with their

British counterparts learning how to control black crowds. The growing powers of the police to attack and criminalise our communities as illegal immigrants is obviously of concern to us.

Throughout the last year NMP has been developing links with grassroots anti-racist and anti-fascist groups to begin to alert our communities about the sinister implications of 1992. In November 1989, NMP, as part of its work in the London Alliance Against Racism and Fascism (LAARF), participated in a major conference on 1992 in Hackney. The conference, organised by grassroots groups, brought together activists from across the country to launch the Communities of Resistance 1992 Campaign. Building on the success of that conference, NMP has come together with Newham Advice Service, Refugee Forum, Newham Black NALGO and Newham Churches Immigration Support Group to organise a Newham Communities of Resistance 1992 conference. The conference will present a genuine grassroots perspective on 1992 and what it means to our communities. The conference organising group has produced a booklet that not only provides a detailed guide to the changes being prepared for 1992 but will also act as a vital resource and campaigning tool. NMP will be urging all its supporters to attend the conference and join the Communities of Resistance fightback against fortress Europe.



On the following page we reprint the *Migrant and Refugee Manifesto* launched by Refugee Forum and the Migrant Rights Action Network in 1989 which serves as a cornerstone of the Communities of Resistance Campaign.

The European Manifesto centres on ten points of direct concern to all immigrant, migrant and refugee communities. These are the right to stay; the right to family reunion; free movement within the EC; full social and political rights; full legal rights; no racism, fascism and police brutality; no repatriation and deportations; no to economic racism; the right to organise independently; amnesty to all unauthorised workers.

Each point has associated with it a series of specific demands which are intended to improve the status of immigrants and refugees in social, economic and political terms.



Turkish and Kurdish groups march for refugee rights



Welcome to Newham!

RIGHT TO STAY

- All immigrants, migrants and refugees to be guaranteed a legal status based on equal rights with nationals of the host country. This status should not depend on the period of residence or employment.
- All children born in an EC country should have the right to the nationality of that country.
- Women's right to stay should not be linked to that of the husbands and families but should be independent.
- The right to stay should be unconditional, ensuring the right to work, to health care, housing and social security in the host countries.
- Refugees and those with exceptional leave to remain should be entitled to obtain permanent residence.

RIGHT TO FAMILY REUNION

- Family reunion should not be subject to qualifications or conditions concerning employment or living accommodation.
- There should be no restriction on rights of entry of relatives.
- Immigrants, migrants and refugees and their families should not be penalised for having recourse to public funds or to welfare benefits.
- Families should not be divided through deportations.

FREE MOVEMENT IN THE EEC

- Immigrants, migrants and refugees should have the right to live and work in any country within the EC on an equal footing with EC nationals.

FULL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

- The right to vote and stand for public office.
- The right to participate in and hold office in trade unions.
- The right to maintain our own cultural identities and languages. We are opposed to forced integration. However, the recognition of cultural identity must not be used to justify discriminatory practices against the interests and rights of immigrants, migrants and refugees.
- Immigrant, migrant, refugee and black organisations should have the right to take legal action against bodies which discriminate against their communities.

FULL LEGAL RIGHTS

- There should be an independent appeals system with legal rights for all those refused entry or facing deportation, detention or repatriation.
- There should be rights to work, claim welfare benefits and study pending a decision on any asylum application.
- Advice and assistance should be available free and as of right at ports of entry, with information in all appropriate languages fully available.
- The criteria for granting asylum should be clarified and should take into account conditions in the country of origin.

THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM, FASCISM AND POLICE BRUTALITY

- Racism in all its forms must be combated – both by means of legislation and by banning racist and fascist practices.
- Immigrant, migrant and refugee communities must have the right to act in self-defence against racist attacks and police brutality without being criminalised.

THE FIGHT AGAINST REPATRIATION AND DEPORTATIONS

- Deportation and so-called voluntary repatriation have been presented throughout Europe as a solution to economic and social problems such as unemployment, lack of housing and welfare services.
- We are opposed to harassment and arrest of immigrants, migrants and refugees and deportations under administrative procedures.
- We demand that people threatened with deportation have the right of access to court hearings with full legal aid and an independent appeals system.
- Immigrants, migrants and refugees should never be imprisoned while awaiting decisions or for alleged breaches of immigration laws.
- We strongly condemn all projects aimed at forcing immigrants, migrants and refugees to return to their countries of origin.
- We demand the rights of immigrants, migrants and refugees to live in the country of their choice, whether country of residence or country of origin.

THE FIGHT AGAINST ECONOMIC RACISM

- We strongly condemn agencies who pretend to act on our behalf while acting against our interests.
- We demand from them unconditional funding so that we can determine our own priorities without interference or pressure from them.
- We condemn the institutionalising and industrialising of immigrants, migrants and refugees.

THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE INDEPENDENTLY

- We do not recognise the right of the governments of countries of origin to speak on behalf of their citizens who live and work within the EC.
- We demand the freedom for immigrants, migrants and refugees to choose for ourselves our own forms of political expression without pressure from our governments or by fascist organisations through which some of these governments operate.
- We demand the ending of cultural and economic agreements between EC countries and authoritarian governments such as Turkey.

AMNESTY TO ALL UNAUTHORISED WORKERS

- We demand that the contribution made by unauthorised workers to EC economies be recognised by granting an amnesty to all living in EC countries and by the repeal of laws which criminalise them.

10 RACISM AND RACIST VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

NMP has recently published a grass-roots account of the fight for anti-racist education in Newham. The report entitled *Racism and Racist Violence in Schools: Towards Establishing Effective Anti-Racist Policies and Practice in Newham* is a critique of the local education authority's failure over the years to tackle racism in education. Below we include a synopsis of those sections which are of particular relevance to events in 1989 as well as our conclusions and recommendations.

A DIRE STATE OF AFFAIRS

In 1988 the government introduced the Education Reform Act. It is likely that this Act with its 'nationalist' curriculum will shape the future of education in England and Wales for the next 20 or so years – well into the next century.

The Act, therefore, has huge implications for the entire community and especially for the black community and those who have been at the forefront of the struggle for anti-racist education.

