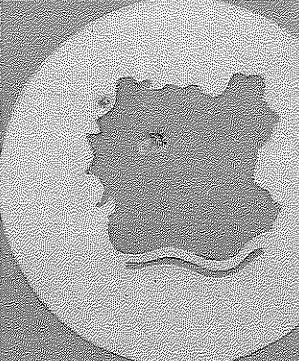



NEWHAM MONITORING PROJECT



NMP



**Annual Report
92 93**

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**newham
monitoring
project**

foreword

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the struggle continues . . .

Introduction

It is with great pleasure that the Management Committee of Newham Monitoring Project presents our thirteenth Annual Report. As we document the struggles, the campaigns, the victories and the day-to-day services that are all part of the Project, we reassess how we can most effectively combat racial and police harassment. The services, campaigns and struggles of the past year bear testimony to the principles and practices of community self-organisation. Tragically, the past year has also seen a frightening rise in racist violence and murders against black and refugee communities across Europe.

In Newham, racial and police harassment continue unabated; this has resulted in a strain on NMP's embattled workers and diminishing resources. Nevertheless, NMP has continued to fight the powers that be. We have seen the acquittal of Arnold and Tony Deane and of Gill Smith, after vigorous campaigns highlighting how they had been viciously assaulted by the police and criminalised. In particular, the experience of Gill Smith exposed the treatment of black women at the hands of the police and provided a focal point for campaigning against the racist and sexist policing of black women. And there was the historic case of Malkjit Singh Natt, whose tape recording of Newham police officers racially abusing and assaulting him, was a chilling

reminder of racist policing at its starkest. Audiences in Britain and around the world heard PCs Gande and Bray in action, as they subjected Mr Natt to a torrent of abuse, threats and violence. The case of Mr Natt, as well as the countless others catalogued in this Annual Report, illustrate that the police, regardless of their public relations offensives and specialised race squads (such as the Newham Organised Racial Incident Squad), remains very much the racist institution that NMP has always pledged to challenge.

In looking forward to 1993/94, we see Newham Council attempting once again to threaten and undermine NMP by slashing our resources. As always, we will fight this cut which we can ill-afford. For NMP's work is invaluable and irreplaceable. We will continue to expose the numerous examples of council blunders and flagrant racism, regardless of the threat to our funding and status.

We trust that this year's Annual Report will bear further testament to the struggles of Newham's black community in combating racism. We pay special tribute to the unstinting work of the staff of NMP, who, without question, regularly give over and above the call of duty and whose commitment to the work of the Project is a shining light to all. We thank all our volunteers and supporters, who help to keep us firmly rooted in the community, through their contributions to NMP.

To those hostile forces out there, we are ready for another thirteen years, for until racist violence and police brutality are eradicated, our work is not done. It is therefore essential to assert once again that we are here to stay and here to fight.

Newham Monitoring Project
 Management Committee

■ For NMP, the term "black" is a colour of resistance. It includes African, Caribbean, Asian and all "other peoples of colour" in a political sense. Our enemy is a political enemy; it oppresses the whole of the black community and as such we have to fight it together. Whilst we do not ignore cultural differences, we reject the way ethnicity is used to marginalise our communities which ultimately only serves our enemies.

casework

■ The central tenet of NMP's work over the last 13 years has been to offer practical advice and support to black people suffering racial harassment and police harassment in Newham.

This approach means that casework takes a central and distinctive role in the day-to-day work of NMP. Our method of working has led us to reject the paternalistic and often patronising approach of social advice and welfare agencies based on an adviser-client relationship, adopting instead a community-based approach. This means for example, that our casework is determined by the needs and wishes of individuals and families themselves. We seek to give those at the centre of a case real control over their lives and the direction that their case takes. This is achieved by providing structures and mechanisms whereby individuals are involved at every stage in the dialogue and feedback from statutory agencies. This same principle applies to both police harassment and racial harassment.

Casework does not, however, exist in isolation. It is not carried out simply for the individual or family concerned, for we are always asking what the wider ramifications of individual cases are for the whole community. It is for this reason that NMP adopts a strategy of building on our casework in order to facilitate community self-organisation and action. The ever-increasing number of cases reported to us clearly indicates that the problem of racial and police harassment cannot be contained by the introduction of specialist task forces, with little or no attempt to strengthen the communities on the receiving end of attack. Many cases demand further campaigning work. And the object of our campaigning work is not only to win this or

that particular case, though this is important, but to use the campaign to highlight issues thrown up by individual cases.

NOTES ON STATISTICS

(1) These cases do not fit neatly into the categories of either racial or police harassment, but are more linked to questions of institutionalised racism.

Framework of cases

In all racial harassment cases our role is to:

- Provide adequate support and advice for the victim;
- Put as much pressure as possible on the police to try and ensure that they take action, arrest the perpetrator(s) and bring the correct charges;
- Pressurise the local authority and relevant agencies to meet their responsibilities to local black people whether they are council tenants or not;
- Get councillors and MPs to intervene so as to ensure that cases are handled satisfactorily by the police and by the local authority.

In all police harassment cases our role is to:

- Try and secure the release of a detained person as soon as possible, and to make sure they are legally represented;
- Ensure that those involved receive proper legal advice from a sympathetic solicitor;
- Ensure that people who sustain injuries while in custody receive immediate medical attention once released;
- See that necessary photographs are taken of injuries incurred while in police custody;
- Make formal complaints on behalf of the victim;
- Pressure council officers, councillors, MPs, etc to investigate police malpractice with the view to making sure that officers who perpetrate racial harassment and assault black people are penalised.

In cases of either racial or police harassment, a further casework option could be to launch a campaign, to effectively expose or embarrass the relevant agencies, as well as raising questions of principle such as the right to self-defence.

Newham Monitoring Project
382 KATHERINE RD, FOREST GATE, E7 8NW



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

FOR IMMEDIATE LEGAL ADVICE AND
PRACTICAL SUPPORT ANYTIME

RING 081 555-8151 24 HRS
7 DAYS

breakdown of cases

Cases reported to the Project

Racial Harassment 198 - 46%

Police Harassment 173 - 39%

Other (see note 1) 63 - 15%

TOTAL 434 - 100%

referrals

DIRECT	212 (49%)
EMERGENCY SERVICE (see note 2)	116 (26%)
OTHER (see note 3)	106 (25%)

NOTES ON STATISTICS

- (2) This only refers to calls during non-office hours.
- (3) This refers to cases referred to us by voluntary and statutory agencies in east London.

This work must be seen in the context of the service provided by other voluntary/community organisations in the borough. At the time of writing, Newham Victim

Support (a police/Home Office initiative), is establishing a section to deal exclusively with racial harassment, ostensibly adopting many of NMP's methods. Whilst we welcome any initiative designed to tackle racial harassment and the terror of racist violence, we would continue to caution against ill-thought out and ill-conceived schemes. The above initiative has been launched despite a complete lack of consultation with any community-based organisations including NMP. With our thirteen years experience of tackling such harassment in the

borough and a wealth of information and documented evidence which we circulate widely, this lack of consultation is inexcusable. The scepticism with which we view the proposal outlined by Victim Support is also shared by Newham Council officers who stated that in 1992 "the level of victim support provided by ... Newham Victim Support Scheme has been virtually insignificant". Victim Support also has the police as part of its management structure, thus automatically reducing the effectiveness of its service provision, as tackling the police's response is also a crucial element to racial harassment work. Ultimately, though, the crucial question with any new initiative designed to tackle racial harassment is the extent this service reflects the community's needs and priorities. This can only be achieved by existing as an arm of the community, rooted within the experiences of that community, which is not the case with Victim Support. Any racial harassment initiatives it indulges

in will, therefore, remain irrelevant and insignificant. It remains an indictment, however, of Newham Council that while cutting most black voluntary sector organisations in the borough, it intends to increase investment in new service provision rather than strengthening existing services.

382 Centre

The majority of cases dealt with

by NMP are taken up as a result of people visiting our office after they have seen NMP publicity or rights cards. However, the use of the Centre greatly exceeds the statistics quoted above. The 382 Centre remains, for many, the first point of contact in terms of help or advice on matters not directly related to racial harassment or police harassment, but to other race and/or class issues which disproportionately affect the black community of Newham. These include poor housing, immigration and bad education. The Centre operates an open door policy. With the help of volunteers, we offer advice on a wide range of issues and act as a referral point to other agencies such as Newham Rights Centre or Asian Ltd.

In 1992, approximately 1200 people used the Centre (many on a number of occasions) for help in filling out forms, writing letters and general DSS and immigration advice. Many of these are referred to other agencies for more detailed advice. In 1992, we established advice surgeries with outside agencies regularly visiting to provide more specialist advice, hence maximising the services provided and encouraging the continued use of the building as a community resource centre.

Emergency service

As can be seen from the statistics, the emergency service accounted once again for 26% of cases dealt with in 1992. The 24-hour service remains unique in the borough and is a vital component of NMP's work. A number of cases dealt with from the emergency service have included general advice and are not related to police harassment or racial harassment.

The service is staffed primarily by local volunteers. They are trained in the basic law and given an emergency service handbook with essential numbers and detailed information on how to deal with cases of policing and racial harassment. These volunteers have the support of a second tier of volunteers including solicitors, photographers and, if necessary, doctors, as well as local volunteers prepared to be called out in an emergency.

NMP's emergency service volunteers represent one of the pillars of the Project without whom much of our work could not be done. NMP gratefully acknowledges their help and support during 1992.

SERVICE

24 HOURS
7 DAYS A WEEK
RING
555 8151

EMERGENCY

racial harassment

1992 will be remembered as the year when at least twelve black people were killed in racist attacks across Britain - including the racist murder of yet another Newham resident. Indeed, across Europe, racism and fascism have been rampant; of particular concern are the massive rise in neo-nazi violence and the introduction of increasingly draconian legislation designed to restrict the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees.

In 1992, Newham Monitoring Project dealt with 198 cases of racial harassment. A detailed breakdown of these cases is outlined below. This continues to represent an unacceptably high incidence of racist violence. For statistics belie the devastating physical and emotional effect of each and every attack on those individuals and families concerned.

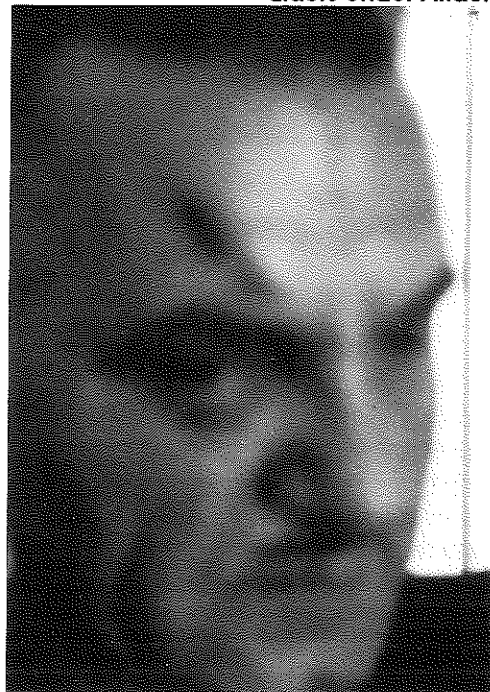
The stories and issues catalogued below illustrate the many different ways in which racial harassment can affect black people. They also demonstrate how in the face of frequent failure on the part of statutory agencies (principally the local authority and the police) black communities are organising themselves at street level and asserting their right to live in peace, free from violence and racism.

Attacks on single parent families

It remains the case, unfortunately, that many black people are isolated in predominantly white areas of Newham with no black community to provide practical support. Many are single parent families housed by the council in these areas with no thought to the possible problems they might face, and frequently with no effective support network in place.

■ Mrs S is a single mother with two young children aged two and four. In 1992, she was moved to a ground floor flat on Milner Road, West Ham, after numerous violent racist attacks upon her children and her (including

Elders Under Attack



an incident in April 1991 in which her son, who was then three, was knocked unconscious by a brick) at their previous address in Canning Town. Three weeks after moving to Milner Road, four or five youths racially abused and assaulted her children and her in front of her block of flats. The next day her children were playing in the garden when they were again attacked and the two-year-old girl was kicked. The police response was to urge Mrs S to seek rehousing. This pattern of almost daily harassment has continued - there have been attempted arsons, numerous broken windows and frequent assaults. In late December 1992, Mrs S required hospital treatment for severe bruising to her body as a result of yet another assault. To date, the police have not arrested any of the perpetrators.

What is particularly disturbing about Mrs S's case is that she was moved to Milner Road due to severe racial harassment at her previous address. But why was she moved to Milner Road which is on an estate where the crime level is so serious that the council used it to test a pilot scheme (later abandoned) of installing alarms in all flats from which a central switch board could be contacted in case of an emergency? As a result of the council's total lack of understanding

of Mrs S's personal circumstances, she has had to endure another year of threats, abuse and violence. The children, as always, have fared worst - her four-year-old son often cowers at the sight of white men.

■ On 12 December 1992, whilst walking home from the shops in West Ham, Ms R saw a group of youths who had harassed her in the past. As she approached them she was abused, called a "fucking Paki" and spat on. The racists then proceeded to assault Ms R's three-year-old child, hitting him on the head at least three times. On calling the police, she was shocked when told she would have to ask the boy responsible for the attack where he lived and then inform his parents.

The police's failure to comprehend the reality of racist violence is more than evident from the advice given above. To seriously expect someone in Ms R's position to challenge her persecutors is quite incredible.

■ In July 1992, Ms SS and her three children were living in a bed and breakfast after arriving from Pakistan when they were offered accommodation in North Woolwich by the council's Homeless Persons Unit (HPU). When Ms SS went to see the flat, she was confronted by a group of white youths who began to racially abuse and taunt her. Clearly distressed, Ms SS returned to the HPU and complained about the property. She was, however, advised by HPU staff that she should accept the property and later attempt to appeal against the offer. The staff clearly gave Ms SS the impression that her appeal would be a mere formality and that she would be rehoused. This advice was totally incorrect as Ms SS was, in fact, entitled to refuse the property on grounds of racial harassment. But the family, accepting the advice given, moved into the flat in North Woolwich. From the moment they moved, they suffered a sustained campaign of racial harassment from groups of local youths who congregated near Ms SS's home and terrorised the family. Incidents of harassment included dog shit being thrown at the door and through the letter box as well as numerous assaults and attempts to rip Ms SS's scarf from her head. The family were so terrorised that the children went to a school many miles away, though they were often too scared to go to the bus stop to go to school. Following NMP's intervention, the HPU was forced to pay financial compensation to Ms SS and move her to a more secure property in a safer area.

The above cases illustrate the problem of housing black single parent families in areas with high levels of racial harassment. The effect of this violence is made worse by

the fact that these families are isolated from the traditional support mechanisms in place in established black communities.

Attacks on refugees

In 1992, refugees across Europe came under widespread attack, with Britain being no exception. Of the few refugees who succeeded in being granted political asylum or leave to remain in the UK, many are already traumatised from horrific experiences at home. They frequently feel a great sense of isolation, which coupled with the fact that many are generally unaware of the nature of racism in this country, makes them more vulnerable to racist attack. The situation is further exacerbated by the lack of resources given to genuine refugee organisations run by and for refugees; consequently, information is not effectively distributed amongst the refugee community as to where to go for help and advice. The cases below illustrate the risks inherent in "dumping" new refugees in areas without any practical support network.

■ Throughout May and June 1992, Ms K, a Ugandan refugee, was suffering racial harassment from her neighbours in East Ham. Incidents included racist abuse in the streets, arson attempts and threats against Ms K's children. The police and the housing department were informed on numerous occasions about this case and yet consistently failed to respond. In August 1992, as Ms K returned home from church, she was confronted by her neighbours who followed her and shouted abuse. As Ms K reached her front door, the racists got in front of her and blocked her path. When she attempted to pass, one of them grabbed her by the hair while the other three beat and kicked her,



Welcome to Britain!

telling her to "get back to the jungle, black bitch!" Ms K's screams alerted her partner Mr D who came out of the flat in time to witness Ms K being hit with milk bottles and clumps of hair being ripped from her scalp. On seeing Mr D, one of the racists attacked him and a fight ensued between the two

Case Statistics

■ Breakdown in terms of manner of referral

Direct	87
Emergency Service (during non-office hours)	44
Via other Agencies	67

■ Breakdown in terms of gender and age (a)

Female	91
Male	83
Children	24

■ Breakdown in terms of nature of racial harassment (a)

Murders	1
Physical abuse	78
Verbal abuse	72
Arson	9
Other (a)	38

■ Breakdown in terms of location of attack (a)

Home	84
School	17
Work	19
Places of Worship	6
Street	58
Pubs	14

■ Breakdown in terms of area

E6	35
E7	31
E12	17
E13	22
E15	37
E16	40
Outside Newham (a)	16

Notes for Statistics

(1) Our statistics in terms of gender and age represent the victim and/or 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 attacks on property ranging from windows being smashed to excrement being shoved through letter-boxes.

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

(5) 'Outside Newham' represents the neighbouring boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

Tide of race attacks greets refugees to 'promised land'

London. The Home Office, which figures the number of refugees in the UK, says that in 1992, 10,000 refugees were granted asylum in the UK. This is a record for the UK, and it is a reflection of the fact that the UK is a safe haven for refugees. The Home Office says that the number of refugees granted asylum in the UK has increased by 10 per cent since 1991. This is a reflection of the fact that the UK is a safe haven for refugees.

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Map of the British Isles showing the location of Newham in the London area.

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The Observer - 13 September 1992

'Racist attack': Council drop case

A COSTLY court case which aimed to bring alleged racial harassment in Manor Park to book has been dropped by Newham Council.

Council chiefs withdrew the case after police and crown prosecutors asked for more time to sift through complex but crucial evidence.

Two families had been charged for alleged racial harassment of asian neighbours.

Legal experts, however, warned staff that Newham Magistrates were unlikely to order a third adjournment when at court on Friday.

The case, which had suffered a number of legal and technical setbacks, had cost £4,000 in legal costs.

The case was brought after the acquittal at Snaresbrook Crown Court of Mohammed Altaf who faced assault charges in 1990 following a series of violent incidents in Carlyle Road, Manor Park in 1989.

Alex Thomson, Police and Community Sub-Committee chairman, said: "The council can only act within their powers."

"This will not deter Newham from prosecuting those responsible for racist attacks."

men. Mr D defended himself and managed to get Ms K into the flat, close the door and call the police. The racists were, however, still outside trying to kick the door down. When the police arrived, they spoke briefly to Ms K and Mr D and then proceeded to discuss the matter at length with the perpetrators. Remarkably, the police arrested one of the racists and Mr D and charged them both with actual bodily harm.

In response to Ms K's wishes, we urged the housing department to move her children and her and demanded that the police drop the charge against Mr D. Ms K eventually moved out of the area, though the CPS was never taken against the racists. The CPS dropped the charge against Mr D and despite our protests, also dropped the charge against his attacker, thereby allowing the case to be viewed as one in which both parties were equally culpable. This outrage is further evidence of not only the failure of the police and the CPS to tackle racial harassment but also of the nonexistent statutory support within the borough for refugees under attack.

The G family from Somalia had not lived for long in Canning Town before they were racially harassed. Mrs G was frequently followed to the shops, abused and threatened by groups of white youths, culminating in a physical attack in September 1992 when youths pinned her against a wall, called her an "African bitch", ripped her veil from her face and punched and kicked her. Mrs G managed to get away. But in the following months, the harassment continued.

The case only came to light when a local Somali group informed the council and other agencies about how the G family were living in isolation and being exposed

to extremes of harassment. The family is presently awaiting a transfer out of the area.

On 16 July 1992, Mr A, a Ugandan refugee, was drinking in a pub when he was approached by two white men who started chatting to him. Mr A, having only been in the UK for a few months, was quite happy to find someone to talk to. One of the men then insisted that Mr A buy him a drink. When Mr A refused, the other man abused him, shouting, "Niggers aren't allowed in here!" The men then began mocking Mr A's accent and laughed when he explained he was African. Feeling threatened, Mr A started moving away from the men, but they persisted to the extent that Mr A asked the bar staff to call the police. The staff, however, ignored Mr A's pleas, accusing him of over-reacting. He finished his drink and went to the toilet, where two other white men abused and punched him. Mr A was knocked to the floor beside the urinals, and his face was pushed into the urine. When he eventually managed to stagger to his feet, he was dragged from the pub to the pavement outside and set upon again. He was eventually rescued by a black bus driver passing by and taken to hospital with serious injuries to his face and body, including cracked ribs, back injuries, cuts and bruises. To date, nobody has been arrested for these attacks.

Many refugees arrive in Newham without friends or community contacts locally to advise and support them. They are frequently harassed by immigration officials and the police and frequently suffer terrible poverty. Despite numerous conferences organised by Newham Council in the name of improving its services to refugee communities, the reality is that refugees continue to be isolated and harassed, with little access to basic services which most of us

take for granted. It is a damning indictment of British society that families who have often escaped from horrific torture and the threat of death from oppressive regimes usually armed and financed by western governments should have to suffer the types of attacks described above.

Harassment at work

Many black people in Newham are exposed to the risks of racist violence in the workplace, particularly those who are forced to work long hours in dangerous jobs. Minicab drivers are especially vulnerable.

