

# **"JUSTICE for the PRYCES" Support Committee**

Dear Friends,

On the 29th November 1984, Eustace Pryce (16) was murdered by racists in Newham. He had gone with his brother and other Black youths to confront the racists who had earlier abused some Asian friends, but he was not directly involved in any fight. He was stabbed in the back of the neck and died almost immediately.

Three plain clothes officers who saw the incident from a passing bus arrested Gerald Pryce (19), who was naturally upset at seeing his brother get injured. The officers took Gerald to Plaistow Police Station, where he was held for several hours before being released. He was not allowed to go to hospital with his brother, and only found out when released that Eustace was dead.

Two weeks later Gerald was re-arrested and charged with making an affray. Four other Black youths were charged also. Gerald was held in custody until 7th January, two days before his brother's funeral.

The murderer, however, who had only been arrested because of community pressure, was given bail almost immediately so that he could be at home for Christmas.

A murderer was allowed to walk free, while Gerald Pryce could not even share his grief with his family. Even when released he had impossible bail conditions placed on him, which meant that he could not come into Newham, to see his family, friends or pregnant girlfriend at a time when he most needed them.

The bail conditions were partially relaxed on July 31st 1985, so Gerald can now stay in Newham with his family.

Gerald's case begins at the Old Bailey on the 8th October 1985, and a major campaign is now needed in order to ensure that the charges against Gerald and the four other Black youths are dropped. We also need to ensure that the police do not get away with a half-hearted prosecution of the murderer which will not do justice to the pain and suffering of the Pryce family. The police and courts will be quite willing to let a white racist thug get away with the murder of a Black boy if we do not pressurise them to take this case seriously. Already, the flippancy of the police has been seen when one officer told Mrs Pryce that the murderer did not mean to kill her son, as if that was to make everything alright.

***Remember Eustace. Defend Gerald***

It is important that the Black community, labour and trade union movements note the implications of affray charges by the police, and how police, in cases such as this, use them in order to criminalise the Black victims of attack and to stem the fight back of our community.

On behalf of the Justice for the Pryces' Support Committee and the Pryce family, I would urge you to:

- (1) Invite a speaker from the Support Committee to your political organisation/trade union branch/ward meeting/tenants association or any group you may be a member of, and pass a resolution of support.
- (2) Affiliate to the Campaign (£3 organisations, £1 individuals). The campaign also needs funds and financial assistance, and this will be greatly appreciated.
- (3) Publicise the case amongst your friends, at work, and in any organisation you are a member of and wherever you can.
- (4) Write letters of protest about the way Gerald and his family have been treated by the police and demanding that the charges against the 5 Black youths be dropped, and that the murderer is prosecuted to the fullest. Send letters to:
  - a) Officer in Charge, Plaistow Police Station, 444 Barking Rd., E13
  - b) Home Secretary, Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1 9AT

(Please send a copy to the support committee at the above address.

- (5) Contact your local MP about the case with a view to highlighting the outrageous treatment of the Pryce family by the police and the way in which charges like affray are continually used against Black people for defending themselves against racist attacks, and urging him/her to make representations to the Home Secretary about dropping the charges against Gerald and the other four Black youth.
- (6) Mobilise and build support for the rally on Wednesday 11th September at East Ham Town Hall, High Street South, East Ham, E6 2RP. It is important that we have the widest possible turnout at this event in order to show solidarity with the Pryce family.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require further information about the case and future activities of the campaign.

Yours in solidarity

*C. Burgher*

Carole Burgher

Secretary, Justice for the Pryces' Support Committee