Events recently in Newham and elsewhere nationally have highlighted the manifest failure of municipal authorities to combat racism and racist violence in schools. In fact, the multicultural policies adopted by Newham Council have been so fundamentally misconceived and confused as to have unwittingly contributed to the worsening position of black pupils. Imposed from above, without explanation or consultation, they have led to a racist backlash that schools are ill-equipped to handle – particularly because of their inability to understand the institutional racism located within the school system itself.

The local education authority (LEA) has recently done its own research into racial harassment in Newham's schools. In a confidential, internal document entitled *Racial Incidents in Our Sec-*

dary Schools, the LEA maintains that 343 incidents of racial harassment were recorded in Newham's 16 secondary schools between September 1987 and December 1988. This is a staggering figure considering that there are no specific guidelines for dealing with cases of racial harassment within the LEA and few schools keep records or detailed statistics. In fact, most schools either have no policies or procedures to deal with racial harassment at all or deal with it on an *ad hoc* basis. Many schoolchildren do not report attacks at all in schools where the administration denies that racial harassment is a problem. Then there are those cases of racial harassment which take place in Newham's primary and nursery schools, Newham Community College and the Polytechnic of East London – attacks which are not included in this figure of 343. In short, if all these factors are fully taken into account, we should be talking about several thousand cases of racial harassment taking place every year in Newham's educational institutions alone.

PLANS TO 'MAINSTREAMISE' ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

In light of the high proportion of reported racist attacks being committed by children of school age and the absence of specific procedures for dealing with racist attacks in schools, the LEA has recently compiled new guidelines (soon to be released officially) for responding to racial harassment in schools.

Whereas NMP welcomes this initiative, we do have serious reservations about the guidelines, an advance copy of which we have seen. The suggestions on offer are too vague and abstract. There is an over-emphasis on monitoring incidents without an explanation of what structures, strategies and action will flow out of that moni-

toring. There are virtually no proposals as to how racism can be challenged in the classroom, thus giving the impression that racial harassment is a matter only for the administration of the school, to be siphoned off into specialist structures (although, again, what form these structures should take is not detailed). Since racial harassment is widespread in schools, surely this should lead to a discussion of racism in the classroom and a questioning of the curriculum. Unfortunately, the new guidelines actually place racial harassment within a different framework:

Tackle racial harassment in the wider context of *pupil harassment*. Otherwise, action against racial harassment may be marginalised. The policy is rigorous in its inclusion of all forms of pupil harassment.

Far from 'mainstreaming' anti-racist education (the LEA's stated intention in light of restrictions imposed by the Education Reform Act), this actually implies the opposite. In addition, the emphasis given to a kind of psychotherapeutic 'counselling' of both victims of racist violence and their attackers is disturbing. It is not difficult to imagine such counselling sessions leading to a derisory response from white pupils. Moreover, black pupils, who are angry about the racism they suffer, do not want to be treated in such a precious fashion (as though they have been psychologically damaged) - they want action.

We are also concerned that the guidelines being proposed have not been drafted in consultation with teachers on the ground or with representatives from the black community. And the emphasis is principally on training and on hiring advisory and outreach teachers who will have an anti-racist brief as part of their responsibilities. What we fear (and what many committed anti-racist teachers fear) is that anti-racism will once again take a back seat. Furthermore, the proposed training appears to be frighteningly similar to Racism Awareness Training, even if it is slightly more radical and sophisticated and less psychoanalytical. This is extremely worrying.

The LEA needs to identify without delay teachers in all its schools who will be responsible for dealing with racial harassment, not as part of general pupil harassment but rather as part of the wider problem of racism in society. It also needs to target officers who will be responsible for establishing specific anti-racist procedures in consultation with teachers and the school community and for monitoring that schools and teachers are following these procedures. Merely including an anti-racist brief in someone's job description is no different from what currently exists: all council employees being contractually obliged to live up to the council's commitment to equal opportunities. We await the introduction of the new guidelines in a

pilot study in the North Plaistow area to see if effective anti-racist policies and practice are genuinely forthcoming.

CONCLUSIONS

1 Newham's current multicultural educational policy is tokenistic and unacceptable. It does not embrace a clear anti-racist position - it is multiculturalist. It lacks the practical content necessary to ensure that genuine anti-racist teaching is conducted and fails to promote debate or progress.

Multiculturalism crudely argues that prejudice stems from ignorance of other cultures and that racism is not located within the very fabric of British society. Because institutional racism is ignored, even denied, multiculturalism merely reinforces racist attitudes and practices and frequently leads to greater hostility and resentment as we have seen at Vicarage School, Stratford School, Burnage and Dewsbury.

2 Genuine anti-racism aims to improve the quality and standard of education for all children. State education must therefore be genuinely democratic for it is only in this way that demands for separatist education will be prevented.

3 The LEA needs to reassess radically its role in light of the Education Reform Act and the subsequent loss of its powers.

4 More black teachers and black governors are needed in schools, but the LEA should not use this as a substitute for developing a comprehensive anti-racist strategy.

5 Racist attitudes and practices must be challenged within the mainstream curriculum. Schools must note that their pastoral responsibilities go beyond ensuring good examination results. If children leave school with racist attitudes, it is a sign of the school's underachievement.

6 As young people are often the perpetrators of racist attacks, schools have to tackle these attacks systematically.

7 Racist attacks must be recognised as such. This can only be done if paramount importance is attached to the views of the 'victim' and the black community at large. The examples we have provided from Manor Park to Manchester demonstrate that this, despite declarations to the contrary, still does not happen.

8 Schools must acknowledge and accept that racist attacks and racism do not begin and end at the school gates but are part and parcel of a wider problem within which schools play a role. Therefore, if the schools' anti-racist initiatives are to be constructive, they must extend beyond the school gates. It is critical that schools and teachers accept that they have a wider responsibility which is not confined to a limited space or time.

9 Schools must be responsive to community

concerns and initiatives against racism and racist violence. By the same principle, this would involve them campaigning and initiating private prosecutions or other civil actions against perpetual racist offenders in cases where the police fail to initiate a prosecution.