In June 1992, AI who works for a Forest Gate minicab firm was called to a pub in Upton Park by a regular customer. On his arrival, he was confronted by two white men and a white woman whom he had never met before but who insisted that he should give them a lift. They attempted to get into the car, but were prevented from doing so by AI who explained that the cab was already booked. The men then started racially abusing AI, with one saying, "tell that Paki to take us". AI had enough and tried to drive off but one of the men forced his way into the rear seat as the other rushed to the driver's window. As AI tried to evict the man from his car, he was struck across the face with a bottle by the second man, causing him extensive facial injuries. The men then dragged him out of the car, raining punches on his head and back. AI managed to fight them off and drive to a public payphone and call the police. By the time the police arrived, the racists had escaped, and

Minicab drivers are easy targets for racists looking for trouble. In 1992, four black minicab drivers in Britain were murdered on the job. As this Annual Report goes to print, NMP regrettably reports the murder of Fiaz Mirza, a Newham minicab driver, who had been missing for nearly three weeks. He was last heard of taking two white men to Custom House.

However, it is not only black people working in high risk employment areas who are attacked.

In May 1992, B, an engineer with British Telecom, was on call in Plaistow when he was approached by three white men. They began abusing him. He ignored them and attempted to leave the area but as he approached his van, one of the men grabbed and punched him in the face. He defended himself, but was then attacked by the other two men who kicked him and beat him on the head. As B tried to escape again, his belt was caught on a fence and the men continued to assault him. Eventually, he managed to stagger to his van and drive off. The attack left B with cuts and bruises on his face and bruises on the left side of his body. Nevertheless, he continued working. But he was feeling increasingly in pain, so he decided to go home. After two days off on sick leave, B returned to work. Fearing he may be disciplined if he mentioned the attack, he claimed his injuries were due to an accident, making a statement to that effect. Remarkably, B was then told that pending an investigation he was suspended on full pay due to an allegation made against him. B immediately approached NMP and we duly contacted his union. Unfortunately, the union initially refused to defend B; but when NMP brought pressure to bear, the union backed B's appeal against suspension. B was eventually reinstated.



These two cases graphically illustrate the risks that many black people run when simply attempting to make a living. The onus in these cases is on the unions to ensure that employers support all workers who have suffered racial harassment and provide adequate security arrangements.

apart from one of the officers cracking a joke at AI's expense, no further action was taken.

Harassment on estates

On many of Newham's council estates, racial harassment is still a daily reality for black tenants. The perpetrators are usually other tenants or even the local tenants association (most tenants associations are actively racist or fail to respond to the needs of black tenants).

Racism on Field Estate

■ The C family and AP from Field Estate, Forest Gate were being harassed by two separate groups of racists: the J family from Fowler Road and Paul Brown and his partner Denise from Field Point, Station Road. Members of the J family (who are well known

family's flat. The police were called regularly by AP and Mr and Mrs C. However, on almost every occasion that officers attended, no action was taken on the grounds that Brown would have to be caught in the act before an arrest to be made. In early 1992, Brown was arrested and charged following an attempt to attack the C family with an iron bar. However, he was later released on bail and allowed to return to the estate.

On 20 August 1992, an NMP worker and volunteer stayed in AP's house in order to observe Brown and be on hand to ensure that police officers attending took some action. As expected, Brown started screaming abused at the C family such as "come here you fucking Paki" and "I'm going to fucking burn you out tonight". AP called the police while the NMP worker and volunteer kept an eye on Brown and took notes of his actions and words. When the police arrived, they were confronted by six witnesses who had seen and heard Brown in full flow; they went and spoke to Brown only to return and threaten to caution all six witnesses including the NMP worker and volunteer. Their twisted logic was that Brown had made counter-allegations against Mr C and that based on their "many years of experience in the police force", there was "no way this case would win in court". The NMP Emergency Service line was immediately contacted and the volunteer on duty called Forest Gate police station, demanding that action be taken against Brown and expressing outrage at the threats of attending officers to caution the six witnesses. A steady stream of calls to the police station from other volunteers ensued and eventually a senior officer attended the scene. Brown was finally arrested and charged with two counts of threatening to kill, one of threatening to cause criminal damage by arson and, crucially, one of incitement to racial hatred. Initially, Brown was bailed not to return to the estate until after his trial. But he repeatedly broke his bail conditions and was, therefore, remanded in custody until the trial.

At the trial, Brown and his relatives made countless threats against AP and the C family, with his father ranting about "Pakis and Niggers running Britain". After the magistrates heard evidence from Mr and Mrs C, AP, a NMP worker and a NMP volunteer, Brown was convicted of all the charges. He went berserk in the courtroom and had to be restrained and dragged from the witness box. He was later sentenced to six months imprisonment (although he was released soon after, having served most of his sentence while awaiting trial).

Within days of his release, Brown was back on the estate and the harassment recom-

menced. A few weeks later, the police were called and they witnessed Brown shouting racist abuse at the C family and AP; they arrested him for breach of parole and charged him with threatening behaviour. He is currently awaiting trial.

After unremitting pressure from NMP, the housing department have at last started proceedings to evict Paul and Denise Brown from their property on grounds of racial harassment. To date, no further incidents of harassment have been reported.

The determination of AP and the C family to stay in the area and fight the likes of the J family and the Browns is worthy of great tribute and respect. By attending court and giving evidence against Brown, they risked a spate of further harassment as Brown knows where they live and where their children go to school. In addition, the crucial role played by NMP workers and volunteers on the Field Estate illustrates the necessity of having community organisations who consistently and proactively combat racist violence.

Racism and tenants associations

Harassment on estates often throws the spotlight on the role of tenants associations and their response to racial harassment. Take the case of the caretaker at Field Estate who resigned from the tenants drinking club because of an effective blanket ban on black tenants becoming members (in that to join you had to be signed in and proposed by two current members). What is most disgraceful is that the club is technically under the auspices of Newham Council's leisure services department and that despite the fact that the club has been exposed in a local paper, no action has yet been taken against its management.

The following case further illustrates the failure of tenants associations to tackle racial harassment perpetrated by their members.

■ For over two years, IT had been regularly harassed by his neighbour in Custom House. Harassment included racist graffiti on the door, rubbish thrown in the garden, racist abuse and assaults. In July 1992, IT attended his local tenants association meeting to complain about his neighbour's behaviour and demand some action. In the full view of the meeting, he was approached by his neighbour and asked whether he cared to discuss

in private the "problems" they were having. IT, believing that this was an opportunity to end years of torment and assuming that he would be safe, followed his neighbour for a "quiet chat outside the meeting". As soon as IT set foot outside the hall, he was set upon by his neighbour who punched him in the face and kicked and beat him in front of a number of other tenants. IT managed to strike back and run home. He, immediately, phoned the police who proceeded to arrest the perpetrator. However, believing that he would get little support, especially from the tenants association, IT decided not to pursue the matter any further.

Many (if not most) tenants associations in Newham are either thoroughly racist or completely unable to respond to racial harassment. Only exceptionally do tenants associations play a progressive and anti-racist role. This is precisely why NMP continues to support the forming, funding and facilitating of black tenants groups which are able to defend their respective areas from racist violence.

What is Newham Council doing?

In 1992, NMP dealt with a number of cases which highlighted the council's failure to respond effectively to racial harassment suffered by Newham residents. Below we outline some of these cases in order to illustrate how supposedly well-meaning and well-intentioned council policies do not get beyond the paper they are written on due to either a lack of will on the part of those responsible for implementation or downright laziness and complacency.

Racism and social services

■ The N family in West Ham suffered consistent harassment from neighbours across the corridor in the block of flats where they lived. In July 1992, the neighbours started abusing and threatening children in the N family, who ran home to their mother crying. As Mrs N went into the corridor to challenge her neighbours, she was met with a tirade of racist abuse. A heated argument ensued, culminating in the racists repeatedly beating Mrs N until she was rescued by her sister. Soon after, Mrs N's husband, brother and a friend returned home. The racists accused Mrs N of instigating the attack but also curiously blamed Mr N. When Mr N explained that he had only just arrived home and, therefore, could not have been involved. He also defended his wife, ex-



Racist Graffiti in Forest Gate

for harassing black residents on the estate and were implicated in driving out another black family from the estate in 1989) would follow Mr C to the shops, abuse and threaten him. AP was also frequently abused by the J family. In recent incidents, members of the J family actually threatened and assaulted Mr C on his own doorstep in the presence of council officers. Following consistent pressure from the C family, AP and NMP, the police reluctantly began to view this as a case of racial harassment but went on to urge the families not to pursue the case further, despite being aware of the history of the J family.

Meanwhile, Paul Brown along with his partner Denise would regularly threaten Mr C with knives and clubs, abuse Mrs C and her children and threaten AP. Brown would regularly stand on a piece of green in the heart of the estate and scream abuse at the C

plaining that she was very distressed and shaken by the incident. The response of one of the racists was to attack Mr N; Mr N retreated into the flat and shut the door.

Later that evening, the N family heard what appeared to be gun shots in the corridor outside their door. Terrified, they called the police and then discreetly investigated, finding the corridor smelling of smoke and two cartridges on the floor. Within minutes, police officers arrived and, incredibly, burst into the N's flat (on the grounds that the shots had come from their flat). Mr N and the other two men in the flat were arrested on suspicion of possessing firearms. When interviewed, they gave full statements and told the police that they believed the shots were fired by the racists. Their reward was to be charged with violent disorder. A full day later, the police raided the racists' home and arrested one person and charged him with violent disorder as well. Not surprisingly, no gun was found.

Whilst the response of the police was beyond contempt (as is all too often the case), the role of social services is also cause for great concern. As far as we know, social services was informed of the incident because the children of the racist attackers were on their at-risk register. Whatever the reason for their involvement, however, their response was seriously flawed, in that without examining the circumstances of the case, they simply moved the perpetrators out of the area into temporary accommodation. This was subsequently used by the CPS as evidence of the alleged threat that the N family posed in an attempt to deny Mr N and the two other men bail. Fortunately, the charges were dropped and the N family is awaiting a transfer out of the area. But not surprisingly, the charges against the racist were also dropped, thus effectively deracialising the case and equating self defence against racist violence with racist violence itself. In short, the police and social services both acted directly against the

interests of the true victims in this case.

The effect of what social services did was twofold: firstly, by implying that the victims in this case posed some form of a threat to the racists, social services paved the way for the CPS in the criminal trial to assert that the victims were in fact the aggressors. Secondly, as a result of a lack of inter-departmental liaison (in apparent disregard for council policy in relation to racial harassment cases), social services did not formally inform the housing department of what it was doing. It is very worrying that to date, despite repeated demands, social services has not explained exactly why these racists were moved. Instead, senior officers including the director of social services have made a point of distancing themselves from the case. NMP has no hesitation in stating that the council as a whole must bear responsibility for allowing the N family to be criminalised by the police as described above.

Harassment of owner-occupiers

■ Mrs H and Mrs S, two sisters occupying their own homes in close proximity to each other in Custom House, had been suffering sporadic racial harassment for some time. However, in October 1992 the scale and ferocity of the harassment increased substantially. Mrs S, in particular, suffered a series of attacks including smashed windows on a daily basis (on one occasion, a brick landed in her child's cot moments after the baby had been removed for feeding), her front door being continually daubed with racist graffiti, glass panels in the front



Racist graffiti in Custom House

door being kicked out, attempted arson attacks and threats. This situation was further exacerbated by the fact that Mrs S also suffers from a mental health problem and cares for her baby and her elderly parents, Mr and Mrs O.

After intervening on a number of occasions to help her sister, Mrs H also became a target. She had her car damaged, her windows and fence broken as well as suffering racist abuse in the street. The situation escalated to the point that Mrs H would drive her parents the few hundred yards to Mrs S's home in fear of being attacked if they walked. The response of the police was either to ignore the clear racial motive behind these attacks or attend and take no action.

The council first heard about this case when NMP contacted the local Custom House housing office, informing them of the harassment and demanding that action be taken against the perpetrators. Some of the racists had already been identified by Mrs H (she had bravely followed two youths to their homes from the scene of one attack). We also demanded that the council install secure letter boxes and security film on the windows to prevent further damage and warned of the probability of the situation becoming worse. Unfortunately, our warnings were not heeded and our demands were not met. A number of Mrs S's windows were smashed and a large firework was fired through her letter box, exploding in the kitchen and terrifying the family. Finally, security measures were installed but the council still refused to accept that these families had grounds to be moved. NMP was told that the council did not feel that the harassment suffered by the S family was of sufficient intensity to justify an immediate transfer.

The continuing harassment began to take such a serious toll on Mrs S's mental health that social services formally wrote to the housing department, urging them to move the families immediately. Nevertheless, the council's response remained disorganised and ad-hoc. NMP workers and volunteers were forced to rush to Custom House on numerous occasions in the early hours of the morning following emergency calls from the families.

It became increasingly apparent that the council's response to these families was prejudiced by the fact that they are owner-occupiers. This directly contradicts the council's stated objective of providing support to all victims of racial harassment,

including owner-occupiers, an objective continuously affirmed by the housing department and councillors alike. However, this objective is simply not translated into action.

For example, the housing department allocated only £2000 to deal with racial harassment affecting owner-occupiers for the whole of 1992. But the entire sum was spent on Mrs S and Mrs H within a matter of months, thus forcing housing officers to demand an increase of £5000 from the council's housing committee.

After months of pressure from NMP and further harassment including three arson attacks, housing officers submitted a report to councillors seeking their permission to move the families. The council's options in terms of moving the families were few in that government legislation limited the power of local authorities to purchase housing stock. Nevertheless, numerous solutions were suggested by NMP including allowing the families to move into temporary accommodation while they tried to sell their properties (the families accepted that they would probably make a financial loss but their primary concern was for their health and safety). Housing officers and councillors proceeded to ask the families what can best be described as banal and irrelevant questions concerning their financial situations, thus demonstrating that the prime concern of the council was that as little money be spent as possible and no expensive precedents be set for the future.

Finally, the housing department, desperately seeking any compromise which would take this thorny issue off the agenda, asked East London Housing Association (ELHA) to purchase the properties. This apparently would have enabled the council to provide the families with temporary accommodation whilst giving them time to find other homes to buy. When ELHA said they could not buy Mrs H's property because the roof was flat, the council's director of housing requested a special favour from ELHA - hardly the way to formulate housing policy.

In a letter to NMP, the director of housing stated, "I would like to emphasise that, in principle, the council does not discriminate in the provision of services to victims of racial harassment between council tenants, private tenants and owner-occupiers. In practice, however, as you have pointed out

time and time again, this commitment has been difficult to apply". He also stated that there was an added difficulty arising from the current housing slump. In a nutshell, the council's advice to owner-occupiers suffering racial harassment seemed to be that they would have to wait for a property boom before the council would be in a position to do anything constructive.

As we go to print, Mrs S and Mrs H and their families have yet to be moved.

Attack on NMP staff

On 29 January 1993, a NMP worker and two volunteers were attacked whilst visiting families in the Custom House area. This was the first serious assault on NMP staff while on case visits.

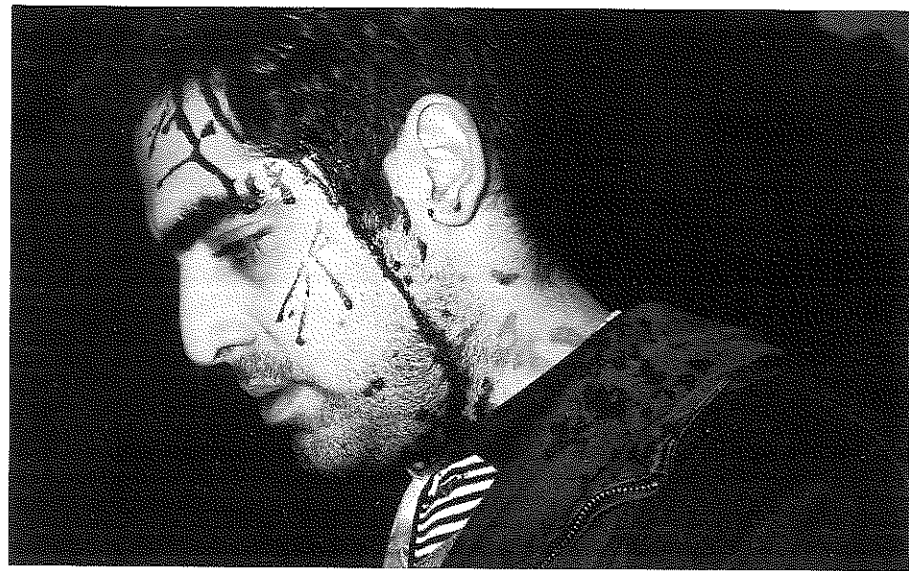
and proceeded to move towards Mr Butler, threatening him. As Mr Butler attempted to get away, the man moved to strike him with a wrench. At the same time, the three other men, armed with hammers, wrenches and a wheel brace, attacked Mr Zahir. They continued to shout racial abuse as they struck Mr Zahir with the wrench and hammer. In attempting to defend himself, Mr Zahir forced one of the attackers to the ground. The other two, however, continued to rain blows at his head and body with the hammer and wrench, leaving him with severe head injuries. Meanwhile Mr Butler had managed to disarm his attacker and ran to Mr Zahir's aid. It was only the intervention of Mr Butler which saved Mr Zahir from any further savagery as the white men urged each other "to get the Paki on the ground".

Mr Zahir was rushed to Newham General Hospital where he required emergency treatment including several stitches to a large head wound and treatment for injuries to his hands, arms and body. Mr Butler also required emergency treatment for injuries to his back and collarbone.

Despite the viciousness of the attack, NMP reiterates its resolve and commitment to fighting racial harassment in east London. No amount of threats and violence from racists and fascists will stop us from doing so.

Beware of institutional anti-racism!

The stories and issues outlined in this chapter illustrate the terrible toll that racist violence takes on the black community and the ongoing fightback against these attacks. We are sorry to say, however, that NMP's role in supporting individuals and families suffering racial harassment is consistently undermined by Newham Council. For example, in their 1991/92 racial harassment report, the housing department states that "Newham Monitoring Project provided support in 37 of the 59 cases which received voluntary group support". This implies that NMP was only involved in 37 of the racial harassment cases handled by the housing department in 1991/92 which is a gross misrepresentation. For in the majority of racial harassment cases handled by the housing department in which NMP was supporting those under attack, we were contacted directly or via the emergency service (and not via the housing depart-



Hossein Zahir after the attack in Custom House

On the day in question, Hossein Zahir, Sujata Aurora and Michael Butler were visiting families and photographing graffiti in the Young Road area of Custom House. It was approximately 3 pm when they passed a garage attached to a house in Young Road in which there were a number of white men. One of the men racially abused Mr Butler

POLICE PROBE AFTER COMMUNITY WORKERS ARE ATTACKED WITH WRENCHES

Race team staff beaten by thugs

Newham Recorder - 11 February 1993

By JOHN HEALY

WORKERS for a group which monitors racial activity have been attacked by thugs armed with hammers and wrenches. It is the first time people working for Newham Monitoring Project, based in Katherine Road, Forest Gate, have been assaulted by racists. The incident is being investigated by officers from the Newham Organised Racial Incident Squad. NMP case worker Hossein Zahir, 25, and volunteers Michael Butler, 29, and Ms Sujata Aurora were visiting two families in Custom House who had been victims of racial violence. In Young Road a white man began abusing the group. He then moved to Mr Butler with a wrench. The two men were then struck with hammers and wrenches. They began striking Mr Zahir and he was forced to the ground by the blow.



Injured Hossein Zahir

RACE-HATE PROBE AS SHOPS BURN

A collage of newspaper headlines related to racial violence and community issues. Headlines include: 'Man fights for his life after knife attack', 'ASIAN YOUTH HURLED AT TRAIN - THUGS JAILED!', 'IMBERT SPEAKS OUT OVER RACE MARCHES', 'Racial attacks on the increase says report', 'Asian lad knifed by drug...', and 'VICTIM FEARS GANG MAY STRIKE AGAIN'. There are also smaller snippets like 'BY NICK LIPLEY' and 'RIGHTS FOR WHITE'.

That Was The Year That Was!

ment). Clearly, the housing department does not wish to acknowledge that NMP has been actively involved in many more racial harassment cases than their statistics reflect.

The same report states that the housing department's race and housing unit is in the process of looking into ways of forging renewed links with voluntary organisations with a view to them playing an increased part in providing support to victims of racial harassment. As far as NMP is concerned, this is merely an attempt by the housing department, and the race and housing unit in particular, to divert criticism away from their own failures, as the cases of Mrs H, Mrs S and countless others prove.

A further example of the race and housing unit's failure to comprehend the dynamics of racial harassment in Newham is the recent launch of its "racial harassment hotline". The tokenism of this "service" was exposed when R and P from West Ham rang the hotline independent of each other to report an attack. P found an answer phone whereas R was told by an officer of the race and housing unit to call

her local housing office (she had rung the hotline partly to complain of inactivity on the part of her housing office in the face of harassment she was receiving). NMP questions why the housing department set up this hotline in the first place when they knew perfectly well that the expectations raised by the expensive and glossy leaflets and posters advertising the hotline could never be met by them. We can only assume that victims of racial harassment are being used as pawns by council officers engaged in empire-building.

At the end of the day, the race and housing unit as well as other race units within the council have a vested interest in defending their respective departments in terms of service provision to victims of harassment, service provision which more often than not is found wanting.

The failures of institutional anti-racism remind us that the community must continuously be vigilant, even of its own elected "representatives" and their officers. We must never forget that there can never be any substitute for community self-organisation and self-defence in support of those under attack.

police response to racism

From 1991 to 1992, police statistics for racially motivated crime in Newham increased by 5.5% from 498 to 525. This should be seen in the context of a 100% increase in harassment from 1990 to 1991. These figures indicate an alarming trend in the increase of racist attacks. Police statistics also demonstrate that one in three victims of racial harassment will be reporting an incident of common or serious assault. In the case of non-racially motivated crime, only one in twelve reports is of assault. The police clear-up rate for racial harassment incidents, however, has decreased to 29.5% in 1992, which is 4.5% lower than it was in 1991.

For a variety of reasons, the police's statistics are flawed. As most independent sources will confirm, the true scale of racial harassment is hidden by the phenomenon of under-reporting. This is primarily because of the black community's lack of confidence in the police and a basic mistrust of the police's willingness and ability to help victims of racist violence. Indeed, many black families under attack actually fear the response of the police. They believe their allegations will be ignored or that they may be criminalised as a consequence of calling the police. This fear is rooted not in abstract media exposes, as many in the police prefer to believe, but in the horrific experiences the black community has had in terms of police brutality.

The incidents outlined below graphically demonstrate why the community's apprehension of the police response to racial harassment is so justified.

Double harassment

■ MM had lived in Plaistow for a number of years when he and his family became the victims of racial harassment from a white family living nearby. The harassment included a serious assault in 1989 on MM's brother, CM. The assault had taken place a few weeks after CM had left hospital following a series of operations, and as a result of the attack, he was again hospitalised. In July 1992, MM was outside with his car when the attacker walked past and abused him. When MM responded, he was attacked.

As MM was being punched and kicked, his older brother YM came out of the house and attempted to stop the attack. MM's family immediately called the police. An off-duty police officer, who chanced upon the incident, kept the racist on the scene until uniformed officers arrived.

The attending police officers discussed the matter with their off-duty colleague and then with the attacker. Finally, they approached MM and proceeded to arrest him and his brother YM. The two brothers gave full statements to the police including the history of harassment involving the same attacker. They were then told the police would contact them. Two months later, they were asked to return to the police station and were, to their astonishment, charged with actual bodily harm. The racist, however, was not charged with any offence.

The above case provides a classic example of the police criminalising the victims of racist attacks. The racist had his actions vindicated by the police and the victims were prosecuted for defending themselves. Unfortunately, the right of self-defence must constantly be reasserted and never be taken for granted.

■ X had suffered repeated attacks on his property in East Ham by youths who would scream racist abuse at him. On one occasion in December 1992, he spotted a number of youths holding what appeared to be a bottle stuffed with a rag. Fearing a possible petrol bomb attack, he ran after them and on apprehending one of them, challenged him saying, "Why don't you leave me alone". The youth pushed X away and ran off. Minutes later while X was at home calling the police, he was interrupted by the door bell. On opening the door, he was confronted by a white man armed with a hammer. The man punched X in the face and knocked him down. As he entered X's home shouting racial abuse and threatening to "do him in", X received a further barrage of blows and fell back again onto the stairway behind him. As he landed he felt a knife on a step and picked it up in the hope of scaring his attacker off. To X's horror, the attack continued so he started desperately waving the knife in the air in order to defend himself. Unfortunately, he happened to cut his attacker on the face. As a result, the racist started backing away and eventually fled from the incident.



X once again called the police. However, on their arrival, he was arrested and charged with malicious wounding, despite the fact that he required three stitches in his mouth because of the attack.

X is currently awaiting trial on this charge, and has moved out of his property in fear of further attacks. Despite the fact that the incident took place in X's hallway, the attacker was not charged. Even though some of the officers in this case knew that X was innocent, their compassion was restricted to laughing at X and mocking his predicament. It is quite incredible that after suffering systematic harassment and damage to his property, all of which had previously been reported to the police, and suffering a serious assault himself, he should then be criminalised for bravely defending himself. X's experience makes a mockery of the police's public relations rhetoric to reveal the reality of British policing. We hope to provide maximum support for X in his fight against the charges and the police's racism.

Declassification and deracialisation of racist violence

A common feature of the police's response to incidents of racial harassment is to deracialise or declassify the case. This is done by the police failing to report an attack as racist due to their interpretation of events, or after 'consultation' with officers, the victim withdrawing the racial nature of the allegation.

In 1992, the council, for the first time, started to address the issue of declassification. This is defined by the council's Police and Community Safety Unit as:

"Where police officers and the complainant agree after further investigations that the incident was not racially motivated, the matter will no longer be counted as a racial incident. Additionally, where an initial complaint of a racial incident is made but the complainant withdraws the allegation or otherwise fails to assist police in substantiating the facts, no further action may be taken and the incident will then be declassified."

The first month in which police started keeping figures on declassification was March 1992. Between March and December 1992, 55 incidents (10.5% of the total) were declassified.

The following case illustrates how this declassification operates in practice.

■ In June 1992, Mrs S from East Ham was visiting an elderly relative close to her home, as she did every evening, when the relative's neighbour started racially abusing her. Mrs S at first tolerated the abuse, but as the number of incidents increased, she formed the impression that the white man next door to her relative's house was often simply waiting for her to arrive. The situation gradually escalated to the point where Mrs S was attacked and chased by this man. She ran home and called the police who, on attending, visited the racist's home. The officers, from Plaistow police station, returned saying that the matter should be resolved between them as neighbours and promptly left. The situation deteriorated to the extent that Mrs S was attacked again and was told by the police that either she moved her elderly relative or "you get harassed". Mrs S again called the police and again was told it was a neighbour dispute, being advised by the officers to take out an injunction against the man. Finally, following NMP's intervention, NORIS decided to mediate, but they proceeded to warn the family that counter-allegations had been made and "urged" them to settle the matter without recourse to any further police action. Mrs S agreed to this and accepted a verbal confirmation that the racist would be spoken to. This incident, as far as we are aware, was noted as resolved through the matter being formally declassified as racial. Mrs S, however, is still fearful of visiting her relative and will not visit alone.

Fortunately, in the above incident, Mrs S did not suffer any serious injuries as a result of her ordeal. At present, however, the council is seeking clarification from the police on how the declassification procedure is implemented and how it operates in practice.

One other major issue raised by the police response to racial harassment is the deracialisation of such cases. This is one area that the new "open" Metropolitan police force does not release statistics on. According to Metropolitan police guidelines, racial harassment will be categorised as such if a) the victim identifies it as such or b) the officer attending believes there is a racial motive. The emphasis is very clearly on the victim's interpretation of the incident. Despite this, police officers (including those from NORIS) continuously take it on themselves to redefine an incident as they see fit. This leaves racist incidents often being dismissed as neighbour disputes, or resulting in very little further action. In the case of the H family, the police indifference is shocking in view of

the injuries suffered by the victim.

■ The H family from Plaistow had been suffering verbal abuse and taunts for a considerable period of time. On one occasion in October 1992, the family called the police to investigate threats of violence made by the Hs' neighbour against their son. Officers attending assured the family they would warn the neighbour. The next night, however, the police were called back following another threat and an attempted assault. The officers attending told Mr H that it was a neighbour dispute and they would simply speak to the perpetrators. The H family never found out if the officers did what they had promised, but they insisted the police treat the matter as racial. The failure of the police to take the family's pleas seriously allowed the harassment to continue.



In early 1993, Mr H's son was attacked by the racists whom they had complained about. One of them sprayed an unknown substance into the son's eyes, causing a burning sensation that left him in severe pain. The parents tried washing his eyes and called the police. On their arrival, the officers took no action against the identified perpetrators and told Mr H's son to seek medical help in the morning. To date, no action has been taken against the perpetrators despite a further attempt to attack Mr H's son.

Only families suffering racial harassment can genuinely be the judge of whether the attacks upon them are racially motivated or not. The views of the family above and indeed of all victims of racial harassment must remain central to the response of all agencies, including investigations carried out by the police. If this is not the case, then the response will be at best irrelevant and at worst destructive, leaving the way open for further harassment. The failure of the police to tackle racial harassment effectively serves to embolden and strengthen the resolve of the racists to continue their attacks. The practical consequences of this is an increase in the number of attacks as the racists gain confidence. Black communities have learned through bitter experience that being organised and vigilant is the best method of defence against such attacks.

NORIS

The Newham Organised Racial Incident Squad (NORIS) currently has 6 officers based in Plaistow and Forest Gate police stations and deals exclusively with racially motivated offences. Such cases are referred

to NORIS by the officer initially attending the scene of an incident. This referral mechanism still remains one of the major problems of such a squad, as it relies on the attending officer's own perceptions of a case which often ignore its racial element. Therefore, it is more than likely that a racist attack will not be referred to NORIS if the attending officers do not view it as racist.

NMP has had major reservations about NORIS from the very beginning. Events over the last six years, most notably those in West Ham during 1992, have more than justified our initial reservations.

NORIS officers often target high profile cases, especially where there is a degree of involvement on the part of NMP. Moreover, a number of NORIS officers have also been involved in spreading disinformation about NMP. But whereas a senior Newham police officer recently referred to a black officer in NORIS as his "secret weapon", it still remains the case that many black families distrust NORIS and, in the case of at least one officer, PC Jones, formal requests for his removal from a case were made to his superiors.

Most NORIS officers are generally, with a number of notable exceptions, more sympathetic to victims of racial harassment than other police officers. However, the fact that they have still failed to gain the confidence of the black community, six years after the establishment of NORIS, indicates that the problem is deeper-rooted than unsympathetic officers alone. Simply speaking a number of Asian languages, being a black officer or presenting a more "caring" image is not adequate to tackle racial harassment effectively. For officers in NORIS have been involved in the harassment of black people and, at the end of the day, all officers share the responsibility for the racism of their colleagues. It is no longer acceptable to talk of the NORIS as a benign influence in terms of policing the black community. It is clear that this squad is integrated into an institution viewed by the community as fundamentally racist. Until the police become truly accountable to the communities they police, NORIS will become increasingly ghettoised into performing more and more basic public relations exercises to save face for the beleaguered hierarchy of Newham's police.

west ham: the multi-agency approach exposed

The West Ham area of south Newham continues to be a major source of concern in terms of the level and intensity of racial harassment in the area, as well as the response of statutory agencies such as the police and council to this harassment. As in 1991, 1992 has seen West Ham experience the highest number of racist attacks in the borough. When seen in the context that Newham generally has amongst the highest levels of racial harassment in the country, the picture becomes extremely worrying.

According to police statistics, there were 92 reported incidents of racial harassment in West Ham during 1992. In last year's Annual Report, we described how NMP responded to the racial harassment in this area by supporting the formation of the West Ham Ethnic Welfare Association, an independent body run by and for the black tenants suffering harassment in the Chargeable Street area of West Ham. The Association supports black families suffering violent assaults, stone throwing, threats to kill, arson attempts as well as council indifference and police hostility. As a consequence of continuing harassment in early 1992, NMP and West Ham Ethnic Welfare Association decided to keep a diary of all significant racist incidents in this part of West Ham for a three-week period in June and July 1992. The purpose was to present this as evidence to the council and the police of the reality of daily life for black families. We reproduce the diary in this chapter.

Racist violence in West Ham

Amongst the incidents of harassment in West Ham were a number of extremely serious attacks including one in 1991 which resulted in a 10-year-old boy being permanently disabled when his legs were broken, following an attack in the alley at the end of Chargeable Street. Most black families have protective screens on their windows as well as secure letter boxes. In the catalogue of incidents listed above, not one arrest was made, despite the racists being frequently identified by the black tenants. The case below is illustrative of the state of

affairs in the Chargeable Street area of West Ham.

■ On 18 June 1992 at approximately 8 pm, AK's door bell was rung continuously. As she answered the door she saw a small boy running away. This occurred several times before AK realised that the child's actions were being prompted by the daughter of a known perpetrator. AK challenged the little boy, telling him off for ringing the bell. Within minutes the boy's mother approached AK's home and when AK answered the door, she began to racially abuse and threaten AK. The woman then started punching and slapping AK on the face and neck. There were numerous witnesses to this incident so it was assumed that the racist would be arrested when the police arrived. However, on arrival, the police went straight to the racist's home, later telling AK that no action would be taken. Following protestations from AK and other black residents, one officer had the nerve to say "you're black, they're white, there's nothing I can do!" The police then left and since then two of the witnesses have been intimidated by racists.

The West Ham Ethnic Welfare Association has recently organised a petition which has been signed by almost every black family in the Chargeable Street area, demanding that the council evict one of the racist tenants. The group continues to organise in the area and is determined not to be driven out by the continuous racist violence. The strength of these black tenants has meant that in this area the black community has shown how, when united, they can withstand such harassment and organise to fight back.

Council and police response

The response of the police and the council to the horrific levels of harassment outlined above has been to use the Chargeable Street area of West Ham in order to implement their latest initiative to tackle racial harassment. In recent years, senior police officers and council officials have been increasingly engaging in a multi-agency approach to combating racial harassment. In principle, this involves the police, the council, and other relevant agencies plan-



Diary of Racial Harassment June - July 1992

- 16/6/92 - 6.30 pm - MJ's young son chased home from school, racially abused and threatened by a group of up to 15 white boys armed with sticks.
- 18/6/92 - 8.00 pm - Assault on AH.
- 19/6/92 - 8.15 pm - Crowd of youths gather outside MJ's house. She is abused and threatened.
- 20/6/92 - 12.30 pm - RS abused and threatened by a known perpetrator. She is called "you fat nigger loving c**t".
- 20/6/92 - 8.45 pm - RS again abused and threatened that she'll be "done" if the police are called.
- 22/6/92 - 6.45 pm - Large stones and bricks thrown over H's wall as family in the garden. Accompanied by racial abuse.
- 23/6/92 - 3.45 pm - Group of youths throw stones at and racially abuse MS.
- 4/7/92 - RS's young grandson is chased from shops in the area and threatened.
- 6/7/92 - MJ has sticks thrown and abuse hurled at her.
- 7/7/92 - 6.00 pm - RS abused verbally, threatened and told a near-by alleyway was for "whites only".
- 7/7/92 - 10.00 pm - Group of white men in several different cars roam around the area. B racially abused and then physically attacked.

contd

ning a co-ordinated response, dealing with both perpetrator and victim and thus ensuring no work is duplicated and all options are examined.

However, the theory behind the multi-agency approach and the reality of how it works in practice are entirely different things. For the police are an unaccountable force with a history of not only failing to support black people but of actively oppressing them. As a result, the reality is that the multi-agency approach has conclusively failed in its stated objectives and will continue to do so, in large part due to the endemic racism within the police force. The continuing failure of the police to tackle racist violence effectively and their eagerness to arrest victims of racial harassment illustrate why this strategy is tokenistic and merely another public relations exercise. An example of their true commitment to combating racial harassment is demonstrated by the fact that Plaistow police station, based in the heart of an area with one of the country's highest rates of racial harassment, still has two police officers on its pay-roll who were taped racially abusing and assaulting a black man (see chapter on policing in crisis). The police's propaganda has, however, been accepted uncritically by Newham Council who have repeatedly fallen over backwards in acquiescing to the police's demands.

A failed experiment

The multi-agency approach has been tried and tested in the Chargeable Street area and has proven to be fundamentally flawed. The catalogue of incidents outlined in this chapter was presented at a Newham Police and Community Consultative Group meeting on the 21 July 1992. At the meeting, the police sunk to new depths. On hearing that the West Ham Ethnic Welfare Association intended to criticise the council and the police response to harassment in the area, senior police officers contacted the Chargeable Street Neighbourhood Watch, which is run by many of the white tenants actively involved in racial harassment and boycotted by all black tenants except one man who is the Chair. These officers urged members of the Neighbourhood Watch to attend the meeting and defend the police. It soon became apparent that some of the perpetrators had been tipped off by the police about the meeting as they were also present. However, in the course of the

meeting, the police were forced to retreat from their chosen tactic due to the sheer number of black people mobilised by NMP and the West Ham Ethnic Welfare Association to attend the meeting and the depth of their anger. For the black tenants, the attitude of the police came as no surprise as they had learned to endure police hostility and racism as a matter of routine. This experience simply strengthened their resolve to continue their campaign against the racists.

West Ham task force

Following the West Ham Ethnic Welfare Association's intervention at the PCCG meeting, the council and the police established a task force to deal specifically with harassment in the Chargeable Street area of West Ham. However, it was clear from the start that this body was merely set up in an attempt to refute the accusations of black tenants.

The task force was made up of Chief Inspector Ibbotson (Newham's Community Liaison Officer), members of NORIS, representatives from Newham Council's housing, youth services and leisure services departments, and representatives from local schools and Community Links (a local voluntary sector agency). Despite there being a vibrant black tenant's organisation active in the area, black community representation was completely ignored. Indeed, there was absolutely no consultation with any local black tenants suffering racial harassment. It can only be assumed that the reason for this was that the black tenants would have placed demands on the task force which it would have been unable and unwilling to meet such as the eviction of racists, the disciplining of racist police officers and the closing of the alley at the end of Chargeable Street not to mention more council and police accountability to local black people.

Holiday camps for racists

The approach which appears to have been adopted by the task force is to try to reconcile the racists and the black tenants who they harass. A number of activities were arranged over the summer months, including a residential camp and sports events. This is based on the long standing police practice of taking youths on residential breaks away from Newham. In the past,

Diary - Contd

- 11/7/92 - 7.30 pm - Threats and abuse from a number of unidentified white youths.
- 16/7/92 - 8.30 pm - A known racist reverses his car down Chargeable Street at great speed towards children playing outside MJ's house. Police claimed racist had a different story and "that is that".
- 17/7/92 - B (14 years old) was spat on by the children of a known racist. He went to the racist's house with his mother to complain but was instead assaulted.
- 18/7/92 - 7.00 pm - Police called after persistent abuse against RS. They respond by saying that if there are any more calls from the area, they "won't come down again".
- 20/7/92 - 3.00 pm - NORIS officer visits B following incident on 17/7/92 and warns him that he will arrest B if the racist is ever disturbed again!



racist attackers have been included on these holidays, with the full knowledge of NORIS officers.

The council's view of this approach is that its success is proven by the sharp fall in numbers of recorded incidents of harassment (only to rise just as sharply the next month). Unfortunately the impact was not so rosy. Only black children from one family attended the holiday camp and the rest were local white children. Many black families were not even informed of the trip. At the camp itself, the children of one of the key perpetrators in the Chargeable Street area were sent home following a racist attack on the few black children present. An unfortunate parallel can be drawn between the task force's policy and the German government's attempts at re-educating and placating fascist thugs who burn down refugee hostels, by taking them on weekend breaks. This policy of appeasing perpetrators and ignoring the roots of racism will never seriously tackle racist violence, as the German government is now beginning to accept.

This initiative was clearly designed to deracialise racist crime and give the impression that problems in the area were the result of neighbourhood disputes. The case below illustrates why such a huge gulf exists between the police and black tenants.

■ In last year's Annual Report, we reported on the case of Mrs S in Chargeable Street. She had complained of racial harassment ever since moving into her property. Her windows were repeatedly smashed and she has suffered daily abuse from perpetrators known to the police, the housing department and crucially to the black tenants. In March 1992, Mrs S was charged by NORIS officers with assault following an incident in which one of a group of racists attacked her on her doorstep. The racist accused Mrs S of assaulting him as he was ejected from her property. NORIS accepted the racist's version of events and arrested Mrs S. Two days later Mr P (Mrs S's son in law) was arrested and charged with threatening behaviour after he had complained to members of the perpetrator's family about the harassment his son had received while visiting Mrs S.

In court when Mrs S was convicted on the testimony of two families identified by several council officers as key perpetrators of racial harassment in the area, the two NORIS officers present, one of whom was black,

congratulated each other. They could scarcely contain their joy at the conviction. The irony of officers, appointed explicitly to combat racial harassment, cheering the conviction of a leading member of a black tenants' group was clearly lost on these officers. Mrs S and her son in law intend to appeal against their convictions.

The police's actions in the above case are all the more remarkable in that the officers were aware of Mrs S's position in the local black community. Instead of supporting the victim, they participated actively and enthusiastically, in criminalising Mrs S. The role of the council was equally disturbing. By participating in multi-agency initiatives, they have demonstrated their inability to understand the dynamics of racial harassment and have in essence condoned NORIS' collaboration with the racists. This critique was presented by NMP at a conference organised by the council's legal department in October 1992. Addressing council officers from across Britain we outlined precisely why the multi-agency approach could not work. In the face of this onslaught, Newham Community Liaison Officer, Chief Inspector Bill Ibbotson, was reduced to exclaiming, "But I tell my officers not to be racist". Clearly, Newham police take little notice of their Community Liaison officer.

Current situation

The last meeting of the Task force took place in September 1992, though in name it still exists. Since then, we have discovered that Newham Council has received £70,000 to employ a youth worker to work, in the Chargeable Street area, with racist attackers. Yet again another initiative in this area has been conducted without the knowledge of the black tenants. In its application for funding, the council claimed that they had consulted local tenants; we can only assume these local tenants are those racists actively persecuting the black families. This behaviour by Newham Council and the police (exemplified by the NORIS) must stop immediately. It is crucial that black tenants are consulted and that their demands are met. Until the experiences of these tenants are reflected and their concerns addressed, the multi-agency approach will continue to be a public relations scam, designed to mask the failure of

two men dead ...

Panchadcharam Sahitharan

On 29 December 1991, Panchadcharam Sahitharan was making his way home in Manor Park when he was attacked by a gang of racist thugs armed with sticks and clubs. The severe head injuries that he sustained as a result of the attack led to his death three days later (see NMP's 1991/92 Annual Report).