10 Schools and the LEA must recognise, in cases where a pupil has been punished for committing a racist attack, that suspension in isolation has little impact. It is essential that in cases where a school has taken a firm line against a racist offender that it publicises its action and explains why it has done so. Experience has shown that this is effective in deterring further racist activity. It shows that schools and the LEA are not only responding but are actually seen to be responding and standing their ground. Contrast this with the vacillations of some schools on the issue of optional holidays where they have changed their minds several times on the same issue.

11 The teaching unions have a role to play in condemning racist acts and must not as in the Stratford School affair sit on the fence - as did Newham NUT - on the grounds that none of their members were involved directly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Some sort of independent forum with black community involvement should be set up to monitor issues of racism and racist violence in schools. This group would act as a central resource, circulating information, agitating and campaigning accordingly. It would monitor the LEA and other relevant institutions such as schools and colleges. Such a forum already exists in Tower Hamlets.

2 Newham Council must produce an effective policy statement accompanied by procedures for tackling racism and racist violence in schools along the lines of its housing department's racial harassment policy. The current policy is valueless because it lacks any procedures. Any new policy will be equally valueless unless accompanied by procedures for tackling problems as they arise. Even though we recognise this is reactive, it is still essential.

In establishing an anti-racist policy all sections of the school community must be involved (ie pupils, teachers and parents). Without this process being undertaken, the policy will be meaningless and ineffective. The onus is on the local authority to ensure that everyone has been informed and consulted and has made their comments. Not to do so would lead to further alienation and feelings of anger and resentment, not only from white pupils and parents but from black pupils and parents as well. If we are expected to stand by a policy, then we must be central to its formulation and not be consulted only as a tokenistic after-thought. Unless this fundamental issue is addressed and the policies

and guidelines are based on the real experiences of the community, any resulting policy will be worthless, ineffective and, perhaps worse, lead to the worsening position of black people (something which indeed seems to be the case today).

3 Each school should establish its own anti-racist, monitoring group which would be comprised of teachers, pupils, parents, and representatives from relevant local agencies. These groups would (i) monitor the performance of teachers and hold the headteachers accountable, (ii) assess the need and make the demand for anti-racist resources and materials, (iii) circulate information about anti-racist events, initiatives, marches, meetings, etc, (iv) produce their own journals of activities, (v) most importantly, commit themselves to taking up individual cases of racist attacks and harassment, both within the school and outside the school gates. Anti-racism, in the final analysis, is about good educational practice and ensuring that the black child is properly protected whilst in the pastoral care of the school.

4 We need to subvert the 'nationalist' curriculum by any means available to us because it is narrow, blinkered and will damage the education of all children. We must ensure that successful forms of anti-racist teaching are introduced whether in a limited form or along the lines developed by the Lawrence Hall Project. The curriculum must include a study of the history of racism, the links between racism and inequality, current issues of racism in Newham and Britain, and examples of black self-organisation and anti-racist struggle.

5 There is an urgent need for co-ordinated and consistent monitoring of anti-racist teaching, particularly in schools in South Newham where black students are in a small minority. This will require backing and resources from the LEA. What minimal anti-racist teaching does currently take place in Newham is far too dependent on the motivation of individual teachers. Even where good practices develop, therefore, initiatives often disappear when particular teachers leave.

6 We need to put great pressure on the teachers' trade unions, who for the most part are only involved in protecting the rights of their members, to take a more principled stance. They have a crucial role to play in fighting racism in schools and new racist developments on a broader front.

7 Each school should establish its own operative anti-racist policies and procedures. Few schools in Newham have yet done this. We suggest that those involved in their school-based anti-racist working parties be given time and resources to be allowed to undertake this.

8 The role of the school's non-teaching staff, eg caretakers, needs to be carefully evaluated, as the council's housing department has done, with a view to employing caretakers who will play an active part in anti-racist work in schools.

9 Schools should hold regular meetings to discuss

the issue of racist attacks and racism in education with a view to judging whether effective progress is being made. The meetings should especially target pupils, parents and members of the local community (eg nearby shopkeepers if they being harassed by pupils). At these meetings, the headteachers and the governors should be made to account for their respective school's policies and any actions taken relating to specific incidents. Headteachers should be made accountable to their school-based monitoring groups as well.

10 There should be a clear system for the reporting of racist attacks in schools which would allow for direct monitoring of the ways that attacks are dealt with. This would allow those concerned to see specifically what was being done and would improve the effectiveness of the response.

11 In schools with a small minority of black students, the LEA needs to assess what positive support is available to black students and act accordingly.

12 In schools with a large proportion of black students, time and resources ought to be provided for those who wish to organise themselves to combat racism and racist attacks and to respond to ways that school authorities are dealing with racism and racist attacks.

13 Teachers should monitor the progress of any prosecutions which the police have initiated and which arise from racist attacks in their schools. They should ensure, through regular correspondence with the relevant senior officer and the Crown Prosecution Service, that the prosecution will be vigorously pursued and that if

successful will be publicised by the police themselves.

14 One of the main concerns of black parents is the criminalisation of their children by the police and the courts. The police have used their access to schools as a means of gathering information on black children, denying juvenile rights and interfering in the running of schools. Schools must ensure that this does not happen and that the concerns of black parents and the rights of black children are properly met.

CAMPAIGNING PLANS

We intend to use our report to campaign for genuine anti-racist education in Newham. Plans are afoot to set up meetings with teachers, parents and governors to complement the regular talks we are already giving to secondary school students throughout Newham. It is important that the conclusions and recommendations of NMP's report are not lost as schools adapt to the demands and restrictions of the Education Reform Act. We hope they can serve as the basis of a new movement for anti-racist education in the borough which will learn from past mistakes and vigorously pursue anti-racist initiatives in terms of both curriculum and management that are rooted in the views, needs and experiences of black people and agreed by the rest of the school community. Fighting racism in education must be a priority for the 1990s.