Sahitharan, a 28-year-old Tamil refugee, had fled torture and persecution in Sri Lanka, arriving in Britain on 16 February 1990. His murder, the first of 1992, shocked the whole of Newham's black community and led to the formation of the Sahitharan Memorial Committee. The Committee organised a series of local initiatives including a community appeal to apprehend the racist murderers and a torchlight memorial service at the spot where Sahitharan was attacked. This series of events culminated in joint demonstration with the Defend the Deane Family Campaign in which over 4,000 people marched against racist violence and police harassment through the streets of Newham.

Two men, Gary Hoskin and Andrew Noble, were eventually arrested and charged with murder and affray. From the outset, NMP and the Memorial Committee were concerned about the commitment of the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to prepare the prosecution case with the thoroughness required to secure a conviction. The Memorial Committee, therefore, requested numerous meetings with the CPS in order to demand that a special prosecutor be appointed to reflect the seriousness of the case and its importance to the local community. Unfortunately, the

CPS repeatedly refused to meet with the Memorial Committee, claiming that they were quite capable of dealing with the case.

British justice - no justice

To the shock of the local community, Gary Hoskin and Andrew Noble were granted bail on surety of £10,000. At a subsequent Old Style Committal at Newham East Magistrates Court, it became obvious that the prosecution case was half-hearted and ill-prepared. Indeed, the prosecution witnesses had been so poorly briefed that the CPS themselves asked that the case against Andrew Noble be dismissed. When the Memorial Committee complained to the CPS about their handling of the case, their response was that they could not even guarantee the continuing prosecution of Gary Hoskin.

The scales of injustice

Gary Hoskin stood trial for murder and affray at the Old Bailey in October and November 1992. The Memorial Committee called a protest outside the court on the first day of the trial.

As the trial began, the judge excluded anybody who lived in Newham from sitting on the jury. During the trial itself, representatives of the Memorial Committee were prevented from taking notes and threatened with exclusion from the public gallery by the court security guard.

As part of the prosecution case, witnesses stated how they had heard the attack on Sahitharan taking place and had gone to the scene only to find themselves attacked by the gang of racist thugs. Several of them had identified Gary Hoskin at an identification parade and others claimed that they had seen him being driven away in a van from the scene of the crime. This van was traced to a member of the Hunt family who, in fact, provided Hoskin with his "alibi", namely that he was with them at the time of the incident in a pub in Grays, Essex.

The Hunt family are well-known to NMP, having been involved in a number of seri-



Picket of Old Bailey

ous racist attacks in the south of Newham. In addition, information passed onto the Memorial Committee from anti-racists in Grays suggests that the pub concerned has become popular with local members of the British National Party in recent years. The CPS, however, raised none of these concerns. Predictably, Gary Hoskin was found not guilty of murder and affray. The response of the police was to close the case.

Sher Singh Sagoo

On October 1992, another Newham resident was killed by racists. Sher Singh Sagoo, an East London market trader, had a regular market stall in Deptford High Street in south London. On the day in question, Mr Sagoo and his two young daughters (aged 9 and 15) were setting up his stall when a white man approached the stall and began to racially abuse Mr Sagoo. Mr Sagoo initially ignored the man, but when the abuse continued, told the man to leave him alone. An argument ensued. All of a sudden, another white man ran from across the market and punched Mr Sagoo. Mr Sagoo fell to the floor and lost consciousness. He was rushed to hospital where he was diagnosed as having a fractured skull and bruising to the brain. He never regained consciousness.

It became clear from the outset that the police were intent on trivialising the attack. They even failed to arrange for Mr Sagoo's two young daughters, who had just witnessed the attack, to be cared for, instead leaving them alone at the market with nothing but a note explaining that they had taken Mr Sagoo to hospital! When the police were questioned for failing to arrest Mr Sagoo's assailant, they claimed that Mr Sagoo had regained consciousness before dying and asked that no action be taken against the attacker. This was despite the fact that there was no medical record of Mr Sagoo having ever regained consciousness or of the police having visited the hospital until contacted by the hospital itself.

The attacker eventually gave himself up voluntarily at the police station and was subsequently charged with manslaughter and released on bail. Mr Sagoo's post-mortem gave the cause of death as "bruised brain and fractured skull".

Mr Sagoo's family contacted NMP. We visited them and began to discuss the variety of support that we could provide. For the murder had not only left the family

emotionally devastated but had also left Mrs Sagoo and her four children in deep financial difficulty. NMP prioritised this latter area of support and we were able to help the family get the body of Mr Sagoo released and force various statutory institutions, particularly the DSS, to support the family. On 1 December 1992, Mr Sagoo was cremated in Manor Park.

Following Mr Sagoo's murder, other black shop-keepers in the area, who began to rally to the support of the Sagoo family, became the victims of further racist attacks. One shop-keeper, Mr P, had his shop fire-bombed. Despite the fact that Mr P identified the perpetrators as being part of a local racist gang, the police failed to even take a statement from him, let alone take any action against the perpetrators.

In March 1993, the police contacted the family and informed them that the CPS had discontinued the prosecution against the attacker. NMP and the family have requested clarification of this appalling decision, particularly because Mr Sagoo's two daughters who had witnessed the attack and could identify the attacker were not even questioned by the police. Lewisham Council also proved unwilling to accept the racist nature of the attack, instead stating that the murderer had "attempted to break up the argument by striking a blow at Mr Sagoo". NMP and the family remain baffled as to how anybody could perceive a racist murder as attempting to break up an attack.

Murderers at large

It is a damning indictment of the police and the CPS that nobody has ever been brought to justice for the Sahitharan and Sagoo murders. In neither case was there a shortage of evidence or a shortage of witnesses. Nevertheless, the murderers remain at large.

Clearly, the battle facing the anti-racist movement is not only to force institutions to recognise the urgency of tackling racist violence in principle but also to force institutions to take the necessary action to demonstrate that commitment in practice. As long as the police and the CPS fail to prepare prosecution cases against racist perpetrators with vigour and commitment and secure convictions, the black community will continue to believe that the criminal justice system is fundamentally racist.

REFUGEE DIED FROM HEAD INJURIES AT HANDS OF BASEBALL BAT GANG

Man is in the clear over racist slaying

RELATIVES of a man accused of a race-lore killing were told by the Old Bailey judge he was cleared by a jury. Gary Hoskin, 21, had told the court he was miles away when 50-year-old Panchadcharam Sahitharan, 28, was battered to death by racist thugs brandishing baseball bats. Still shaking with relief, Hoskin said after knowing the verdict: "I am happy that justice has been done. All I want is to get back to a normal life." The court heard Mr Sahitharan came to this country two years ago and lived in South Avenue, Manor Park.

He was walking home from shops in the early evening of December 29 when a gang of seven men in Wayward Road, Manor Park. His tragedy "was to be at the wrong place at the wrong time," claimed prosecution counsel Mr Victor Tompkins. He added: "He was doing nothing more than making his way home, minding his own business. The attack was totally unprovoked and the gang was armed with baseball bats or sticks." Gary Mattam and Ahmed Siddiqui, both 16, heard Mr Sahitharan



The trial was held up for half a day after the arrest of one of the jurors. He was arrested for public order offences in Trafalgar Square and the judge suspended the trial while awaiting his release on police bail. The hearing was then allowed to continue. During the trial, the judge, jury and lawyers visited the scene of the attack on Mr Sahitharan in Manor Park. Police were able to get hold of the vehicle allegedly used by the gang who attacked a number of Asians and the jury was able to inspect it under various lighting conditions at the scene.

police harassment

"I am grateful for all the support that myself, Tony and Steve received during our ordeal. Our case highlights the continuing harassment faced by black people throughout this country. What happened to me, could have happened to anyone. The people of Newham should be grateful that an organisation such as NMP exists to support them. I had no such support and the police were able to get away with framing me".

Yusef Abdullahi, one of the Cardiff Three after being released

In previous Annual Reports, we have highlighted the police harassment faced by the local black community. This harassment has continued unabated in the past year. The everyday cases of police brutality and malpractice that NMP handles help us refocus our perspectives in relation to policing in this borough and criminal justice in general.

The state vs the individual

Once again, policing dominates the political agenda both domestically and across Europe. In Britain, despite the increasing number of cases of police harassment, the current debate is primarily focused on further strengthening police powers. Senior politicians including the Prime Minister are now openly talking about how society should be "less caring" about the "guilty". Statements such as these are part of an overall strategy of preparing the British people for another new Criminal Justice Bill, which far from protecting "individual rights" will severely restrict already limited freedoms such as the right to silence.

It is often stated that policing techniques perfected on the streets of Belfast are inevitably brought to the streets of Britain; the denial of the right to silence is already in force in the north of Ireland. In Britain,

the restriction of the right to silence is just one of many changes being proposed. For example, the police are currently engaged in a propaganda campaign to justify the introduction of US-style police batons. Permission has already been granted for the batons to be introduced on a trial basis and black people are well aware of the effect that such a measure will have on their lives.

Coupled with increased police powers is a general decrease in access to Legal Aid. The government has announced that changes to Legal Aid will now restrict its eligibility even further. Criminal Legal Aid is already denied to tens of thousands of people who, faced with spiralling legal costs, have no option but to plead guilty. The latest proposals will ensure that British justice increasingly becomes the preserve of those who can afford it rather than those who are innocent.

On a wider level, the introduction of the Asylum Bill in this country and equally draconian immigration legislation across Europe illustrate that far from opening its borders, Europe is strengthening its internal security structure as part of the creation of Fortress Europe and a move towards a Europe for Europeans.

Racist policing in Newham

A total of 173 cases of police harassment were reported to NMP during 1992. This is a slight increase in the total for 1991 and continues to highlight the impact of policing on the black community.



Case Statistics

Breakdown in terms of manner of referral

Direct	96
Emergency Service	38
(during non-office hours)	
Via other agencies	39

Breakdown in terms of gender and age (1)

Male	62
Female	77
Juvenile	34

Breakdown in terms of nature of police harassment (2)

Assault	35
Verbal	26
Stop & search/traffic	39
Raids	17
Immigration	19
Other (3)	37

Breakdown in terms of police station

West Ham	23
Plaistow	32
Forest Gate	54
East Ham	9
Outside Newham (4)	33
Unidentified (5)	22

Breakdown in terms of area

E6	17
E7	46
E12	21
E13	18
E15	25
E16	14
Outside Newham (6)	32

Harassment on the streets

In previous Annual Reports, NMP has highlighted the changes in policing that are taking place in inner-city areas such as Newham, in particular, the shift towards public order policing. For the black community, such policing is far more insidious than it first appears. For in the eyes of the officer on the beat, it is black people who are the potential threat to public order and, therefore, need to be watched constantly. A prime example of this is the police's warning of black gangs roaming the streets of Newham.

As financial cuts force the closure and limiting of youth facilities in the borough, black youths are increasingly forced onto the streets. The police then target them, claiming that they are gang members and that there is potential for gang warfare. Black youths are continuously stopped and searched on the streets of Newham. They are questioned and then released with warnings. An increasing number of them approach NMP for assistance and learn about their rights. Consequently, we have begun to explore various mechanisms to help them set up their own youth groups based at centres across Newham. At the same time, NMP has put pressure on the police regarding their policy of attempting to harass young people off the streets. Rather than accept that for many of these young people the streets were the only option available to them, the police initiated a scare campaign suggesting armed gangs are roaming the streets and announced that groups of two or more youths would be stopped and searched.

The case of CG highlights how the police are unwilling to accept the word of any black person even if s/he happens to be a police officer. To many officers, every black person is a likely suspect.

CG was a police officer from the Caribbean who was on a training programme in Britain. He took the opportunity afforded by his trip to visit his relatives in East Ham. In August 1992, CG was sitting on a bench in High Street North when he was approached by a uniformed officer who asked him his name. CG identified himself and showed the officer his police card. At that point, two plain clothes officers arrived and started asking CG where he was going. The officers were then joined by a police van with three more officers. The police claimed that they

were investigating a robbery that had taken place in the area and that CG fitted the description. CG was arrested and taken to Forest Gate police station where he was searched and placed in the cells. He was later taken to his aunt's home and the house was searched. Despite the officers finding no evidence to substantiate their allegations, CG was taken back to Forest Gate police station and placed in the cells. It later emerged that the "suspect was clean-shaven" whilst CG had a full beard. CG was released on police bail after the intervention of his solicitor. He immediately lodged a complaint with his High Commission at the treatment he received.

In July 1992, two NMP workers were on duty in the Stratford area. As they made their way past the shopping mall, they were shocked to see a group of white men jump from two cars and approach them. The two workers initially thought they were about to be attacked by racists when the men showed their IDs and shouted that they were police officers. These officers were subsequently joined by uniformed officers and the two workers were told they were being held on "suspicion of smash and grab". The officers proceeded to put the two men against the wall and tried to search them. To the amusement of the NMP workers, a senior officer arrived at the scene, immediately recognised the workers and radioed the police station for advice. The response was "Ivan says let them go" (we can only presume that the Ivan referred to was Chief Superintendent Ivan Brown). The officers immediately apologised for their behaviour, explaining they were just "doing their duty".

Many black people in Newham suffer unexplained stop and searches in the street merely because they happen to be black. Whilst in this case, the officers were wary of harassing black people armed with knowledge of their rights, our experience is indicative of the police treatment of black people who they believe are powerless to complain.



Notes for Statistics

(1) Our statistics in terms of gender and age represent the victim and/or 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 police 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' represents forms of harassment such as police indifference towards racial harassment and victims of racial harassment being arrested and charged by the police.

(4) 'Outside Newham' represents the neighbouring boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, or police stations outside Newham where Newham residents were being held.

(5) 'Unidentified police station' represents incidents of police harassment in Newham where we have been unable to identify police officers and their stations.

(6) 'Outside Newham' represents the neighbouring boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, or areas outside Newham where Newham residents have faced police harassment.

Stop and search

The Ramsey family have endured many years of police harassment. The first family campaign ever facilitated by NMP in 1982 was in defence of the Ramseys. Over a decade later, the family had to relive this trauma at the hands of Newham police.

■ On the morning of 13 April 1992, Dawn Ramsey and her husband Norman were returning home from a social event, accompanied in a second car by a group of family friends. As the two cars arrived at the Ramsey's home in Manor Park, a police van arrived and an officer asked the driver of the second car for his documents whilst a woman police officer began to search the female passenger.

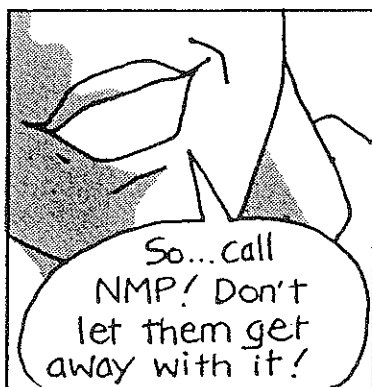
Dawn Ramsey did not interfere with the officers as she was intent on getting into her house. Unfortunately, she had misplaced her house keys and had to go to a payphone on the street corner to phone one of the residents at her house to wake up and open the frontdoor. When she returned, she was shocked to find that two additional police cars and another police van had suddenly appeared. She then noticed that one of her friends, Lloyd, was being pinned to the floor. When Dawn went to inquire what had happened, the officers told her to get lost. Lloyd was insisting that the level of violence they were using was unnecessary as he was not struggling. Dawn then noticed that her husband was being held by two other officers.

As she approached Norman, she was told to go away. Dawn protested that it was her husband they were arresting and that she had a right to know why he was being arrested. To her horror, she was told "fuck off you slag" before being grabbed by the arm, arrested and dragged toward a police van. Dawn protested that she was not resisting arrest but was concerned about her son not being able to get into the house. An officer then kned her in the groin and kicked her as she fell to the floor. She was subjected to systematic racist abuse.

En route to Plaistow police station, Dawn was again insulted and abused by one of the arresting officers. At the station, she was examined by a doctor with regard to the serious injuries she had sustained during the arrest. To her amazement, she was charged with assaulting a police officer and disorderly words and behaviour (as were Norman and Lloyd).

The behaviour of the officers in this case is astonishing. A simple stop and search es-

calated into a situation where three people were assaulted and charged with various offences. Fortunately, they were all acquitted at trial after the case was dismissed due to unsafe police evidence. At present, all three have begun civil action proceedings against the police.



The case below illustrates the daily reality faced by many of Newham's black community in stop and searches conducted by officers on the pretence of investigating alleged traffic offences. It also exposes police attitudes to black people who have any knowledge of their rights and in particular any links with NMP.

■ MR was driving home to Manor Park with a group of friends when he noticed a police van following them. MR was stopped and asked to produce his car documents which he did. Despite the documents being in order, the officer decided it was necessary to search MR. When MR asked why a search was necessary, the officer refused to respond. During the search of MR, the officer discovered an NMP rights card. The officer immediately asked MR if he was a member of "that lot". MR stated that he was indeed a supporter of NMP. To his horror, the officer proceeded to say "that's why you're such a little Paki wanker". This racist remark was overheard by several witnesses. In order to justify the search and further harass MR, the officer then charged him with disorderly behaviour.

This case highlights a number of important issues. Firstly, senior officers state that they are not adverse to people knowing their rights. Yet because MR did know his rights and because he was associated with NMP, officers decided to harass him. NMP was determined that the officer would not succeed as this would give a green light to the police to harass the thousands of other local people who carry NMP rights cards precisely because they do not trust the police. NMP was able to extract an apology from the police for their behaviour.

Harassment of juveniles

■ KH, a fifteen-year-old, was on his way to his local sweetshop when he noticed a police van had stopped a car on the main road. KH recognised the driver of the car and as he passed he greeted him. When KH returned from the shop, the car had gone but the van was still parked on the road. As he passed the police van, one officer asked him, "What are you doing here? Why are you here?" KH replied, "Is there any harm in walking on the road?" At this point, the officer muttered something and got back into the van. Suddenly, he jumped out of the van and rushed over to KH. He grabbed KH around his neck, twisted his arm behind his back, forced him over to the van and threw him down into it. KH was taken to Forest Gate police station where he was searched and put in a cell. It was only when his mother and a friend arrived at the station that he was released. KH immediately stated that he wanted to make a complaint about the arrest. One officer refused to take down the complaint saying, "No need to make a complaint. Nothing is going to be done against you".

Policing and Immigration

■ In October 1992, Mr M was driving when he stopped at a set of traffic lights. As the lights turned green, Mr M began to drive off only to be stopped by a police car. Three officers asked Mr M to get out of his car. As he did so, one officer began to search the car without Mr M's consent. The other officers initially began to question Mr M about his car but then quickly began to ask him about various details relating to his immigration status. One officer asked for Mr M's country of origin and on being told it was Nigeria, the officer questioned him about his status. Mr M explained he had been granted political asylum, but the officer insisted that Nigerians could not claim political asylum and demanded information as to the port of entry and conditions of stay. The officers then confiscated Mr M's licence and proceeded to ask him how a refugee could afford a car. It was only when Mr M was able to produce a letter from the Home Office that the officers accepted his story but even then they refused to return Mr M's driving licence.

This example of how officers routinely stop black people on alleged traffic offences only to question them about their immigration status is becoming standard police procedure in Newham. No doubt the Asylum Bill will make things even worse.

Arresting the victim

■ The M family have been the victims of sustained racial harassment from their neighbours. Incidents include windows being broken, dogs shitting in the garden, and fire-engines and taxis being sent to the house. The police have failed as yet to take any action against the perpetrators. On 2 September 1992, the M family contacted the police after their 13-year-old son, IM, was racially abused by their neighbour. Despite the fact that they had called the police, the officers who arrived went to speak to the neighbours first and returned to threaten IM that "if he ever hassles that woman again, I'm going to break your legs". This was repeated four times despite the family's protestations that IM was only 13-years-old. The family finally told the officers to leave their home. The officers responded by pushing Mrs M and telling her that if she didn't shut up they would arrest her. The family immediately lodged a complaint against the



KH eventually managed to lodge a complaint against the officers but only after a passer-by who had witnessed the whole incident had contacted Forest Gate police station to complain about the arrest. KH subsequently received a summons at the family home charging KH with assaulting a police officer. The charge was formally dropped after the witness to the incident contacted the court and informed them that he was willing to attend any court hearing. At present, KH with the support of NMP is commencing civil action proceedings against the police.

This case highlights how the police assaulted a 15-year-old black youth, and how they attempted to legitimise their conduct by charging the victim with assaulting a



officers for their behaviour.

On 10 November 1992, four officers forced their way into the M's home, saying they were going to arrest IM. The officers then proceeded to force IM's arms up behind his back and handcuffed him, forcing his head between his legs. The family protested that IM was only 13-years-old but the officers ignored their protests and dragged IM out into the street. By this time, a number of police vans and cars had also arrived at the scene. IM was bundled into one of the vans. When IM's grandfather asked why they were arresting his grandson, one of the officers responded by saying, "shut up you Paki". Other members of the M family requested that they be allowed to accompany him to the station. Their request was refused.

IM was taken to Plaistow police station where he was searched, put in a cell and released five hours later on police bail. NMP immediately protested at the treatment of IM and the blatant disregard for the police's own guidelines on the treatment of juveniles. Following pressure from NMP, the police did not instigate any charges. IM is currently examining the possibility of suing the police.

Police raids

■ On 5 June 1992, Ms D left her home in Stratford to visit her father. Her 16-year-old nephew AL stayed behind to baby-sit her 3-year-old son SD. At 10.30 that morning, AL was in the kitchen making toast for his young cousin when the kitchen window was broken and the front door smashed open. AL ran to the front door to see what was happening. He was terrified to see a police officer armed with a semi-automatic standing at the door with a number of other armed officers behind him in the garden. The officer shouted to AL to "drop the weapon", this weapon being a butter knife that AL was still holding. AL was made to come out of the house. A gun was put to his head and he was told to "fucking shut up" as he was pushed to the garden wall and plastic handcuff strips were put on his hands. AL protested that this hurt but he was ignored. Throughout this ordeal, AL informed the officers he was only 16-years-old, but the officers continued to abuse him and struck him on the head with the butt of the gun as he was dragged to the front gate where a pair of metal handcuffs were placed on his hands and he was forced to get into an unmarked police car.

Another officer had in the meantime brought SD out into the front garden whilst seven other officers began to search the house. AL



was then taken back into the house where he explained that he did not live at the house. At no time was AL shown any search warrant. Only when the officers were leaving did they throw an information leaflet on the floor.

Ms D returned home to find the two young children in a complete state of shock. She immediately contacted Forest Gate police station for an explanation of the armed raid. The police's response was that they believed that a car parked in a communal car park adjacent to the flats in which the D family lived was owned by a suspect they wished to arrest.

Both the D family and NMP remain perplexed that the police could launch such a massive raid with armed officers, sealing off the whole area merely on the suspicion of a car parked in a communal car park. The raid itself raises worrying issues for the black community, such as the use of firearms by police officers in Newham. In addition, the police seem to believe that an apology suffices whilst the young children at the blunt end of their harassment are left with nightmares and bed-wetting. Three-year-old SD was left recounting the story of how police officers had put a gun to AL's head. As a result of the raid, the D family was forced to move from their home in an attempt to alleviate the situation.

Policing of black women

The increasing number of cases of police harassment of black women is an issue that NMP is currently highlighting (see chapter on policing in crisis). The case below illustrates not only the racism of the police but also how the police use sexual harassment as a weapon against black women.

■ Ms X called the police after suffering domestic violence. Two officers arrived at her home, one taking her partner into an adjoining room to talk to him whilst the other talked to Ms X. Ms X was asked whether she had any injuries. The officer then placed his hands on her body and began to lift up her dress. He then put his hands on her breasts and told her he would be back later. Ms X was too shocked to remonstrate. A few days later, Ms X heard a knock on the door. When she opened it, the same officer was on her doorstep and he once again began to make advances towards Ms X. Fortunately, she was not alone and the officer left.

Ms X visited NMP and asked for the incident to be recorded but was too frightened

of reprisals to take the matter any further. This case highlights the sexual harassment of women in a vulnerable position and demonstrates how many black women feel powerless to challenge such harassment. With the increasing number of single black women in Newham, particularly recently arrived refugees, this issue is undoubtedly a matter of great concern due to the use of the police as immigration officers. NMP has already organised a discussion group on this issue during recent International Women's Day events and we look forward to a number of specific initiatives during 1993. Cases such as these continue to expose the stereotype that police harassment is the preserve of African-Caribbean and Asian young men.

■ On 20 December 1992, CS, a local nurse, was waiting in her parked car when she was approached by two officers, one of whom was a woman. The officers claimed CS was illegally parked and a dispute arose. As CS got out of her car, she was thrown against the car window by the woman police officer and then assaulted in the street. More officers arrived and CS was taken to Plaistow police station where she was placed in a cell for four hours and eventually charged with assaulting a police officer and littering. CS required hospital treatment for injuries to her neck and body consistent with being beaten and kicked.

This case illustrates how violence against black women is as likely to be at the hands of female police officers as male ones. As far as NMP is concerned, cases such as these expose the argument that increasing the number of black or women officers will ensure that police harassment is reduced. For Newham's black community, the lesson is that it is not the gender or race of the officer that is important but the fact that the officer is part of an institution that is riddled with racism and that the power of the institution forces any "good" officers to accept the status quo. Consequently, our response is one that brings together all sections of the community, united in opposition to any form of police harassment against the black community.

Care homes for black children

The case of the S Home, a black children's care home, illustrates how Newham's police are involved in a sinister attempt to criminalise young black people.

The S Home is the only black children's care home in Newham catering for young black people between the ages of 13 and 18. It is currently taking in children from 13 London boroughs. The home has increasingly become the target of police surveillance and harassment. Not only were individual residents harassed because the police believed that a concentration of such youths was a potential "threat to the public order" but the very existence of the home was threatened.

■ AB, a 16-year-old black youth, was returning to the home one evening when he noticed a police car at the end of the road. As he neared the home, he noticed another two police cars in front of him. The officers stopped AB and told him that they were going to search him. When AB refused, the officers grabbed hold of him, twisting his arms behind his back and forcing him onto the bonnet of a car whilst another officer grabbed him around the neck. AB was then placed into a police van where he was searched and subsequently released.

■ On another occasion, a black youth was arrested and taken to Forest Gate police station. The officers proceeded to photograph and fingerprint the youth without his permission or any legal representation. The youth was subsequently released after being given a caution.

The home, its residents and staff consistently complained about oppressive and heavy-handed policing.

Staff at the home eventually realised that senior officers in Newham were not only claiming the home was a centre for crime but also that it was not being properly supervised. Rather than express these concerns through the approved channels and raising the issue with the Inspector of Homes, certain officers began to write directly to different boroughs, urging them not to place children in the home.

The conduct of the police is of great concern. The home provides a unique service to one of the most vulnerable sections of the black community. Yet officers seem intent on ensuring the home is closed at the earliest opportunity, without any evidence of unprofessional conduct by members of staff. Indeed, the home has received regular citations for its work. It was only through the intervention of NMP that the criminalisation of the black residents was highlighted. After liaising with social serv-

ices, the police were forced to concede that their behaviour towards the home was unwarranted.

Issues of concern

Mr Govindan is innocent

In our 1990 Annual Report, we discussed the case of Mr Govindan who was the victim of a racist assault in his shop by four men. Despite the whole incident being captured on the shop's security video, the police officers immediately sided with the attackers and Mr Govindan was charged with actual bodily harm. Following a campaign by NMP, Mr Govindan was found not guilty and immediately commenced proceedings against the police. The civil action is still an ongoing matter although the police have offered Mr Govindan £1000 in an out-of-court settlement which he has refused. Two of the officers involved in the case, however, are instigating a civil action against the BBC for its *Panorama* documentary which highlighted the case. The officers are claiming that the show libelled them by claiming that their actions were racist. They are being supported by the Police Federation which is attempting to lead a fightback against the media exposure of police malpractice. It is common knowledge amongst civil liberties organisations that the Police Federation is willing to tie up any critics of police malpractice in litigation battles. This obviously has serious repercussions on the future role of the media in publicising cases such as Mr Govindan's. NMP continues to watch the case closely and will report on any future developments.

Partners in crime

Relations between the *Newham Recorder* and the local police have been a constant source of concern for NMP. In previous Annual Reports, we have highlighted how confidential information given to the police by victims of crime has regularly shown up on the pages of the *Newham Recorder* without the consent of the victims. This complete disregard for those under attack is not only completely unprofessional but can actually place the safety of those under attack in jeopardy.

The case of Mr A illustrates how this process regularly takes place and its effect on those involved.

■ Mr A and his friend Mr O came home one evening to be told by a friend that there was someone in the basement of the house. When the two men went to investigate, they discovered a burglar. The two men were able to photograph the man who, after a struggle, managed to escape. Mr A and Mr O immediately contacted the police and a number of officers appeared at the scene including DC Lelliot. The two men gave him the photographs they had taken including photographs of themselves and the injuries they had sustained. The officers questioned the two men about their immigration status and whether or not they had criminal records (as if this was at all relevant).

Mr A and Mr O were shocked to find that their photographs had appeared on the front page of the *Newham Recorder* less than two weeks after the incident. When NMP intervened, it became clear that officers had given the photographs to the *Newham Recorder* without the permission of the two men. The *Newham Recorder* not only printed the photograph of the burglar but also that of Mr A and Mr O. As a result, Mr A's personal safety was threatened. A week after the photographs appeared in the paper, a car drove past Mr A and a man shouted "you're dead". Mr A was so terrified that he was forced to move from his home. When he complained to the police about their behaviour, the reaction of the officers was not only rude but also threatening in that Mr A was told that if he did not cooperate with the police, then further action may be taken against him.



Whilst NMP is fully committed to any action that ensures that those guilty of crimes are brought to justice, we are totally opposed to police officers handing over confidential information to the press, particularly evidence in ongoing cases. Mr A's civil action against the police for their conduct in this matter has our full support.

policing in crisis

Due to continuing pressure from NMP and the continuing resistance of the local black community, policing remains a major political issue in Newham. The police have attempted to silence this opposition using a variety of methods, including public statements that racist policing "is a thing of the past". They attempted to co-opt the local community through the formation of the Police Community Consultative Group, arguing that community policing would redress public criticism of the police and improve relations between the police and the community. However, any illusions about the commitment of the police to fighting racism were shattered in 1992 as the reality of policing of the black community was once again exposed beyond doubt.



A victorious Tony Deane

Deane family - victorious and fighting on

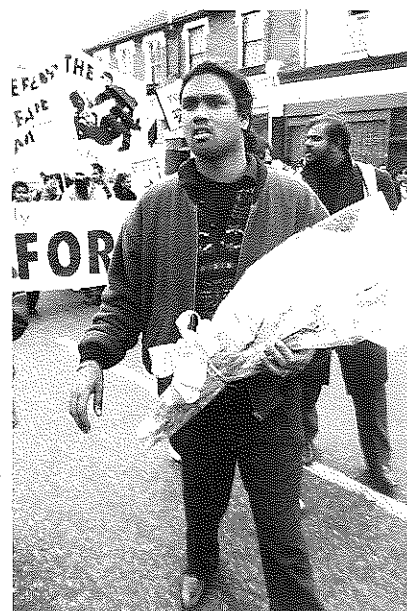
The case of the Deane family has been reported at length in last year's Annual Report, so we will only give a brief background to the case.

On 4 November 1991, Arnold Deane (aged 53) and his son Tony (aged 23) were the victims of a unprovoked attack by officers from Forest Gate police station. Arnold Deane, a severe asthmatic, suffered concussion from the attack and was left needing stitches for facial injuries. The attack triggered off a near fatal asthma attack which required emergency hospital treatment. PC Andrew Knock and PC Ian Sullivan also launched an attack on Tony Deane in which he was repeatedly kicked, punched and struck with a walkie-talkie battery pack. Arnold and Tony Deane were abused and mocked by the officers before being arrested and charged with several counts of assaulting police officers.

The case of the Deane family sent shock waves throughout the local black community, as the attack had taken place outside the Deane's shop in Green Street, in the heart of Newham's black community. The case also highlighted the continuing police strategy of attacking black people and then criminalising them by charging them with criminal offences. It was in this context that the campaign was launched.

Newham policing in crisis

During the past few years, there has been a deliberate move by the state towards public order policing. Senior officers have declared that the role of the police is no longer to fight crime in inner-city areas but to maintain some form of social control, albeit blaming the government for this new role. The rationale behind public order policing is that due to a number of social, political and economic factors, such as high unemployment, urban deprivation and rising crime, policing can no longer be administered with the consent and support of the community but must now attempt to ensure discontent is contained and disturbances prevented. For example, take the recent centralisation of policing in Newham into one single police division based at the new Forest Gate police station. This station, built in the heart of the local black community, is designed to ensure that high profile policing prevails. In reality, this means riot vans constantly patrolling the streets of Newham. No wonder the station was immediately dubbed Fortress Forest Gate.



The campaign successfully mobilised the local community. One public meeting on 6 November 1991 attracted over 600 people. The campaign, in conjunction with the Sahitharan Memorial Committee, also organised a massive demonstration against police harassment and racist violence.

Police harassment continues

On 10 April 1992, Tony Deane, who owns a local mini-cab firm, called one of his drivers to collect him from Katherine Road, Forest Gate. As the car pulled up, two plain clothes officers in an unmarked car appeared and asked the driver to produce his immigration papers. Tony Deane approached and asked the officers if there was a problem. He was told, "Shut up and go away or we will nick you".

Tony Deane immediately called NMP and within minutes a worker was present at the scene. The worker intervened and requested the officers' numbers in the event of wanting to take the matter further. One of the officers refused to give his number, suggesting that the NMP worker take down the car registration number instead. To the surprise of Tony Deane, the officer then asked him if he was from Advance Ltd on Green Street whilst muttering something under his breath. The officer was asked if he was making a threat against the Deane's business. The officer laughed and replied, "I don't need to threaten you", the obvious implication being that that was exactly what he was doing.

NMP immediately issued a warning to senior officers that any harassment of the Deanes prior to the trial or after would be rigorously challenged. An official complaint was also made at the unwarranted stop and search of the mini-cab driver and the subsequent request for his immigration papers, an increasingly common situation in Newham (see chapter on police harassment).

The trial

Following the demonstration in March 1992, the campaign focused on building a mass picket for the trial of the Deanes. Initially, the campaign attempted to have the charges dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) because of the nature

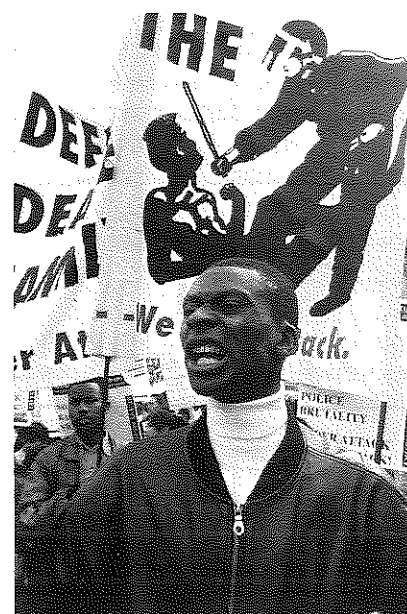
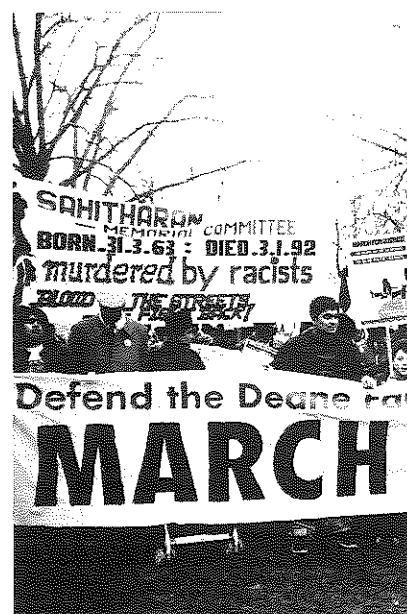
of the case and the obvious concern of the local community. Indeed, the campaign forced the local authority to write to the CPS, demanding that the charges be dropped "in the public good". The CPS, however, were intent on continuing with the case, obviously concerned at the wider ramifications if they accepted that the charges were malicious. As a result, Arnold Deane, an ill man who had left his business in Newham to return to St Vincent in the Caribbean to recuperate from his injuries, was forced to return to face trial. On 25 June 1992, the trial of the two men began at Newham East Magistrates Court. Over 80 people packed the public gallery after a picket of the court demanded an end to police violence and the sacking of the racist police officers.

During the trial the inconsistencies in the police evidence became evident. For example:

- PC Shaun Plunkett insisted that he was the first back-up officer to arrive at the scene and that he witnessed Tony Deane trying to attack PC Knock and PC Sullivan.
- PC Ian Morton insisted he was the first back-up officer on the scene, adding, "I don't remember PC Plunkett being there".
- PC Knock and PC Sullivan claimed that two civilian prosecution witnesses were not present during the attack, although both witnesses gave evidence that they were present.
- One of the civilian witnesses denied that Anthony Deane had lunged at PC Knock as he had claimed.

After Arnold and Tony Deane had given their evidence, the prosecutor commented that if the police had indeed behaved as the Deanes had maintained on oath, then Newham would be a sorry place to live in. There was obvious delight amongst the public in the gallery who concluded that the prosecutor was obviously a Newham resident.

In his closing remarks, Tony Deane's barrister, Ika Peart, told the court that PC Knock and PC Sullivan had in fact instigated the confrontation with the Deanes and had later concocted their story to justify their unlawful detention and arrest of the Deanes. He concluded that "the evidence that the Crown have produced is so shot through with inconsistency, incredible in part, that it just cannot be believed". Despite all the evidence, the magistrates found Tony



March for justice

UPROAR AFTER MAN IS CONVICTED OF ASSAULTING OFFICERS

Fury on police harm claims

THERE was uproar at Newham Court on Thursday after a 23-year-old export manager was convicted of assaulting two police constables in Forest Gate.

By TIM WHITWELL

Chanting broke out after the verdicts against Anthony Deane were announced. Supporters, including members of Newham Monitoring Project, left the court yelling: "No peace, no justice."

More than 50 people had demonstrated outside the court before the hearing. Deane was convicted of assaulting Pc Ian Sullivan and Pc Andrew Knock. He was fined a total of £250 with £50 court costs. The court heard Deane had been approached by the officers in Sherrard Road following an incident opposite the Deane

family's shipping business on November 4. The man involved claimed Deane witnessed the event and the officers approached him for information. Deane told the policemen: "It has got nothing to do with me." Prosecutor Richard Binstead said Deane then moved aggressively towards the man who had made the claim. Said counsel: "Anthony Deane was the aggressor. He was restrained by the two policemen but struggled violently with both of them."

Other police then arrived to help restrain Deane on the ground, the court heard.

Deane denied that he had been aggressive.

He claimed he had walked away from the police but they had held him back.

Deane's father Arnold, 53, of Green Street, Upton Park, came out of his office. He screamed at police: "Let him go, you are killing him."

During the struggle Arnold Deane was hit in the mouth by one of the officers, alleged his defence counsel Mr Michael House.

Lita Ramaya, who was working for the Deanes, came out of the office because of the commotion.

She said: "Arnold's lip burst open and he stumbled backwards against a wall. He was choking on his blood and having an asthma attack."

The son was finally bundled into a police van and the father was taken to Newham General Hospital.

Said Arnold Deane: "It all got out of hand."

He was cleared of assaulting the officers.

Mr Ika Peart, defending Anthony Deane, of Romford, said: "The police have got a difficult job but they will not make things easier for themselves by behaving in this way."

Deane guilty and fined him £350 (Arnold Deane was thankfully acquitted). The public gallery erupted as supporters of the Deane family chanted "No Justice, No Peace" and condemned the verdict. Arnold Deane's barrister, Michael House, called the magistrates "spineless" for ignoring the clear discrepancies in the police evidence. He went on to say that the decision to convict one and discharge the other was a "feeble compromise". Arnold Deane condemned the verdict, stating that "you do not have to find yourself behind bars to realise that there is no British justice whatsoever".

Cleared of cop attack. Deane to sue

A JUDGE cleared 24-year-old West Indian Tony Deane on appeal after hearing how two PCs 'allegedly concocted a story' to justify a violent arrest against him.

Now Deane plans to take civil action against the police force after his appeal against conviction was granted at Snaresbrook Crown Court.

The court heard from Deane's defence. Mr Ika Peart, that evidence from two civilian witnesses conflicted with stories given by the two Forest Gate officers PCs Ian Sullivan and Andrew Knock.

Peart said that PC Knock was affronted by Deane's shrugged shoulder response to questioning about an incident where a car was smashed up in Green Street, Forest Gate, by an unknown man.

PC Knock denied the charge and claimed Deane punched him in the face without warning.

A struggle ensued with both Deane and his 53-year-old father Arnold.

Newham magistrates convicted Deane of assault and fined him £125. But charges were dismissed against dad.

The clearing of conviction has been hailed as a victory for the Newham Monitoring Project. The group lobbied the court during the hearing.

The fight goes on

The campaign refused to accept the verdict of the court, and Tony immediately lodged a notice of his intent to appeal against conviction. On Thursday 29 October 1992 at Snaresbrook Crown Court, supporters of the Deane family once again packed the public gallery. At the end of the prosecution case, Ika Peart, Tony's barrister moved that the case be dismissed due to the discrepancies in the police case. The prosecutor was unable to oppose Mr Peart's submission. The judge was left with no alternative but to find Tony Deane not guilty of the charges.

The Deane family, whilst welcoming the decision, condemned the fact that they were assaulted, criminalised and forced to endure a whole year of suffering. Tony Deane commented, "I would like to pay my respects to NMP for all the support they have given me. Without them and the support of the local community, the police would have been successful in their campaign of har-

assment". He went on to say, "the campaign does not end here. PC Knock and PC Sullivan should be immediately sacked and prosecuted for what they did".

The Deane family have since instigated civil proceedings against the Metropolitan police for assault, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution. It is worth noting that the Police Complaints Authority have chosen to legitimise the actions of the police as a result of a request from a senior officer that their investigation be curtailed. In addition, NMP have called for all the officers in the case who clearly perjured themselves during the trial to be disciplined and sacked.

The Tape

Mr Natt Why am I being arrested?

PC You're just a pain in the arse, ain't yer?

Mr Natt Oh God

PC Why don't you go and set fire to your self, or something?

Mr Natt You carry on arresting me - you carry on arresting me without reason. Why carry on? I don't know why

PC Eh?

Mr Natt Why? Why do you ...unintelligible... to me like that?

PC 'Cos you're a shit

Mr Natt Eh?

PC Behave yourself

Mr Natt Last time you arrest me without any reason. You try to arrest me again and again and again - why?

There is a loud belch

PC Oh!

Mr Natt Why do you do that?

PC Put our job on the line for someone like you?