Newham Monitoring Project

382 KATHERINE RD, FOREST GATE, E7 8NW



**TROUBLE WITH THE POLICE?
RACIAL HARASSMENT?**

RING

555-8151

24 HRS
7 DAYS

NMP STILL FIGHTING

11 RACISM AND THE MEDIA

The British media are more in the business of making opinion than of presenting news. And this is nowhere more apparent than in the reporting of race. NMP has always recognised this. Hence monitoring the coverage of race issues in the local and national press is an important component of our work. We need to keep tabs on emerging trends in the press if we are to challenge effectively the ways that journalists sensationalise our lives and struggles and understand the process whereby the press not only reflects the racism of society but increasingly fuels and creates it.

In order to counter the distortions of the media and ensure that true representations of the lives and struggles of black people are reported, NMP has tapped the media for coverage of our work wherever possible. In these hard times, we cannot afford the luxury of ignoring the power of the media in influencing our lives and struggles. We must use the media to put forward our politics, even if means having our politics represented in ways other than we would like under more ideal circumstances. At the end of the day, publicity for genuine anti-racist initiatives is essential.

NMP AND THE MEDIA

It is in this context that we continue to make ourselves available for comment or interview, be it for newspapers, magazines, radio or television. We remain a first point of reference nationally for journalists interested in presenting a grassroots anti-racist perspective and speaking to those people at the cutting edge of racist attacks.

During 1989, NMP has worked on BBC and ITV programmes. We appeared on Wogan in July and in front of millions of television viewers, we challenged Sir Peter Imbert, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, who was advertising the police's new racial harassment policies. We stressed that that as long as racism remains rampant

within the force, the professed commitment of the police to combat racial harassment can never be taken seriously. Other programmes NMP featured on were a Network East episode which looked at perceptions of the term 'black' and 'Hypotheticals', a roundtable discussion on racist violence and policing.

We have received extensive coverage in the *Asian Times*, *Caribbean Times*, *The Voice*, *City Limits*, *Time Out*, *Muslim Voice* and the *Daily Mirror*. At a local level, the *Stratford and Newham Yellow Advertiser* has regularly carried objective articles on race issues, something which is most welcome in a climate where racist violence is on the increase. Predictably, the *Newham Recorder* continues to distort the work of NMP, most vividly so in its coverage of NMP's campaign in South Newham.

TOP POLICEMAN'S PROMISE TO RACE WATCHDOG

Report
by MIKE BAESS

Yellow Advertiser
14/7/89

MILLIONS of television viewers on Monday night's Wogan show watched a Newham race watchdog worker tell London's top cop Sir Peter Imbert that racism was widespread in the British police force.

After the show Sir Peter told Nish Kanwar, who works for the controversial Newham Monitoring Project that he would come to the borough to discuss policing attitudes.

Nish was invited on the show because of NMP's headline reputation in combating racism. He was told he would only be allowed a few seconds on air as a member of the audience.

Instead Terry Wogan kept switching back to aim to entertain the discussion on British police attitudes.

Nish told Sir Peter about police raids in Newham last year - mainly on black youngsters - that resulted in very few arrests.

Extracts from the interview are as follows:

Nish: "I can't see the British police coming up with anything to tackle the problems of racism in the lower unenforced ranks, who act as an obstacle to any progress being made."

Sir Peter: "We should look at the whole of society and I don't think the British police will have any more or less racism than the rest of society."

"But what we do have of course is a determination to stamp it out and I'm not sure if any other profession which has racism as an offence - it's a disciplinary offence within the police service."

"I can assure Nish that we are tackling any racism that we find and one way which we can do it is by having more black police officers within the police service. I would invite Nish to get others to do this."

Nish: "I think it's for the senior officers who are intent on doing something, like Sir Peter, to take action under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act to sanction police officers where and when their behaviour and attitudes are reported."

Sir Peter is known for his strong views on promoting racial harmony and he was mainly responsible for introducing the anti-racial harassment campaign across London boroughs earlier this year.

He added on the programme that he had broken tradition three weeks ago by being the first Metropolitan Police Commissioner to attend a local Council for Racial Equality meeting - which initially took place in Newham.

After the show the discussion continued and Sir Peter told Nish that he would come and talk to the Newham Monitoring Project about both police commitment to tackling racism and racism within the police force.

The group say they have recently taken to patrolling the streets of Canning Town to monitor the high level of racial incidents there.

Nish added: "Twice a week 5-10 NMP staff go down to the Canning Town area and talk to local residents, shopkeepers and people on the street about any racial attacks in the area."

"Things we particularly bad in the Star Lane area."



NISH KANWAR

THIS WAS AJIT'S DREAM. A QUIET ROAD AND A GARDEN FOR HIS CHILDREN..

STREETS OF HATE

AJIT Varma celebrated his move to paradise by buying three little bicycles.

He couldn't really afford them, but the vision of his children playing in the quiet street outside was irresistible to a man who had escaped the violence, the racial hatred and the squalor of an East End tower block.

Two years on, the bicycles stand unused - as redundant as all of Ajit's dreams.

As for his two small sons and his daughter, they are never allowed out of the house without being escorted by a watchful parent, ready to lift them and run at the next cry of "Paki. F...ing Paki bastard."

Ajit's house has been robbed, his car vandalised, his family threatened.

Because he is a quiet, unhyphenated man, he does not elaborate on his fear and his grief.

Instead, he says simply: "When we came here, we thought we were in heaven. All the dreams we were dreaming..."

"I told my wife we were near the airport - that we could go anywhere. That we could do things we had never done before, like planting a garden."

Today, the bare patch of grass is full of rubbish dumped by passers-by. Even the garden is forbidden territory to a family living in a fortress.

Ajit's doors are all heavily bolted and the panic button to the local police station lies within reach of his bed.

The story of Ajit and his wife, Ayesha - their names have been changed to protect them - is a horrifyingly common one in Nineties Britain.

Racial violence is soaring, and nowhere is the evidence more graphic and desperate than in the fire-bombed, boarded-up flats of London's East End.

THE truly alarming aspect of Ajit's story is that the place where he lives bears no outward relation to the grim, hate-filled ghetto-lands.

Cyprus Estate in Beckton should be an oasis - a model of the Nineties ideal of a council development.

Built just two years ago, it is a cluster of quiet streets, edged with rows of half-timbered, mock-Tudor houses.

The net curtains are tastefully draped behind windows decorated with boxes full of geraniums.