Mr Natt You remember - you remember last time you arrest me without any reason - you remember, Sir?

contd

**Malkjit Singh Natt . . .
One law for black, one law for blue**

In April 1992, four Los Angeles police officers were acquitted of assaulting Rodney King, despite the attack being captured on video by a white bystander. The reaction of the local community was a spontaneous uprising against police and judicial racism which spread to a number of cities across the US. The uprising left 33 dead and over 2,000 injured. In Britain, senior police officers and politicians sought to minimise the parallels between the situation in the US and Britain by asserting that such an incident would never occur in this country and that if it did occur, every "rotten apple" would be severely dealt with. They were soon to rue their words, for less than three months later British policing was to be rocked to its foundations by the Malkjit Singh Natt affair.

The story begins

Malkjit Singh Natt was in the midst of unpleasant divorce proceedings with his wife who worked as a civilian employee at Plaistow police station. It was during this period that he was continually arrested on trumped-up charges, racially abused and then remanded in custody, before being released after being found not guilty. Fed up with this constant harassment, Mr Natt began to carry around a small tape-recorder to prevent this harassment from continuing unchallenged.

On 14 January 1991, Mr Natt was at work at the Bard Brothers factory in Forest Gate when he was arrested by two women officers for "threats to kill" against his wife. Mr Natt, fearing yet another incident of harassment, phoned his solicitor who promised to meet him at Plaistow police station.

The two officers then placed Mr Natt in an unmarked police car and drove him down Katherine Road. At the junction of Wakefield Street, he was transferred to a marked police car containing PC 1143 Craig Gande and PC 762 Daryn Bray from Plaistow police station. Mr Natt immediately recognised the two officers as they had previously arrested and assaulted him. Fearing a repetition of this, he managed to switch on his tape-recorder. It was an action

that was to lead to a situation that Mr Natt could never have conceived of at that moment. For during the seven minute journey to Plaistow police station, the two officers racially abused Mr Natt and assaulted him. The whole episode was recorded on tape.

When Mr Natt arrived at Plaistow police station, he was searched and the tape was seized, but when Mr Natt was being interviewed, his solicitor asked for the tape to be played, to the obvious embarrassment of the officers. This was why the police were unable to dispose of the tape. Nevertheless the police, aware of the implications of the tape, refused to return it or disclose its contents, claiming it was vital to their investigation, despite continued requests by Mr Natt's solicitors. Indeed, it was only when the solicitors obtained a court order that the tape was released. To date, the police still retain the original copy of the tape.

Even more disturbing was the appearance of two men outside Mr Natt's workplace. They approached Mr Natt and told him that he should tell his solicitor to stop demanding the tape or someone could get killed. The matter was reported to the police, although it has never been established who the men were.

The trial

Mr Natt was charged with threatening behaviour, ABH on a police officer and attempting to escape. When he initially appeared at Newham West Magistrates Court, the charges were modified to threatening behaviour and assaulting a police officer, thus ensuring that the case would be tried at magistrates court and that he would be denied the right to trial by jury. On 18 November 1991, when the case was finally heard, Mr Natt to his horror was found guilty on the charge of threatening behaviour and assaulting a police officer. He was faced with a heavy fine.

Mr Natt immediately lodged an appeal against conviction. On 17 June 1992 at the trial at Snaresbrook Crown Court, the public gallery was packed as close to a 100 people came to support Mr Natt. Many of

PC No don't talk. He's driving

Mr Natt Do you know of any reason, anyway?

PC I know a reason

.....

Mr Natt Without any reason?

PC Yes

Mr Natt You are going to arrest me?

PC Yes

Mr Natt That's bad. That's bad

PC It often happens in your country, don't it?

Mr Natt Eh?

PC It happens at home - where your lot comes from

Mr Natt Yes - what happens over there, it would never happen like that

PC Yes it does. Worse than that

Mr Natt What?

PC They'd go out and shoot yer, or something

Mr Natt What?

PC That's what we should do - fucking shoot yer

Mr Natt You shoot me?

PC Yes, I would

contd

his supporters were workers at his factory who came straight to court after working on the night shift. Within a few hours, Judge Jackson had overturned Mr Natt's conviction for threatening behaviour.

With regard to the charge of assaulting a police officer, the police alleged that Mr Natt somehow managed to punch one of his arresting officers, WPC Reed, before slamming the door in her face and fleeing from the police car. It was further alleged that Mr Natt was eventually arrested by officers from East Ham police station in a local school playground, then transferred to PC Bray and PC Gande's police car and taken to Plaistow police station.

The case raises a number of interesting points:

- Why were the police so intent on ensuring that the tape and its transcript should not be aired during the trial?
- The only injuries that WPC Reed claimed to have suffered was tenderness to the left cheek, not the injuries one expects from such an alleged assault.
- On the tape, Mr Natt continually asks the officers why he is being arrested - hardly the actions of someone who has just assaulted a police officer and tried to escape.
- If Mr Natt was so intent on absconding from the police, why did he call his solicitor and ask him to meet him at the police station?
- WPC Reed makes no mention of the assault or her injuries or the fact she was examined by a divisional surgeon in her notes.
- The tape recording of PC Gande and PC Bray abusing and assaulting Mr Natt contains no mention of the assault of WPC Reed - one would expect them to mention the assault on their colleague during their abuse.
- The divisional surgeon's notes, recording the examination of WPC Reed, cannot be found.
- No medical evidence of the assault was presented at the first trial.

The case against Mr Natt was fundamentally flawed from the beginning. The only injury WPC Reed alleged was "tenderness" to her cheek, a subjective diagnosis since there can be no medical proof. Indeed, the divisional surgeon accepted that he noted the "tenderness" only after WPC Reed pointed it out, and that "redness" could be inflicted through rubbing one's own face. In addition, the medical notes, which were

not presented at the first trial, somehow reappeared in the possession of WPC Reed in the midst of Mr Natt's appeal.

Despite all evidence to the contrary, Judge Jackson upheld the conviction of assault against WPC Reed. He did, however, order the tape transcript to be forwarded to Barbara Mills, the Director of Public Prosecutions, to investigate the possibility of criminal charges being brought against PC Gande and PC Bray.

The only conclusion that can be drawn from the whole episode was that once the police became aware of the contents of the tape, they initially attempted to confiscate and bury it in police bureaucracy, whilst concocting a story to legitimise their assault and abuse of Mr Natt.

Rotten apples or rotten system?

Meanwhile, Plaistow police station claimed that an internal investigation of the tape recording had been instigated. Chief Inspector Gritty of Area 2 Complaints Unit stated in a letter dated 27 January 1992 that PC Gande and PC Bray had been charged with "discreditable behaviour", found guilty and punished, although the punishment was not disclosed. We have since discovered that the punishment meted out to the two officers for their racist behaviour was the docking of one day's pay. According to the police's own disciplinary code, PC Gande and PC Bray should have been disciplined, found guilty of racist behaviour and immediately dismissed. The fact that they remain on the force speaks volumes for the commitment of the police to tackle racism within its ranks. The message is clear: racist officers can offend without any fear of retribution from a Police Complaints Authority that is controlled by the police and hence lacks the will or the spine to take firm and decisive action where necessary.

Nowhere to hide

Following a press conference organised by NMP in which the tape was publicly aired, the Natt case became world famous. For many, it was the British version of Rodney King. Here was a case of police brutality captured on tape. For local black people, it merely reinforced their own everyday experiences of policing in Newham.

Mr Natt What for?

PC Well..... wanker

Mr Natt What? That's no good for police officer doing that thing, you know. You know that? Eh?

PC Why don't you go home?

Mr Natt What's go home?

PC Go home - you know - to India or Pakistan, or whatever you fucking come from

Mr Natt Here, you don't have right to tell me to go home or whatever

PC I'm asking you - why don't yer?

Mr Natt Why? Why I go home?

PC Why? Yes, why don't yer?

Mr Natt What?

PC Why don't yer? Go home

Mr Natt It isn't your country

PC Its not your fucking country yet. Are you going to get put in prison again? Are you?

Mr Natt What? What?

PC That's going to cost us more money, ain't it?

confid

Sir Peter Imbert condemns racist officers

When asked by journalists for his views on the Natt case, Sir Peter Imbert, the then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, chose to distance himself from Newham's police. Indeed, he was forced to accept that the officers were racist and should have been disciplined in a more appropriate manner. Not surprisingly, the police force immediately closed ranks in support of PC Gande and PC Bray, whilst isolating the Commissioner himself. An editorial in the *Police Review* of 7 August 1992 stated that Sir Peter's behaviour "overstepped the bounds of natural justice". Indeed, the Chairman of the Police Federation, Mike Bennett, criticised Sir Peter for branding his officers as racist, and went on to say that "the tape does not contain any racial abuse". Clearly, condoning racist policing is not merely the prerogative of the PC on the beat but is endemic within the force as a whole.

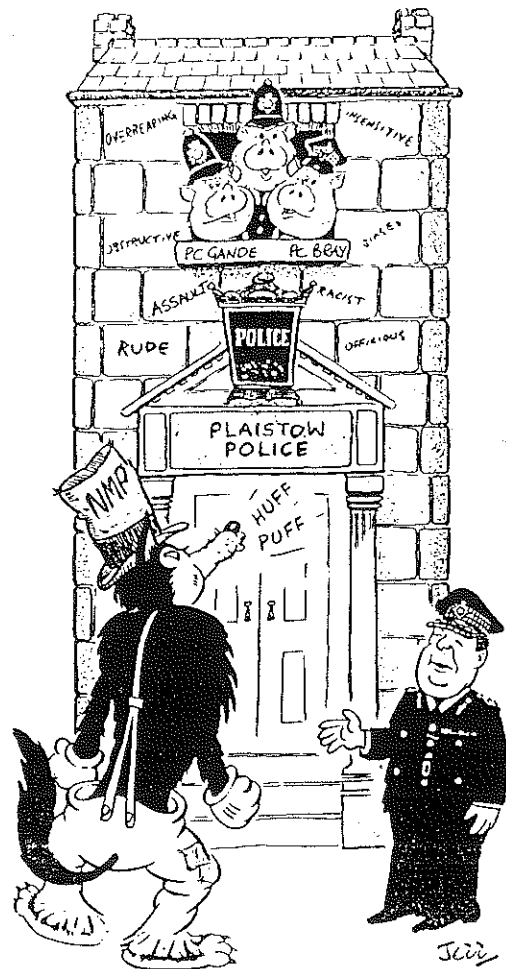
Home Secretary condemns racist officers

The case of Mr Natt so clearly exposed the reality of racist policing that even the Home Secretary was forced to distance himself from the racist officers.

Below we quote from Kenneth Clarke's response to a question from Mr Natt's MP, Ron Leighton (*Hansard*, 23 October 1992):

"... my recollection is that Mr Natt was convicted of assaulting a police officer, and that it was after his arrest that that unfortunate incident took place. It should have not taken place.

Like many other people, I have heard the tape recording on the radio. It appears that the officers admitted the disciplinary offence, and the matter was dealt with locally, as a result of which the full facts were not known. I do not think that those who imposed the penalty of one's day loss of pay had heard the tape recording. I have appeared on a platform with the Commissioner, Sir Peter Imbert, who also expressed his dissatisfaction with the outcome of the case. I repeat that I wholly agree with him. Such incidents are serious disciplinary matters, and I am sure that both the present and the new Commissioners will ensure that they are regarded as such throughout



"They may be little pigs, Mr NMP - but they're MY little pigs!"

the Metropolitan Police Service."

The Home Secretary was either misinformed or unable to accept the truth behind the disciplining of PC Gande and PC Bray. The facts clearly show that the investigating officers had the tape within their possession when they chose to dock a day's pay as punishment.

Nowhere to run

NMP will not allow PC Gande and PC Bray to escape punishment. We demand that Chief Superintendent Brown sacks these officers immediately and instigates criminal proceedings against them. The fact that the PC Gande and PC Bray continue to walk the streets of Newham in uniform is an insult to the people of Newham. Meanwhile, Mr Natt fights on. He has instigated civil proceedings against the Metropolitan police.

Mr Natt Well without any reason. I try to respect you, and you are swearing a lot. Why?

PC Yes

Mr Natt You do not have any right to do that - that - that thing. But you have the power.

PC We are doing the right thing

Mr Natt No you are not doing the right thing

PC We are not?

Mr Natt No

PC We are getting scum off the street

Mr Natt Why did you arrest me at my workplace? What for?

PC How can we arrest you at home if you are at work?

Mr Natt That's really bad to the police - what you say

PC SHUT UP!

Mr Natt Ah!

Mr Natt What do you do that?

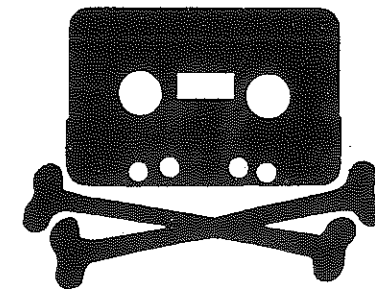
PC Bit boring that. You've said it already. Be quiet, Terry's got something to say to you

Mr Natt That's really bad. Why beat me?

PC I've got no respect for someone like you

NMP New Year Card - 1992/93

Newham Police Beware!

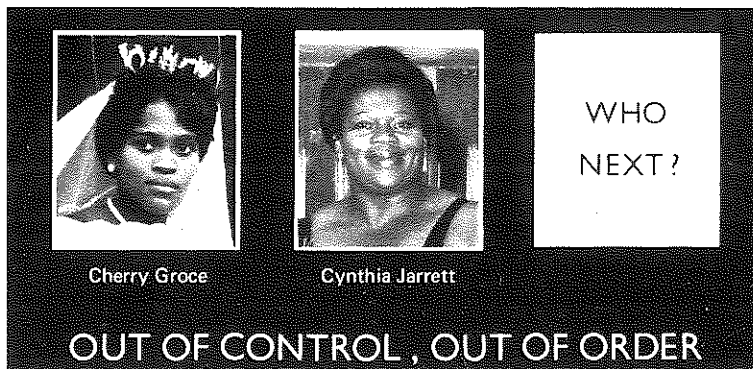


Everyone's buying a Tape Recorder for Christmas!

In July 1992 the tape recording of police abusing Malkijl Singh Natt in the back of a police car was released to the media and received national press coverage. Unfortunately, most people who suffer this sort of treatment from the police are not lucky enough to be carrying a tape recorder. So you know what to ask for this Christmas ...

Press Coverage of the Natt Case

- The Natt case made the following newspapers: Today, Guardian, Sun, Daily Mirror, Evening Standard, Independent, Times, Daily Telegraph, Daily Star, Daily Jang, India Today, Sunday Times, Observer, Independent on Sunday, Weekly Journal, Eastern Eye, Caribbean Times, Asian Times, Asian, Birmingham Mercury, Newham Recorder, Stratford Express and Yellow Advertiser.
- The case appeared on: BBC News, Channel 4 News, ITN News, Thames News, BBC South East News, Sky TV and Indian TV.
- The case was covered on: Radio 4 Today, Radio 4 Special Assignment, GLR, IRN, Radio One, Kiss FM, Choice FM and BBC World Service.



The ordeal of the Imbert family

In June 1992, Newham police very nearly added another name to the long list of black people who have died as a result of police brutality. In echoes of the police raid on Cynthia Jarrett, whose death led to the Broadwater Farm uprising seven years ago, a black woman in Manor Park nearly died as a result of a similar police raid.

The Imbert family have long suffered harassment at the hands of the local police, in particular from PC Sean Plunkett, who was also involved in the arrest and criminalisation of the Deanes. On one occasion, NMP wrote to Chief Superintendent Brown to complain about PC Plunkett's behaviour after he had arrested Jason Imbert on 30 August 1991 on suspicion of taking and driving away (TDA). During his arrest, Jason was told by PC Plunkett that "I've been looking for you for a long time" and "I know your family". Plunkett threatened Jason that he would "pull" him every time he saw him. The very next day, Jason and two friends were walking down High Street North E12, when PC Plunkett passed them in a patrol car; as he saw Jason he stuck two fingers up at him. Jason was subsequently proven innocent of the TDA and was acquitted of all the charges.

Police harassment continues

This pattern of harassment became more serious. In June 1992, Colin Imbert (aged 24) was cycling home when a patrol car containing PC Plunkett and PC Hands began to follow him. On noticing that he was being followed, Colin made his way from Forest Gate to Manor Park. His mother, Mrs Imbert (aged 60), was on the doorstep of the house when the officers arrived, demanding that Jason Imbert come out. Mrs Imbert told them that only her other son, Colin, was at home. The police then began to kick the front door, demanding Jason give himself up. Colin opened the door and the officers rushed in, grabbed him and forced him into the front room. Mrs Imbert, worried at the behaviour of the officers, went to see what was happening to her son. One officer suddenly pushed Mrs Imbert with such force that she was

hurled against the wall. Mrs Imbert, a diabetic who also suffers from hypertension, was left feeling breathless and dizzy and was forced to sit down at the foot of the stairs while over twenty officers carried out a raid of her home.

Mrs Imbert was quite clearly in distress and was having difficulty breathing. Suddenly, she felt a sharp pain in her chest. The officers ignored her condition and continued to step over her. It was only when Mrs Imbert's grand-daughter, C (aged 12), returned home that Mrs Imbert was able to tell her to call for an ambulance. Minutes later, Mrs Imbert's daughter, Jackie, returned to find her mother slumped on the staircase waiting for an ambulance, whilst seven police cars and a police van congregated outside. Mrs Imbert required emergency oxygen before being rushed to Newham General Hospital where she was detained in intensive care for cardiac arrest. She was released eight days later.

Marilyn Imbert, Mrs Imbert's other daughter, went to Forest Gate police station where Colin had been taken. Marilyn enquired about her brother but was told rudely to shut up and sit down. As she was writing down what the officer had said to her, the officer shut the metal grille on her hand. Marilyn immediately contacted NMP for assistance. Colin was subsequently released.

The trial

Before the case finally came to court, the police had dropped the ABH charges and brought in new charges of assaulting a police officer and threatening behaviour. This was quite clearly designed to ensure that Colin would not be able to enjoy the benefit of trial by jury and but would have to face Newham Magistrates Court who are renowned for being pro-police.

On 12 January 1993, Colin appeared in court accompanied by a large number of supporters. PC Plunkett and PC Hands, in giving evidence, alleged that they saw a youth they believed to be Jason Imbert and who was apparently wanted for deception. They followed him home and kicked the door open, when he allegedly refused them entrance. They were then, they allege, assaulted by a youth who they believed to be Jason but was in fact Colin. They even denied that Mrs Imbert had suffered a heart

attack-PC Plunkett claimed that Mrs Imbert was at the police station an hour later "screaming the place down".

During the trial, the police case was exposed for the lie that it was:

- PC Plunkett alleged that Jason Imbert was wanted for deception. Yet Jason had gone to the police station the day before and cleared up the matter.
- PC Plunkett knew Colin and Jason, having arrested both of them before. Colin is stocky, short and dark-skinned, whilst Jason has long dreadlocks, is taller and has light skin. Yet PC Plunkett alleged that he had mistaken Colin for Jason.
- PC Plunkett and PC Hands contradicted each other over the timing and sequence of events.

Indeed, the police evidence was so transparently false that the public in the gallery reacted in anger. Marilyn Imbert was removed from the court after she was unable to contain herself any longer, when the officers denied that Mrs Imbert was injured during the raid. To the joy of those present, the court found Colin Imbert not guilty.

This case highlights the increasing police brutality faced by the local black community. Had it not been for the prompt action of Mrs Imbert's children, she may well have died. As Mrs Imbert herself said, "Anything could have happened to me just like Cynthia Jarrett. I have the same symptoms, same blood pressure, same pushing around". The family joined NMP in calling for an immediate investigation into the police raid and the immediate dismissal of PC Sean Plunkett.

Justice for Gill Smith

On 9 October 1992, Gill Smith was out shopping on Woodgrange Road, Forest Gate when she met a close friend, Ms C, and her young son. The two friends stood outside Forest Gate train station talking. The discussion led to an argument between the two. At that moment, officers from Area 2 Territorial Support Group (TSG) passed by in a riot van. On seeing the two women arguing, two officers got out of the van and approached the women. One officer moved Gill towards the back of the pavement, grabbing her hand and saying "if you're not quiet, you're nicked". Gill

explained that she was quiet and began to move to leave, but the officer blocked her path and forced her arm behind her back. The second officer returned after having spoken to Ms C who had told him that there was no problem between the two women. The first officer said to his colleague "we've got her on a Section 4", and forced Gill onto the floor. The two officers then handcuffed Gill, began to drag her towards the barrier at the edge of the pavement, and forced her over the barrier causing injuries to her stomach. At this point Ms C, witnessing the attack, began shouting to the officers to let Gill go and stop hurting her. The officers ignored her protestations and dragged Gill towards the van where she was lifted up by her arms and legs and thrown onto the floor of the van. As she struggled to get up off the van floor, the officers began racially abusing her, saying "You black dog, get on the floor" and "You bitch, get down, get down". One officer then grabbed Gill by the back of the neck and tried to push it to the ground. The other officer began to stamp on her legs and her back. During this ordeal, Gill suffered injuries to her body, had her jacket ripped and her jewellery snatched off. Gill was then taken to Forest Gate police station still lying on the floor of the van whilst the officers continued to abuse her racially and laugh at her discomfort.