So calm is the Brookside-set face of the estate that it is hard at first to believe the words of Rajiv Menon, an outreach worker for the Newham Monitoring Project - the local watchdog on racial crime.

"There are people here who are turning this place into an estate of terror. There are families who are too frightened to go outside."

"And we expect it to get worse."

What is happening on the estate is not all-out racial war, Ajit Varma, a softly-spoken, respectable man, gets



FORBIDDEN TERRITORY: The streets that once held promise now offer only fear and repression for countless families.

Pictures: NIGEL WRIGHT

NOW HIS HEAVEN IS HELL

By MARY RIDDELL



PANIC BUTTON: A lifetime for Ajit

to the scope of this senseless hatred.

"Turkish c..." it reads.

Bullent's shop is clean, well-scrubbed. Only the closed-circuit television which allows Bullent to check what is happening to his car, betray the climate in which he works.

"Here it is the youngsters, the teenagers, who cause the problem. They line up against the window and spit as I serve my customers."

"Once my wife went to tell them to move and they pushed her to the ground."

ILIVE above the shop. I have to. Otherwise I would have been broken into 20 times.

"There is nothing here for these people to do. That is the problem. And if they don't stop, this area will be ruined."

From Bullent's shop-front, you can just see the grim tower blocks of the East End on the horizon, far beyond the nicely laid-out local park and the playground of the smart, modern primary school.

Designed as dream-land, it was always going to be a senseless place.

What nobody foresaw was how furiously racial hatred - supposedly a symptom of the old, the decayed, the outgrown, would flourish there.

Bullent Hassan watches the violence simmering behind his plate-glass window with a mixture of resignation and despair.

"Something will blow. All these hopes... and still this place will end up as another Brixton."

on well with his white neighbours.

Many families acknowledge that hatred exists but say they want no part of it.

"I look after a black girl," said one child-minder. "My kids play with black kids. You have to live and let live."

Doreen Whyberd also has Asian friends and bitterly resents any slur on them. But her feelings about the black community in general

reflect the classic pattern of resentment.

"People come here expecting to have it all laid on. Sometimes they walk into the country and get put in brand new houses. That is what makes for so much hatred."

THE problem, according to the monitoring project, is insidious.

It stems from a small handful of troublemak-

ers spread throughout the estate.

One white family is now being taken to court.

But the black community, so carefully interspersed with the whites when the houses were allocated, dread that the mutual transfer system means that more persecutors will gradually move in.

It is not a view you hear on the streets of the estate, because those most in fear rarely venture out.

Inside one of the most immaculate houses, Vivek Mohan explains why.

"It is better not to after dusk. That is when the people come to break in. They will smash the door down even if you are in."

BURGLARS tried to get into my home a few weeks ago. So I am wary."

Vivek Mohan - it's also not his real name -

is one of the area's elder statesmen.

He is a proud man - too proud immediately to confess to his terror at being pursued by a swarm of white teenagers, screaming: "Get the old Paki", and bombarding him with rocks and pebbles.

Vivek Mohan and his countrymen may be the prime target. But no one who has the wrong-coloured skin is exempt.

The graffiti outside Bullent Hassan's fish-and-chip shop testifies

THE NEWHAM RECORDER AND SUPERINTENDENT BALL

In chapter 5 we outlined how Superintendent John Ball attempted to disrupt NMP's public meeting on racist violence in South Newham. What is also revealing is how a particular journalist's attempt to report on the incident was hampered by the editor of the *Newham Recorder*, Tom Duncan.

In her article, 'Group step in with a race patrol', Denise Shaw discussed why NMP had decided to organise patrols in parts of Canning Town and what the response of the police was to these patrols. Interestingly, the final two paragraphs of the article, which consisted on an attack on NMP by John Ball, appeared in smaller print than the rest of the article and was not written in the same objective tone and style. One could assume from this that the editor of the *Recorder* added these two paragraphs to what had originally been written, perhaps under pressure from John Ball. If so, then such interference and manipulation from a senior police officer is reprehensible.

Several weeks after the article appeared, Denise Shaw was transferred to the *Tower Hamlets Recorder*.

THE 'SALMAN RUSHDIE AFFAIR'

No account of racism and the media during 1989 would be complete without a mention of the 'Salman Rushdie Affair'. For the British media played a major part in the affair by generating hysteria and crudely reducing the conflict to one between 'freedom of speech' and Islamic fundamentalism. Muslims were portrayed as 'anti-British' and a threat to 'British democracy' - in the tabloids, in the so-called quality papers, on radio and on television. The Rushdie affair was used as yet another attack on the black community. Mosques were vandalised by fascists and defaced with graffiti like 'NF Rules' and 'Long Live Rushdie'. In racist attacks up and down the country, the Rushdie affair was used to justify abuse, violence and criminal damage. Even the word 'Muslim' became a term of abuse, synonymous with 'Paki'.

What is most apparent about the Rushdie affair is the ways in which the British establishment and media have exacerbated it, giving further respectability to racist ideas and actions. As a result, there has been increased racial polarisation, racist violence, criminalisation of black people, as well as a fascist resurgence.

Few answers to racism's bitter questions

DAVID ROSE'S article highlights the extent that police officers are willing to interfere in and undermine the work of black community organisations that are critical of the police. Chief Superintendent Mclean's attacks on Southall Monitoring Group mirror similar attacks made by police officers against black community organisations from Notting Hill to Broadwater Farm to Newham. There are even examples of the police trying to get local authorities to stop funding groups critical of the police. Two years ago the then Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Area 2, Wyn Jones, called Newham Monitoring Project "the most sinister, damaging and divisive group operating in the borough today."

Instead of tackling the problems of racist violence and racist policing, the police try to silence and marginalise their critics. It is hardly surprising that report after report has condemned policing against black people and that black people for the most part do not trust the police.

Rajiv Menon.
Newham Monitoring Project,
382 Katherine Road,
London E7.

The Guardian
20/12/89

'Families are too frightened to go outside'

12 POLL-AXING THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The full impact of the poll tax can only be understood in the context of the broad attack being made by this government on the less well-off and the most underprivileged sections of the community. Changes under way in the health service, in education, in housing and in social security benefits, mean that access to services and control over them will increasingly depend on ability to pay.

In contrast to the present system of local rates, whereby the amount you pay is linked to the value of the property that you live in, the poll tax is a flat charge on all individuals over the age of 18 (with very few exceptions), entirely unrelated to people's income or ability to pay (and, unlike with the present rates rebate system, the government plans that those living on supplementary benefit and on the lowest incomes will pay 20% of their poll tax - to ensure their 'democratic responsibility'). The far-reaching consequences of this proposed tax, especially on the black community, are only just beginning to emerge.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT

People living in poor, inner-city areas (which means, in Newham, the majority of black people) will be worst hit by the poll tax. In these areas, rates are already much higher than the national average because of the greater need for local services.

Because the poll tax is based on a 'head count', black families will be hardest hit. While only 6 per cent of white families have more than three adults living on average in a household, this figure rises to 17 per cent for Afro-Caribbean and 22 per cent for Asian families. Many black households are, therefore, likely to receive some of the highest poll tax bills. An average black family containing four adults will pay an estimated £2,012 in the first year. Yet, on average, black people earn less and are more likely to be unemployed. Those in work will have to increase their support for those who have no jobs. The pressures on families to break up will be enormous, particularly in terms of encouraging young people to move out. But where can they move? Homelessness is already a huge problem in Newham, particularly for young black people.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

Through sheer poverty people may try to evade paying the poll tax. The government's plans to prevent this include some worrying measures. Poll tax collectors will be able to use the electoral roll to track down people. As a result, many who cannot afford to pay will simply not place their names on the roll. Large numbers of people in the inner cities already do not register to vote - some 17 per cent according to one recent study. The poll tax will encourage this even more. Not only will more and more people be excluded from voting, but this will also affect those eligible for jury service and will increase the likelihood of an accused black person facing an all-white jury.

Proposals have also been made to check and maintain the poll tax through the names of people using local services. This will inevitably mean that those most in need could be discouraged from using them. It also means that families suffering either racial or police harassment will be less likely to report the incidents to 'official' organisations such as housing offices. This will inevitably mean that one of the few organisations to which such families can turn will be independent community organisations such as NMP.

There are also serious implications for people's immigration and nationality status. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), in a recent report, found that black people were already failing to register to vote for fear of nationality checks. It is well known that the Immigration Intelligence Unit uses the electoral register to 'trawl' for alleged overstayers and illegal entrants. It could use any poll tax register for a similar purpose.

DEPORTATION

Failure to register or pay the poll tax could mean facing a prosecution. Ultimately, black people who have immigrated here since 1973 could face the possibility of deportation. The possibility of harassment by the authorities of the whole black population on the pretext of verifying someone's immigration status has already been shown to be a reality under existing practices. The poll tax will just add another opportunity to do so.

13 OUTREACH WORK: FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

One of the strengths of NMP over the last ten years has been its ability to change and move with the times. The changing nature of racism - whether it be shifts in state policy, differing tactics of the police, new dimensions to popular racism giving rise to new rationalisations for racist violence - means that NMP has had to constantly reassess its work and the relevance of the various anti-racist strategies we advocate. In all this we learn from the concrete experiences of black people on the receiving end of racism. And through constantly analysing and re-evaluating our relevance to them, we are involved in the ongoing process of updating our work. This also enables us to build alliances with new organisations as well as cementing existing links.

BLAIR PEACH COMMEMORATION

Blair Peach was murdered in April 1979 by members of the Metropolitan Police's Special Patrol Group whilst taking part in a mass protest against fascism in Southall which led to over 700 arrests. Ten years later and Blair Peach's murderer has still not been brought to justice; the black community also continues to bear the brunt of racist violence, oppressive policing and fascist activity.



Anti-racists commemorate the murder of Blair Peach

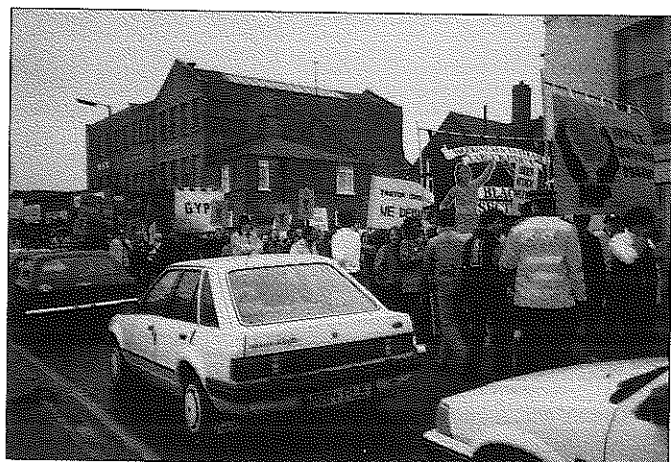
On 23 April 1989, black and anti-fascist groups from all over the country came together to hold a march and rally in Southall to commemorate the murder of Blair Peach and celebrate the continuing resistance of black people to racism. NMP played a central role in the organisation of this event, and provided one of the keynote speakers at an impressive rally of over 7,000 people.

LONDON ALLIANCE AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM

July 1989 saw the creation of the London Alliance Against Racism and Fascism (LAARF), a network of anti-racist community organisations. LAARF produces a quarterly bulletin which provides vital information linking up campaigns London-wide. The justification for the formation of this new network has been to 'create a stronger, clearer and more authoritative voice for the independent grassroots anti-racist movement in London', and to strive to give local issues a London-wide, and even a national, focus. Through its regular quarterly bulletin, LAARF not only informs communities across London about racism but reports on issues of racism as they are lived and experienced by black people. And by so doing, LAARF aims to outline the various practical ways in which groups can fight racism. Despite its recent creation, this organisation, of which NMP is a leading member, has already played a clear role in the 'Communities of Resistance Campaign', the 'United Families Campaign' around deaths in police custody, and launching new initiatives against racist violence. This organisation, which has filled an important vacuum in the anti-racist movement, must go from strength to strength if the black community is to be able to meet the challenges facing it in the 1990s.