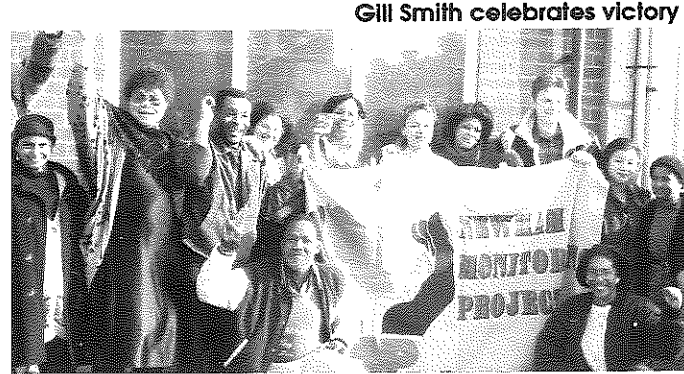
At the police station, Gill was taken out of the van, released from the handcuffs, processed and escorted towards the cells. A WPC then informed her that she was about to be searched, and Gill was pushed into a cell and told to undress. As Gill took off her dress, she noticed that the male officers who had arrested her were watching her through the door which had been left ajar. When the officers realised that Gill had seen them, they began to make lewd and sexist comments about her. Gill pleaded with the WPC not to continue the search, saying, "Why are you doing this? You're a woman as well". At this point, the WPC, obviously embarrassed by the situation, discontinued the search and left Gill in the cell.

It was over four hours later that Gill was released after having been photographed and fingerprinted. She was, however, refused medical treatment for her injuries and ordered "to clear off" from the police station when she said she wanted to complain about her treatment.



Gill Smith public meeting

For Gill, the day began as a normal one but ended in an experience that has been shared by countless other black people who have suffered police racism and brutality. Gill was not only assaulted, racially abused and strip-searched by the police but also charged with threatening behaviour. This charge, just as the ones faced by Arnold and Tony Deane, can only be heard in a magistrates court, without a jury. These courts are renowned for their complicity with the police in criminalising black people.



Gill Smith celebrates victory

charges and discipline the officers involved. NMP contacted Gill's MP, Tony Banks, who also expressed concern at the case and the anger it had sparked in the local community.

Black women under attack

After the incident, Gill visited NMP who immediately provided her with legal advice and practical support. NMP arranged for Gareth Peirce of Birnberg & Co to take on the case. In addition, NMP lodged a formal complaint against the arresting officers from Area 2 TSG as well as those officers at Forest Gate police station who assisted in Gill's arrest and detention.

The case of Gill Smith clearly demonstrates that it is not only young black men who suffer police racism and brutality. All sections of the local community regardless of their age and gender may find themselves abused, assaulted and framed by the police, an experience which can not only affect you physically but can also leave deeper mental scars. In Gill's case, her doctor prescribed medication for the severe mental distress that she had suffered.

The Gill Smith campaign

The Justice for Gill Smith campaign was initiated by NMP and friends of Gill Smith. It brought together a number of black organisations including East London Black Womens Organisation and Newham Asian Womens Project. The campaign also attracted the support of the Deane family campaign. The aim of the campaign was not only to raise support for Gill herself but also to raise the wider issue of racist and sexist policing of black women. The campaign decided to organise a public meeting to galvanise support for Gill and initiate a debate around the policing of black women in Newham. In addition, pressure was brought to bear on the police to drop the

The public meeting

A public meeting was organised on 2 December 1992 at the One Love Centre. A number of local black women including Gill Smith and Dawn Ramsey (see chapter on racial harassment) gave their accounts of policing in Newham. A discussion followed about the varied experiences of black women which ranged from the police trivialising violence against women to the criminalising of black women which has resulted in 36% of the female prison population being black despite black people as a whole only constituting 4.9% of the total population. The meeting of over 130 people decided to call for a mass turnout at the Newham East Magistrates Court on the day of Gill's trial.

The trial

The campaign continued to mobilise support with mass leafleting being done all across Newham. On 2 February 1993, eighty supporters packed the public gallery at Newham East Magistrates Court. To the delight of the crowd present, the case against Gill was dismissed by the magistrate after the CPS offered no evidence due to the fact that the arresting officers had failed to turn up. We can only conclude that the police realised that their tissue of lies would be exposed in court and therefore settled for a convenient exit.

The future

The Justice for Gill Smith Campaign has continued to campaign against the police abuse of power. A civil action against the Metropolitan police is pending as is a formal



Picket of Forest Gate police station

police investigation by the Area 2 complaints. But more importantly, the campaign resulted in Gill being found not guilty and the wider issue of policing against black women being raised an issue of concern in Newham.

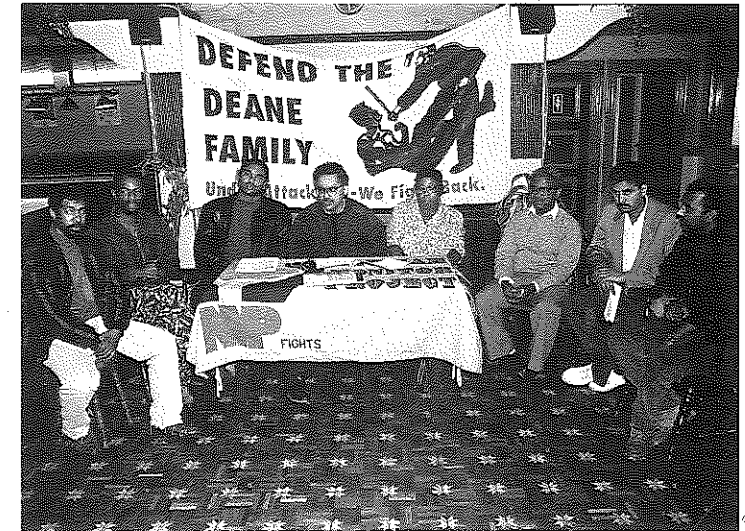
Picket of Forest Gate police station

The Defend the Malkjit Singh Natt Campaign approached the Deanes and the Imberts and requested that they support a picket of Forest Gate Police Station to protest at racist policing. The picket was planned for 9 July 1992 at 5 pm. The campaigns began to mobilise the local community. Leaflets were handed out at the local tube stations and posters distributed throughout the local community.

The picket demanded:

- a public inquiry into policing in Newham
- criminal charges against the racist police officers
- an end to racist police frame-ups
- no more police harassment

On the day over 500 people packed the street opposite the police station, demanding justice and the immediate sacking of PC Gande and PC Bray. The picket was joined by over a 100 workers from Mr Natt's workplace who marched from their factory to demonstrate their support for Mr Natt and the other families. The police, obviously shocked at the scale of the local protest, wisely decided to remain inside their Fortress. The show of anger reinforced the commitment of the local community to oppose police violence and sent a clear message throughout the police hierarchy that racist policing would not be tolerated. One by one, victims of police brutality spoke out and pledged their support to the campaign and all the other families.



Press Conference

Press conference against police harassment

To coincide with the official opening of Forest Gate police station by the Home Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, and the then Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Peter Imbert, NMP and the families campaigns organised a press conference on 28 September 1992 to highlight the role of the station in the harassment of black people. The press conference which was held next door to the police station was addressed by the Deanes, the Ramseys, Mr Natt and the Imberts and Mr Govindan. All called for an inquiry into policing in Newham as well as the sacking of racist officers. The families demanded that the Commissioner and the Home Secretary address the concerns of the local community and acknowledge the reality of policing in Newham rather than tacitly support racist officers still serving in Newham's police force. The press conference received widespread coverage.

Independent inquiry into policing against black people

On 21 July 1992, the Deanes, the Imberts, Mr Natt, the West Ham Ethnic Welfare Association, Newham Asian Womens Project together with NMP lobbied a Police Community Consultative Group meeting. Over 150 people packed the gallery to support the demands of local families for justice. The families campaigns quite clearly

Justice for Gill Smith Campaign
Newham Asian Womens Project • Newham Monitoring Project

Public Meeting

Stop Police Harassment of Black Women in Newham!

Justice For Gill Smith!

Early in October, Gill was arrested in Forest Gate and charged with assaulting a police officer. During the arrest, she was injured after being thrown violently into a police van. In the "Toitress" Forest Gate Police Station, she was subjected to an intimate body search whilst male officers were present who mocked and racially abused.

Wednesday 2nd December
One Love Centre
1 Bishop's Ave (off Plashet Rd, Plaistow E13)
Starting at 7pm. Newcastle • Upton Park
(creeche available)

Speakers from Justice for Gill Smith Campaign, Newham Monitoring Project, Newham Asian Womens Project, East London Black Womens Organisation.

Police Harassment is a Crime!

Gill Smith leaflet

COURT CASE DISMISSED AS POLICE FAIL TO SHOW UP

A CASE against a woman who was arrested while arguing with a friend in the street has been thrown out of court.

Gill Smith, a 28-year-old mother-of-two, was charged with threatening behaviour last year.

But when police officers did not show up at the hearing at Newham East Magistrates court last week the case was dismissed.

She now plans to sue the police because, she claims, she was mistreated during her arrest.

"I couldn't believe this was happening to me. I've never had anything to do with the police before. And although I'm happy the case was dismissed I don't feel justice has been done," said Ms Smith.

On October 9, 1992, a police van pulled up by Forest Gate British Rail Station, east London, at Ms Smith and another woman, with a small boy, were arguing.

Hudson "Zahir" of local campaigning group Newham Monitoring Project who started the Justice for Gill Smith Campaign last December, said: "This case illustrates the reality of policing against the black community in Newham. He claims that he has received hundreds of complaints against police in the Newham Area."



Picket of Forest Gate police station

Options for the Inquiry

■ A Home Office Inquiry Into Policing

This model is best illustrated by the Scarman Inquiry into the Brixton uprising in 1981. In this model, the government appoints a senior member of the judiciary to chair the inquiry. This model, however, lacks independence for it is initiated and sustained by the government and thus fails to address community concerns that it is controlled by the police and the state.

■ A Local Authority Inquiry Into Policing

This model again lacks independence, being biased towards the police and local government and thus failing to win support of the community.

■ An Independent Inquiry Into Policing

This model involves an inquiry regulated by an impartial advisory group which will be independent of all statutory institutions and thus will encourage community participation.

The United Families Campaign concluded that the third option would most likely address the fundamental concerns of the local community.

saw their own cases not as isolated incidents of police harassment but as part of a worrying pattern of abuse that had led to increasing tensions between the local black community and the police. They therefore demanded an inquiry into policing in Newham, a demand which was supported by the PCCG who pledged their support to the families.

United Families Campaign

Following detailed discussions between the campaigns, including previous campaigns such as the Defend Mr Govindan and The Defend Mr Altaf Campaign it was agreed to form a United Families Campaign. The United Families Campaign examined the various options by looking at previous inquiries into policing including the Colin Roach, Broadwater Farm and the Toxteth Inquiries, and a number of options emerged (see left). However, there was initial hostility from Newham Council and the Police Community Consultative Group who both wanted the Inquiry to be located within the framework of the PCCG. This, however, was unacceptable to the United Families Campaign. Newham Council and the PCCG were forced to accept the model proposed by the Campaign since they were aware without the support of the families, there would be little or no community participation.

The format

The United Families Campaign published a document in which they outlined how the Inquiry would function. The Inquiry was to be unique in that it would not simply focus on the particular issue of policing but would examine the experiences of the local black community in relation to policing.

■ An Advisory Group would be selected from a wide spectrum of organisations within the relevant political, legal and civil liberties fields to provide the relevant experience and perspectives required to constitute the Inquiry.

■ The Advisory Group would formalise the mechanics of the Panel and its broad terms of reference. The Advisory Group would also select the membership of the Panel and provide any logistical support required for the Panel to convene and operate.

The Advisory Group meets

The United Families Campaign invited a number of key organisations and individuals to constitute the Advisory Group:

Institute of Race Relations, Statewatch, Liberty (formerly NCCL), Haldane Society of Lawyers, the Chair of the PCCG, NMP and the United Families Campaign.

The Advisory Group began to draft the broad terms of reference and the mechanism of the Inquiry and to suggest names for the Inquiry Panel.

The Inquiry

The Advisory Group agreed that an overall investigation of policing was needed, with examination of the role of policing in a number of areas including policing on the streets, policing and immigration and policing in schools, in order to ensure that the day-to-day experiences of the local community were documented. The examination of contemporary policing would be placed in its historical context.

Mechanics

To ensure the widest possible community participation, the Inquiry will use a number of public and private sittings throughout Newham where local people will be able to present their evidence. The Inquiry will also hear evidence in private as well as written submissions from institutions such as the local authority, the probation service etc. To ensure that the views of specialist groups are included, a number of specific questionnaires will be circulated amongst the teaching profession, community groups etc.

Presently, the Advisory Group is considering the actual composition of the Panel.

The future

This Inquiry will undoubtedly make an important contribution to the debate around policing and black people. But it will also play an important role in the debate around criminal justice in the context of the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice which is due to publish its report in June 1993.

fascism & anti-fascism

In the last Annual Report, NMP reprinted an article from CARF which outlined our view on the fight against fascism. We believe in fighting institutionalised and popular anti-black racism and therefore fascism, rather than seeing the fight against racism as subordinate to anti-fascist activity. Mobilisations against groups such as the British National Party, which render local black communities as mere venues for disconnected action and leave them to face the backlash once the anti-Nazi marchers have gone home, amount to what CARF rightly described as "little more than macho flexing of left muscle". NMP is encouraged by a greater understanding and respect for black community organisations from certain anti-fascist groups; however, much of what passes for anti-fascism in this country continues to be wedded to the strategies of tired rhetoric and campaigns aimed at the media rather than at the experiences of black communities in Britain. Across Europe, the growth of parties of the extreme right and the violence in particular of German neo-Nazi skinheads associated with them (which was so sickeningly highlighted with the attacks on refugee hostels in Rostock in August 1992) have been the most worrying developments for anti-fascists. An investigation into racist murders in Europe conducted by CARF (January 1993) has shown that of the 59 deaths recorded, fascist-inspired killings constitute by far the largest category, with 21 reported cases Europe-wide of which 17 were in Germany. Widespread unemployment and disaffection with mainstream politics has provided a fertile breeding ground for recruiting young Germans, and with more and more jobless in Britain, there is a very real danger that groups such as the BNP, which has not yet been able nationally to capitalise on the worsening economic situation, will be able to grow into a greater threat than it currently is.

The General Election

The inability of the far-right in Britain to broaden its support nationally was shown in the General Election in April 1992, when the combined national vote of both the BNP and the National Front was 11,821,

with the BNP receiving 7,005 across the country and the NF getting 4,816. More worrying was the number of votes that Richard Edmonds and John Tyndall received in the two Tower Hamlets constituencies, which have been a particular target of the BNP with their "Rights For Whites" campaign, which has made parts of the borough, including the Isle of Dogs and the Globe Town area around Roman Road, particularly dangerous for black people and for recognised anti-fascists. Since the general election, council by-elections in Bethnal Green and Millwall have seen the fascists maintain a core of support, suggesting the beginnings of a base. In Millwall, the BNP gained 657 votes, 20% of the vote, compared to only 182 for the Conservatives. The violence which surrounds BNP electoral activity was again evident during the Bethnal Green by-election, when the BNP ventured for the first time in many years into Brick Lane, a predominantly Bengali area, to attack an Anti-Nazi League stall and seriously injure a number of anti-fascists. NMP attended a subsequent picket of the BNP's election meeting in York Hall which mobilised around 1,000 people and prevented large numbers of local racists attending. Part of the NMP contingent was a large and vocal group of Bengali youth who, typically of anti-fascist activity, were among the few local black people on the demonstration. Also unfortunate were the tactics of the police, who allowed fascists to chant "Sieg Heil" and racist abuse on the steps of the hall and later arrested four local black people who were subsequently acquitted of all charges.

The Rohit Duggal demonstration

On 7 November 1992, NMP participated in a demonstration of around 1,000 people who marched through Eltham to protest against the racist murder of Rohit Duggal, who was killed in July 1992. In Eltham's shopping centre, the march was met by a large number of fascists whose mobilisation, with considerable support from local youths, was in an ideal position to attack the marchers. Despite this, and partly be-



Skinheads on Waterloo Bridge on 12 September

cause of the work of the demonstration's stewards, the marchers were able to lay wreaths at the spot where Rohit was killed, march back through the town and proceed to a rally, where around 200 fascists, had already congregated in order to launch an attack. In a situation similar to that in Bermondsey last year, a number of protestors left early (and were assaulted at the local railway station) and those remaining faced the fascists from behind rows of police officers. However, the aim of the march, to protest at the killing of Rohit and to honour his memory, had been achieved in spite of threats of fascist violence. The black community had exercised its right to march where it chose in order to show its respect for the family of Rohit Duggal, and in that sense, the demonstration can only be seen as a victory.

The Battle of Waterloo

The skinhead following of the BNP remains close to the Blood & Honour music organisation, run by Ian Stuart Donaldson of the neo-Nazi band Skrewdriver, which continues to try to hold secret events around the country. On 12 September, members of Blood & Honour planned to attend a Skrewdriver gig at the Yorkshire Grey pub in Eltham which, as usual, had been booked under a false name - the "Gods of War Scooter Club". They assembled at Waterloo Station to be redirected to the gig and were met by around 1,000 anti-fascists intent on preventing them from congregating. As Blood & Honour supporters came off the trains, they were forced to flee from anti-fascists, resulting in a pitch battle on the station concourse. As the News of the World reported the following day, "the skinheads ... were clearly terrified by the size of the crowd". The police response was predictable, but despite twenty-eight arrests and attempts to drive protesters out of the sta-

tion using police dogs, the police were eventually forced to close Waterloo station, thus denying the fascists their meeting point. The battle continued outside, halting traffic on Waterloo Bridge and spreading around the Shell-Mex building and the South Bank Centre where a carload of skinheads was attacked and one fascist was taken away in an ambulance after having a heart attack. Furious demands for help from the fascists to the concert organisers who were at Victoria were ignored.

NMP supporters who were part of the anti-fascist contingent witnessed police officers at one point fighting side-by-side with Blood & Honour supporters under the railway bridge by the Royal Festival Hall and, according to Anti-Fascist Action which called the counter-demonstration, an anti-fascist who infiltrated a group of fascists overhead a police officer say "if you run, we're running with you". The way that the police side with the BNP and other far-right groups, as was evident at York Hall in Bethnal Green, clearly shows that, whilst BNP-inspired racist attacks are often ignored and trivialised by the police, the perpetrators of racist hatred are continually defended.

The beating that the fascists received was a great victory, but it would be dangerous to become self-congratulatory by this success. Firstly, the confrontation in Waterloo station was a set-piece clash on neutral territory, and there was therefore little danger of a backlash against local black people. If the events on 12 September are to be held up as a model for all future anti-fascist mobilisations, then the criticisms that NMP and others have made about the isolation of the anti-fascist movement from the everyday experiences of black communities will again have been ignored.

Secondly, the far-right has undoubtedly learned from its defeat, as has become clear in subsequent confrontations. Members of the Combat 18 (C18) group were amongst the fascists seen in Eltham in November 1992. Advocating support for the BNP, the group (the 1 stands for A and the 8 stands for H, Adolf Hitler's initials) act as unofficial and organised security at BNP events and are responsible for the publication of *Redwatch*, which prints the names and home addresses of anti-fascists which operates from an address in North Carolina in the US in order to avoid incitement laws. A

JOIN US!

- The British National Party is recruiting new members in this area
- The BNP is the only party that puts the British people first - in jobs, housing, education and welfare
 - The BNP is the only party that defends the rights of white communities under threat from floods of immigrants
 - The BNP says that child killers and other murderers, including IRA terrorists, should get the death penalty
 - The BNP totally opposes all attempts to break up the United Kingdom
 - The BNP is against the Maastricht Treaty and stands for British independence from Europe
 - The BNP is against destroying British jobs by importing foreign goods which we have the skills and resources to produce in this country; it believes the way to full employment is by buying British
 - The BNP opposes mass immigration and believes in Britain for the British

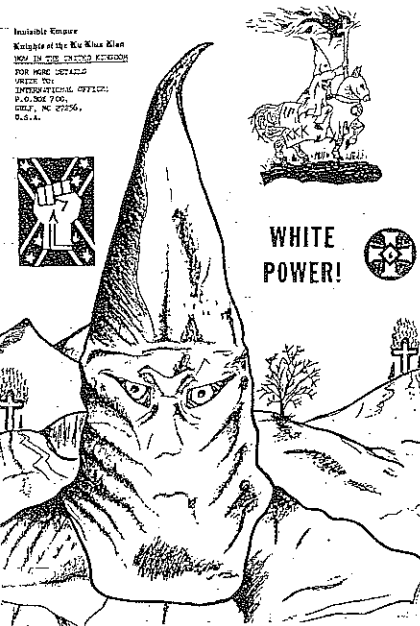
Stand up and be counted! Join our Battle for Britain!

BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY

Please tick the appropriate box and fill in and send the coupon below to the address at bottom. Please send me further information about the British National Party, for which I enclose 34p to cover costs.
 Please send me as a member of the British National Party. I enclose a year's subscription of £12.00 (half-rate for OAPs and students)
 NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____

Printed & published by British National Party, PO Box 117, Reading, RG4 0AB 2008

BNP recruitment leaflet sent to NMP



Klan hatemail sent to NMP

similar publication called Target has been produced by the so-called "Pro-Fascist Action". Threats to known anti-racists, including NMP (see below), are becoming increasingly common; they highlight the need for extra vigilance and suggest that the black community may soon have to organise its own forms of self-defence against these threats.

Fascism in South Newham

Since 1989, when the BNP held a large public meeting in Canning Town, fascist recruitment in Newham has been at best sporadic. With the BNP seemingly consolidating its position in Tower Hamlets, however, the establishment of a branch in Newham would appear to be a logical step for the BNP to take. During the summer, the BNP's newspaper, the British Nationalist, reported that a paper sale had been held on 13 June 1992 in Canning Town and that a "unit" was shortly to be established in the borough.