LOCAL LINKS

On a local level NMP has always striven to forge new links with different sections of the community. This year has seen two important developments: the formation of Black Tenants and Resident Groups (in which NMP has played an instrumental role) and the rejuvenation of NMP's links with Newham's student community. Colleges have always been an important area of work for NMP, from the days of the Newham 7/Justice for the Pryce Family campaigns to the present. Although students from the Polytechnic of East London (PEL) supported the anti-BNP picket at West Ham tube station, the creation of an NMP student supporters' society, as well as various other initiatives around NMP's 10th Anniversary, should see the Polytechnic of East London Students' Union involved to a greater extent.



NMP on the streets of Greenwich

NMP has also spoken, throughout the year, on issues of racism and policing, at the majority of secondary schools in the borough. This work will undoubtedly take an even higher profile in the coming year with the launch of NMP's education document.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Just under 200 people attended NMP's Annual General Meeting held on 12 March 1989 at Trinity Community Centre in East Ham. The major guest speaker was Lord Gifford QC, the Chair of the Broadwater Farm Inquiry. Lord Gifford spoke about the criminalisation of the black community and how different sections of the legal system collaborated to ensure that black people continued to face 'rough justice'. Other speakers included Celia Stubbs, the convenor of the Blair Peach 10th Anniversary Committee, and Suresh Grover from the Southall Monitoring Group who spoke about

the experiences of the Southall community in defending itself from racist and police attacks.

NMP - A BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

NMP has always been willing to present our views on either racism or policing to a wide cross-section of people. Unless those working in institutions who have a direct responsibility towards the black community are confronted with the black experience, they will never be accountable to the black community or able to effect institutional change.

It is on this basis that NMP has led workshops or been the keynote speaker at a variety of conferences including ones organised by the Federation of Black Housing Organisations, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, Black NALGO as well as a European Immigration Conference in Essen, West Germany. NMP has also led a workshop on our work at a national student anti-racist conference. Over the last decade NMP has spoken at hundreds of meetings and conferences up and down the country, taking the Newham experience as a blueprint for other community initiatives. In this, NMP has played a key role in helping give workers from a number of voluntary and statutory agencies a different vantage-point and perspective on their work. This has included the Homeless Young Persons Project, Waltham Forest Social Services, Circle 33 Housing Trust and Citizens Advice Bureau, to name a few of those we have spoken to in 1989.



Hackney remembers the victims of police brutality

NMP has also advised on the setting up a Monitoring Project in Brighton to help counter the growing racist violence in the area, and has participated and spoken at a number of demonstrations around the issue of racist violence including ones in Welling, Tottenham, Sheffield and Dewsbury.

The new decade will undoubtedly see NMP helping to formulate new strategies to facilitate community action. Immense challenges lie ahead. We intend to meet them.

14 RESOURCES

NMP has a number of resources which are available to local community groups and affiliated members. A deposit may be required on some items, with prices being negotiable according to the user's financial position.

□ Newham Monitoring Project exhibitions

The History of Racism in the East End

(23 panels which illustrate the history of racism in London's East End)

Hire fee: £15 per day

Conspiracy

(12 panels which document different campaigns and struggles of black people in Britain)

Hire fee: £15 per day

□ Megaphone

Battery-powered, hand-held, loudhailer suitable for demonstrations or pickets

Hire fee: £10 per day

□ Video/Reading Library

A selection of videos, books, journals and reports on issues related to racism, fascism and policing. Telephone for details

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Below we list some suggestions for further reading

□ Publications available from Newham Monitoring Project

Annual Reports (1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988)

Accounts of the struggle against racist violence, fascism and police harassment in Newham in the context of trends and events nationally

The Dividing Line (1986)

Brief historical booklet on racism in East London and NMP's work to accompany a film that NMP made with BBC Open Space

Newham Communities of Resistance 1992 Information Pack (1990)

A series of papers on the implications of 1992 on black and refugee communities in Newham and elsewhere in Europe

□ Publications available from the Institute of Race Relations

Race & Class

Quarterly journal of Black and Third World liberation. Subscription is £10 (individuals) and £14 (organisations) per year

Policing Against Black People (1987)

Includes a section on policing against black schoolchildren

□ Publications on policing and racist violence

Duncan Forbes, *Action on Racial Harassment: Legal Remedies and Local Authorities* (Legal Action Group and London Housing Unit, 1988)

The Broadwater Farm Inquiry: Report of the Independent Inquiry into Disturbances of October 1985 at the Broadwater Farm Estate, Tottenham (Karia Press, 1986)

Paul Gordon, *White Law: Racism in the Police, Courts and Prisons* (Pluto Press, 1983)

Paul Gordon and Anne Newnham, *Different Worlds: Racism and Discrimination in Britain* (Runnymede Trust, 1986)

Policing in Hackney 1945-84: Report Commissioned by the Roach Family Support Committee (Karia Press, 1987)

□ Other publications

Campaign Against Racism and Fascism (CARF)

Monthly section in *Searchlight* magazine in which important matters in the anti-racist struggle are discussed

London Alliance Against Racism and Fascism (LAARF)

Quarterly bulletin produced by community anti-racist organisations across London (including NMP)

Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (Pluto Press, 1984)

Paul Gordon and Francesca Klug, *New Right, New Racism* (Searchlight, 1986)

A Sivanandan, *A Different Hunger: Writings on Black Resistance* (Pluto Press, 1982)

Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (Hutchinson, 1987)

The Migrant and Refugee Manifesto (Refugee Forum and Migrant Rights Action Network, 1989)

Murder in the Playground: The Report of the Macdonald Inquiry into Racism and Racial Violence in Manchester Schools (Longsight Press, 1989)

Challenging Racism (All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism, 1984)

The Arrivants: A Pictorial Essay on Blacks in Britain (Race Today Collective, 1987)