Evidence to suggest that this is true has included a recruitment leaflet stamped "Newham BNP" which has been circulating in the borough, a copy of which was sent to NMP. The Canning Town papersale in Rathbone Street market in June was repeated in December when around 30 BNP members descended on the market.

The fascists, including a number of their most violent members, met first in the Ordnance Arms and then the Beckton Arms pubs, before leafletting the market and displaying a Union Jack. NMP supporters in the market were able to photograph the sale and reported that a number of the local stallholders were unhappy about the BNP's invasion of the area.

Having previously waited six months between papersales in Canning Town, around 20 BNP fascists were back in Rathbone Street market on 27 February 1993. This, along with the fact that February's visit involved marching around the market and pulling down SWP posters, would seem to indicate a growing confidence. Another worrying development is that racist BNP graffiti, almost certainly not the work of BNP members, has begun to appear in areas such as Custom House, suggesting that the initials "BNP" are becoming asso-

ciated with popular racism in the way that "NF" was in the past. With support from local people and organisations in the Canning Town area, NMP is launching an initiative to stop the BNP gaining a foothold in south Newham. Plans to leaflet Rathbone Street market are the first step in this initiative.

Threats to NMP

Throughout 1992, NMP has been receiving abusive and threatening telephone calls on the Emergency Service. On a number of occasions, our volunteers have been threatened at home. In addition, we have been sent abusive letters and copies of literature from the far-right. Amongst the hate-mail received was material from the Klu Klux Klan in the US, which included a Klan calling card. The appearance of the Klan in Britain has been most prominent in the north of England with cross-burnings in the Mansfield area; but the possibility of



BNP in Rathbone Street Market

the Klan, with its history of violence against black people in the US and its close links with Blood & Honour, organising in Newham is a danger that NMP will be monitoring in the coming year.

The clear implication of the volume of racist leaflets and threatening letters sent to NMP over the last year is that the fascists are desperate to intimidate a strong and vocal organisation representing black people. The strength of the black community in Newham remains the major obstacle to the far-right's attempts establish a base in the borough, and threats to NMP simply renew our commitment to preventing the fascists from succeeding, by any means necessary.

outreach

NMP has always regarded outreach activity as a fundamental aspect of our work as a community organisation. We have sought to take the lessons of thirteen years of unrelenting community struggle against racist violence and racist policing out to as wide and diverse an audience as possible. We have sought through campaigning and educational work to go beyond the converted and reach into the very heart of our community. By doing so, we have shown that the fight against racism can only be fought by the community and never on its behalf and that what has come to be known as the "Newham experience" can provide a blueprint for community struggles across the country.

Below we provide perspectives on our outreach work at a local and national level.

Community care

A significant area of NMP's work continues to be the tackling of a variety of issues which affect the black community. This includes recent legislation allegedly aimed at "care" within the community.

Following the phasing-in of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 which was supposedly enacted to tackle the failure of current care provisions within the community for those with short and long term care needs, NMP was instrumental in establishing the Black and Ethnic Minority Community Care Forum. This developed from an existing loose network of black community groups. The forum now has a membership of over 50 black voluntary sector representatives including NMP.

During 1992, the Forum worked tirelessly to produce a unique and comprehensive report on the experience of the local black community and community care. The report critiqued the statutory sector's consultation exercises in Newham and highlighted failings in the Audit of the Independent Sector commissioned by Newham Council's social services department. It went on to demonstrate that community care for black people in general is inadequate, in-

appropriate and inaccessible. Nowhere else in the country has a community produced such an analysis and documentation of their experience of community care.

In December 1992, the Forum organised a public seminar to launch the report and highlight issues of black community care generally. Over a hundred black community workers, carers and service users attended the meeting and were very vocal in their support of the criticisms made in the Forum's report. Ratna Dutt, Director of National Institute of Social Work's Race Equality Unit, spoke about how community care was nothing new to us as black people since racism in service provision has meant that we have historically provided care within our own community.

Newham's statutory authorities should consider themselves fortunate to have such a dynamic and representative Forum undertaking this type of work. Given the fact that other community care forums doing similar work in other boroughs have received joint social services and health authority funding for a worker, the most obvious recognition of the work of the Black and Ethnic Minority Community Care Forum would be to approve its application for joint finance for a worker. The success or failure of this application will prove the final barometer as to how serious the local and health authorities are about incorporating the black community into community care.

Asylum Bill

Another issue which required a wider and more coordinated response and struck at the heart of Newham's black community is the insidious Asylum Bill. We documented the details and dangerous implications of this racist piece of legislation in our last Annual Report. NMP's response to the Bill in Newham was to launch the Newham Immigration Action Committee (NIAC) along with other local groups, with the aim of coordinating anti-deportation cases and developing pro-active strategies for work around immigration and refugee issues.

On a national level, however, it was vital that the Bill be stopped. This became even more imperative when politicians of all persuasions had no hesitation to use the race card during the general election campaign to whip up public hysteria against asylum-seekers.

NMP was centrally involved in supporting the launch of an organisation drawn from and run by refugees in their own interests. The Refugees Ad-Hoc Committee on Asylum Rights (RAHCAR) was launched in 1992 with the explicit aim of campaigning against the Asylum Bill. On 21 November 1992, RAHCAR organised the largest demonstration to date against the Bill, in which many thousands of refugees and anti-racist supporters marched through central London demanding justice and an end to the Bill. However, despite this magnificent display of unity amongst refugee, black and progressive groups and a subsequent huge lobby of Parliament, it appears that the Asylum Bill will unfortunately soon become law. The Bill will not only prevent thousands of refugees from escaping death but will also affect the lives of those refugees already settled here. It will also, in some cases, affect those who simply want to visit relatives in this country.

In 1993, however, we look forward to the opening of a fully resourced and functioning refugee centre based in Newham. This centre will provide general welfare and immigration advice as well as serve as a much needed base for many existing refugee organisations in the borough. Sadly, it appears that internal council politics have already begun to affect this scheme adversely and once again refugees and the black community as a whole will suffer.

Tower Hamlets

NMP has been active in casework and supporting campaigns in Tower Hamlets for many years. An example of this work has been NMP's involvement in the Ocean Youth organisation based in Ocean Estate, Stepney. This dates back to October 1990 when a number of our supporters, operating out of a local community centre, provided advice and assistance on cases of primarily police harassment of young Bengali men.

The support provided has included the use of NMP's emergency service line, regular advice sessions and the distribution of thousands of rights cards. We also supported the formation of the Ocean Youth organisation in order to campaign for the opening of a desperately needed youth club.

It was in the context of work with Ocean Youth that the stark reality of racism within the Stepney Neighbourhood of Tower Hamlets Council became apparent. The Liberal-run neighbourhood consistently refuses to fund any youth club in the area which is not run or controlled by the white community, and there is no provision at all for Bengali youths except for inadequate grants for brief residential holidays. Eventually, due to the work of a local youth worker, Nasir Uddin, and the youth of Ocean estate over the past three years, Ocean Youth is now mentioned at every youth forum in the borough. Despite the opposition of all established agencies in the neighbourhood and the indifference of most voluntary sector groups, Ocean Youth has rapidly become a leading youth organisation. The level of the group's influence is such that Ocean Youth was approached by students from Tower Hamlets College seeking help in tackling the college management on the issue of racist discipli-



Picket of Tower Hamlets College

COMMUNITY
CARE:
THE
NEWHAM
BLACK
EXPERIENCE

report by the newham
black & ethnic minority
community care forum

black community care
who cares?
december 1992

Report of community care forum

nary procedures. These disciplinary procedures forced black students to sign contracts of good behaviour often based on spurious and unproven allegations made by teachers and staff. These students would be forced to sign away all their rights to any normal disciplinary hearing, meaning that the word of a teacher or other member of staff could result in automatic expulsion, with no right of appeal. When three particular students were expelled on these grounds, Ocean Youth's response was to represent the youths in a meeting with the college and, with the support of NMP and the local community group CAPA, to call a picket of Tower Hamlets college in December 1992 which was attended by nearly 400 youths.

Currently, there are faint possibilities that the youth club, so badly needed on the estate, may at last be provided. The continued existence of Ocean Youth and its commitment to continue fighting for the rights of black youth on the estate is a testament to the courage of young people on the estate and to the hard work and diligence of Nasir Uddin and local youth worker, Maqsood Sheikh.

Cardiff Three

In last year's Annual Report, we outlined the case of the Cardiff Three - Yusef Abdullahi, Steven Miller and Tony Paris - three black men wrongfully convicted of the murder of a woman in Butetown, Cardiff. Throughout 1992, NMP provided practical advice and support to the Free the Cardiff Three campaign. We spoke in Cardiff on a number of occasions, visited the men in prison and when the case came back to the Court of Appeal, we supported and attended the picket outside the Royal Courts of Justice. On 10 December 1992, the Cardiff 3 were freed. We salute the Cardiff Three, their families and the campaign for their tremendous resistance in exposing yet another miscarriage of justice.

Local and national links

Throughout 1992, dozens of organisations and campaigns from across Britain came to visit NMP, frequently in order to learn from our experiences of over a decade of anti-racist community work and to exchange information. The bulk of NMP's outreach work, however, was in Newham and directed at developing our profile and

extending our service. We have pursued links with Newham Community College and various schools around the borough with the aim of speaking directly to young people and providing them with support. We have also participated in various education schemes involving students working for NMP as placement students. These students have proved invaluable to the work of the project and in the vast majority of cases have remained close friends and supporters of the Project.



Local youth visiting NMP

In addition, we have spoken at numerous meetings, rallies and demonstrations covering a wide range of issues, including the Asylum Bill, racist violence, police brutality and the criminal justice system. NMP has also played a central role in the Innocence campaign, supporting those campaigning for the release of Winston Silcott, the M25 Three and Satpal Ram (who was given a life sentence for murder after defending himself from an armed racist attacker). Innocence has been working to highlight the ways that black people are subject to immense injustice at the hands of the criminal justice system - NMP has been central to this umbrella initiative.

Visitors to the Project have also included delegations from Germany, Sweden, Holland, France, as well as trade unionists from South Africa and USA. The largest single group consisted of 25 predominantly Arab youths from Belgium. These discussions provided fascinating insights into the experiences of our sisters and brothers in Europe. Such meetings will have to be-

come more frequent if the scourge of Euro-racism and neo-fascism are to be fought.

There is little doubt that 1993 will see increasing attacks on black communities in Britain and throughout Europe. If we are to be prepared, we must reaffirm our commitment in practice to the principles of internationalism and community-based anti-racism. We must continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with those under racist and police attack and keep the vibrant tradition of struggle within Newham's black community alive.

1992 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

NMP's 1992 Annual General Meeting was held at the Tom Allen Centre, Stratford on 7 June 1992. As a result of NMP preferring to link its AGM with some entertainment, the evening incorporated an evening of poetry and cultural resistance and a social. The evening was attended by approximately 250 supporters of NMP. There were speeches from the Defend the Deane Family Campaign and the Sahitharan Memorial Committee followed by poetry from Benjamin Zephaniah, Saquib Deshmukh, Imtiaz Hussein, Ahmed Sheikh and Dawn Lennon, Brother Nye and finally, a social and dance. All in all, the evening was an overwhelming success and thoroughly enjoyed by all those present.

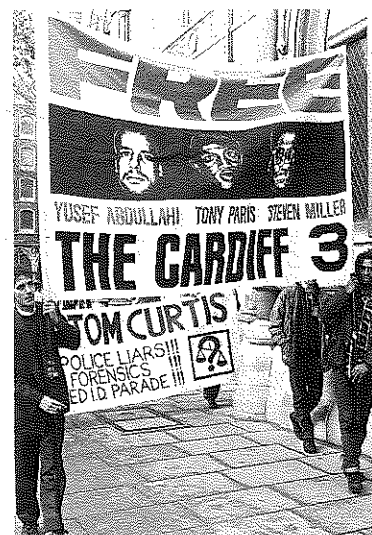
NMP and the media

As the issues of racism and racist violence have begun to dominate both the British and European political agenda, the media has once again turned to NMP for our analysis of current race issues and its hands-on experience of racial harassment and policing.

Opposite, we reprint a selection of the media that have either reported the work of NMP or have used the experience of NMP in researching their programmes.

SOME OF THE PRESS THAT HAVE FEATURED NMP:

Sunday People
Voice
Evening Standard
Weekly Journal
Yellow Advertiser
Newham News
Stratford Express
Labour Briefing
Socialist Worker
Workers Press
Socialist
Newham Recorder
Docklands Recorder
East London Advertiser
Eastern Eye
Observer
Spare Rib
ID magazine
Dekko magazine
Daily Jang
Watan
Independent On Sunday
India Today
New York Times
Stars and Stripes (USA)
Daily Mirror
Sun
Today
Guardian
Independent
Daily Star
Daily Mail
Sunday Mirror
Starsound Radio
GLR Radio
BBC Midlands
BBC Community Radio
BBC World Service
Radio Lancashire
National Radio United States
(250 stations)
Sunrise Radio
Radio Four
Radio One
Capital Radio
LBC Radio
Kiss FM
LWT
BBC Network
South East News
Carlton Television
BBC East
Central Television
CNN Television
BBC One O'Clock News
National Indian Television



Cardiff Three picket

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.

■ BIBLIOGRAPHY

Below we list some suggestions for further reading

■ Publications available from Newham Monitoring Project

Annual Reports (1983,1984, 1985,1986, 1987, 1988, 1989,1990, 1991)

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

Newham: The Forging of a Black community (1991)

History of the struggles of the post-war black community in Newham based on interviews and original research (published jointly with the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism)

The Dividing Line (1986)

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

Racism and Racist Violence in Schools: towards establishing effective anti-racist policies and practice in Newham (1990)

Critique of tokenistic multi-culturalism which proposes a new positive anti-racism that improves education for all children

■ Publications available from the Institute of Race Relations

Race and Class

Quarterly journal of black and third world liberation.

Subscription is £12 (individuals) and £16 (organisations) per year

■ Other publications

Campaign against Racism and Fascism (CARF)

Bi-monthly magazine produced by the CARF collective covering key issues in the anti-racist struggle. Subscription is £7.50 (individuals) and £12 (organisations) per year

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

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

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

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

Chris Mullin, Error of Judgement: The truth about the Birmingham Bombings (Poolbeg Press, 1990)

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

A Sivanandan, Communities of Resistance: Writings on Black Struggles for Socialism (Verso, 1990)

Gunter Wallraff, Lowest for the Low (Methuen, 1988)

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

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

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

Loosen the Shackles: First Report of the Liverpool 8 Inquiry into the Race Relations in Liverpool (Karia Press, 1989)

The Migrant and Refugee manifesto (Refugee Forum and Migrant Action Network, 1989)

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

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

■ Newham Monitoring Project Exhibitions

The History of Racism in the East End (23 panels which illustrates the history of racism in London's East End)
Conspiracy (12 panels which document different campaigns and struggles of black people in Britain)

■ Video/Reading Library

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

financial statement

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 1992

INCOME	1992 £	1991 £
Grant Funding	117,933	108,264
Other Income	4,011	14,917
	<u>121,944</u>	<u>123,181</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries & National Insurance	64,844	63,045
Rent, Rates, Light & Heat	3,440	2,151
Repairs & Maintenance	3,527	6,585
Insurance	1,515	1,620
Telephone	5,014	5,890
Stationery, Postage & office Material	8,278	6,433
Printing, Publicity & Reports	14,018	6,477
Literature & Subscriptions	839	693
Audit & Accountancy	1,592	1,845
Legal & Professional Fees	913	92
Courses, Conference & Training	3,536	583
Motor, Travel & Subsistence Expenses	5,038	5,105
Volunteers Expenses	3,046	1,877
Bank Charges & Other Expenses	168	435
Equipment Purchased	2,895	11,011
Recruitment Advertising	2,520	110
Festival Expenses	-	4,804
10th Anniversary Expenses	-	2,438
Book Expenses	2,252	43
Missing Petty Cash	-	628
	<u>123,435</u>	<u>121,865</u>
Taxation	-	50
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD	<u>(1,491)</u>	<u>1,266</u>
	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors & Prepayment	2,366	10,489
Cash at Bank & in Hand	22,195	21,774
	<u>24,561</u>	<u>32,263</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors & Accrued Expenses	18,089	32,263
Bank Overdraft	-	6,228
	<u>18,089</u>	<u>25,394</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS REPRESENTED BY:		
Accumulated Surplus	3,301	4,792
Defence Fund	3,171	2,077
	<u>6,472</u>	<u>6,869</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 1992

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.

- AFRICAN REFUGEE HOUSING ACTION GROUP (ARHAG) *
- ASIAN LTD
- ASIAN WOMENS RESOURCE CENTRE *
- BEHNO-KI-MILAN
- BETHNAL GREEN CHAMBERS *
- BIRNBERG & CO SOLICITORS *
- BRIGHTON POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS UNION *
- BRIGHTON ANTI-FASCIST ACTION *
- BRIGHTON LAW CENTRE *
- BRISTOL RACE EQUALITY COUNCIL *
- CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM *
- CANNING TOWN & GRANGE WARD LABOUR PARTY
- CANNING TOWN MUSLIM WELFARE ASSOCIATION
- CARIBBEAN AFRICAN LATIN AMERICAN TRAINING CENTRE *
- CASTLE WARD LABOUR PARTY
- CHINESE INFORMATION & ADVICE CENTRE
- CITY OF LONDON ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP *
- COLUMBIAN FATHERS
- COMMUNITY LINKS
- COMMISSION FOR FILIPINO MIGRANT WORKERS *
- CUMBERLAND SCHOOL NUT GROUP
- DEFEND THE DEANE FAMILY CAMPAIGN
- EAST LONDON ACTTS (NEWHAM BRANCH)
- EAST LONDON BLACK WOMEN'S ORGANISATION (ELBWO)
- EAST LONDON TEACHERS ASSOCIATION *
- EAST LONDON TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT
- EASTWARDS TRUST (HOSTELS) LTD
- EDWARD SON & NOICE SOLICITORS
- FELLOWSHIP HOUSE ASIAN WOMENS PROJECT
- FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM! *
- FOREST GATE WARD LABOUR PARTY
- FOREST GATE YOUTH CENTRE
- GENERAL UNION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN *
- GREATFIELD WARD LABOUR PARTY
- GREENWICH ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST RACIST ATTACKS (GACARA) *
- GUJARAT WELFARE ASSOCIATION
- HALLSVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL
- INQUEST *
- INDIAN WORKERS ASSOCIATION GB (EAST LONDON)
- INTERNATIONAL ASIAN WELFARE ASSOCIATION
- ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION
- JEWISH SOCIALIST GROUP *
- LITTLE ILFORD YOUTH CENTRE
- LEEDS TUC *
- LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS STUDENTS UNION *
- MALAYALEE ASSOCIATION OF THE UK
- MANCHESTER MARTYRS COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE *
- MANOR PARK WARD LABOUR PARTY
- MAYFLOWER FAMILY CENTRE
- MIGRANT RIGHTS ACTION NETWORK *
- MUSLIM WELFARE ASSOCIATION
- NACRO HOUSING *
- NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS *
- NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS LONDON AREA *
- NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE PROJECT
- NEWHAM ALCOHOL ADVISORY SERVICE
- NEWHAM ASIAN WOMEN'S PROJECT
- NEWHAM CHINESE ASSOCIATION
- NEWHAM CITIZEN ADVICE BUREAU
- NEWHAM CND
- NEWHAM COMMUNITY ADVICE UNIT
- NEWHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS UNION
- NEWHAM COMMUNITY HOUSING LTD
- NEWHAM CONSORTIUM FOR YOUTH
- NEWHAM DRUGS PROJECT
- NEWHAM GATEKEEPERS
- NEWHAM IMMIGRATION ACTION COMMITTEE
- NEWHAM INDEPENDENT LABOUR PUBLICATIONS
- NEWHAM NALGO BLACK WORKERS GROUP
- NEWHAM NALGO
- NEWHAM NORTH EAST LABOUR PARTY
- NEWHAM NORTH WEST LABOUR PARTY
- NEWHAM REFUGEE FORUM
- NEWHAM RENEWAL PROGRAMME
- NEWHAM RIGHTS CENTRE
- NEWHAM TAMIL COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION
- NEWHAM TENANTS AND RESIDENTS FEDERATION
- NEWHAM WOMEN'S EQUALITY UNIT
- NOTTS ANTI-FASCIST ACTION *
- OCEAN YOUTH *
- ONE LOVE (BEDS)
- NORTH EAST AREA YOUTH OFFICE
- PLASHET WARD LABOUR PARTY
- PLASHET SCHOOL NUT GROUP
- POPLAR COLLEGE STUDENTS UNION *
- RACIAL HARASSMENT PROJECT *
- REFUGEES AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON ASYLUM RIGHTS *
- SAHITHARAN MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
- SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION *
- SHERICO CARE HOMES
- TAMIL WELFARE ASSOCIATION OF NEWHAM
- TOWER HAMLETS TRADES COUNCIL *
- THEATRE ROYAL STRATFORD
- TOM ALLEN COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE
- TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT *
- THIRD WORLD FIRST *
- TYNE & WEAR ANTI-FASCIST ASSOCIATION
- UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON STUDENTS UNION
- UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK STUDENTS UNION *
- UPTON WARD LABOUR PARTY
- WORKERS POWER *
- VICTIM SUPPORT NETWORK CO-ORDINATORS *
- WALTHAM FOREST TRADE UNION RESOURCE CENTRE *

* Other organisations which support and agree with the constitutional aims and objectives of NMP although not based in Newham.