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 MARCH 1989**

	1989	1988
	£	£
INCOME		
Grant funding	96,774	117,850
Transfer of specified funding	-	3,498
Other income	65	642
	<u>96,939</u>	<u>121,990</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries & National Insurance	50,073	41,901
Rent, Rates, Light and Heat	1,128	1,359
Repairs and Mainenance	3,760	4,011
Insurance	1,373	1,707
Telephone	2,506	3,391
Stationery/Postage/Off Materials	8,679	6,331
Printing/Publicity and Reports	10,262	2,692
Literature and Subscriptions	1,139	275
Audit and Accountancy	1,128	920
Legal Fees	52	4,312
Courses and Conference	3,003	1,689
Motor/Travel and Sub Expenses	6,154	5,574
Volunteers' Expenses	2,114	3,516
Petty Cash Differences	-	1,093
Bank charges and other expenses	424	1,722
Equipment Purchased	295	234
Recruitment Advertising	433	2,747
Research Project Expenses	3,958	32,442
Provision for Doubtful Debts	-	5,010
	<u>96,481</u>	<u>120,926</u>
SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD	458	1,064

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 1989

	1989	1988
	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors and Prepayments	1,568	12,211
Cash at Bank and in Hand	18,705	16,865
	<u>20,273</u>	<u>29,076</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and Accrued Expenses	14,991	22,098
Specified Revenue Funding	-	3,330
Bank Overdraft	-	2,195
	<u>14,991</u>	<u>25,428</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	5,282	3,648
REPRESENTED BY:		
Accumulated Surplus	4,106	2,584
Surplus for the year	1,176	1,064
	<u>5,282</u>	<u>3,648</u>

**15
FINANCIAL
STATEMENT**

**16
AFFILIATED
ORGANISATIONS**

Affiliation to NMP is open to anyone who lives or works in Newham and agrees with the constitutional aims and objectives of the Project

ASIAN ARTS GROUP
 ASIAN LADIES GROUP - HAROLD ROAD CENTRE
 ASIAN WOMEN'S GROUP
 BEHNO-KI-MILAN
 BRIGHTON POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS UNION
 CANNING TOWN MUSLIM WELFARE ASSOCIATION
 CASTLE WARD LABOUR PARTY
 CAIRDE NA NGAEL - NEWHAM AND DISTRICT FRIENDS OF IRELAND
 COMMUNITY LINKS
 COMMUNITY RIGHTS AND SAFETY POLICY UNIT
 CUMBERLAND SCHOOL NUT GROUP
 DEAN AND COMPANY SOLICITORS
 EAST LONDON ACTTS (NEWHAM BRANCH)
 EAST LONDON BLACK WOMEN'S ORGANISATION (ELBWO)
 EAST LONDON IRISH YEAR OF ACTION
 EASTWARDS TRUST (HOSTELS) LTD
 FOREST GATE WARD LABOUR PARTY
 FOREST GATE YOUTH CENTRE
 GREATFIELD BRANCH LABOUR PARTY
 GUJARAT WELFARE ASSOCIATION
 INDIAN WORKERS ASSOCIATION (GB) LONDON EAST
 INTERNATIONAL ASIAN WELFARE ASSOCIATION
 ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION
 LITTLE ILFORD YOUTH CENTRE
 MANOR PARK WARD LABOUR PARTY
 MAYFLOWER FAMILY CENTRE
 MUSLIM WELFARE ASSOCIATION
 MILAN GIRLS PROJECT
 NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE PROJECT
 NEWHAM ADVICE SERVICE
 NEWHAM ALCOHOL ADVISORY SERVICE
 NEWHAM ANTI-FASCIST ACTION
 NEWHAM ASIAN WOMEN'S PROJECT
 NEWHAM BLACK PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS
 NEWHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU
 NEWHAM CND
 NEWHAM COMMUNITY ADVICE UNIT
 NEWHAM COMMUNITY TRANSPORT
 NEWHAM CONSORTIUM FOR YOUTH
 NEWHAM DRUGS PROJECT
 NEWHAM INDEPENDENT LABOUR PUBLICATIONS
 NEWHAM NALGO BLACK WORKERS GROUP
 NEWHAM NALGO SOCIAL SERVICES SHOP STEWARDS COMMITTEE
 NEWHAM LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS
 NEWHAM NORTH EAST LABOUR PARTY
 NEWHAM NORTH WEST LABOUR PARTY
 NEWHAM RENEWAL PROGRAMME
 NEWHAM RIGHTS CENTRE
 NEWHAM TAMIL COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION
 NEWHAM TENANTS AND RESIDENTS FEDERATION
 NEWHAM WOMEN'S GROUP
 NEYADIN ASIAN YOUTH CLUB
 ONE LOVE (BEDS)
 PLASHET WARD LABOUR PARTY
 PLASHET SCHOOL NUT GROUP
 POLYTECHNIC OF EAST LONDON LABOUR CLUB
 POLYTECHNIC OF EAST LONDON STUDENTS UNION
 RAMGARHIA SIKH GURDWARA
 SHALOM CENTRE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE
 ST STEPHEN'S BRANCH LABOUR PARTY
 SAHALI WOMEN'S GROUP
 SINGH SABHA (LONDON EAST)
 SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION
 SOCIETY OF ST FRANCIS
 STARDUST ASIAN YOUTH CLUB
 TAMIL WELFARE ASSOCIATION OF NEWHAM
 THEATRE ROYAL STRATFORD
 TOM ALLEN COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE
 THIRD WORLD FIRST
 UPTON WARD LABOUR PARTY
 URBAN STUDIES CENTRE
 ZEBRA PROJECT

NEWHAM MONITORING PROJECT

NMP is here to

● help you if

- you have been racially attacked – on the street, at school, at home – or racially abused

● help you if

- you have been harassed by the police on racial grounds
- you have been unjustly arrested and need legal advice and representation
- you think your rights have been abused by the police
- you have been racially abused or assaulted by the police or unnecessarily detained without charge

We can also

- help you to make a complaint or take out civil/criminal action against the police if your rights have been abused.

HELP CAN BE OBTAINED 24 HOURS 7 DAYS A WEEK BY RINGING 555 8151

NMP

- *has full-time workers who can help and advise you if you have been racially attacked or face police harassment*
- *runs a 24-hour emergency service, 7 days a week, which can give you legal help, moral support, medical help and other necessary assistance if you have been racially attacked or arrested or have been arrested and need legal representation.*



NMP