

# **NEWHAM 8**

## **defence campaign**

c/o P.O.Box 273, LONDON E7 9JN. Tele. 555 3331(day), 5341640(evenings)

September 1983

Bulletin 2

# **DEMONSTRATE**

## **—against racist attacks!—**

Over the last few months Black communities throughout the country have come under a barrage of attack from racist thugs. These attacks are increasing in number and at the same time are extremely savage.

Only two weeks ago Deepak Amin, a first year medical student, was horrifically and brutally attacked in East London when he went to visit a friend. He was slashed from head to foot, receiving forty slashes on his face alone. His back was broken and as a result he is partially paralysed. On top of this the racist thugs carved NF on his arms. The response of the police has been in its true form. To date they claim not to be sure if the attack was a racist attack. The thugs carved NF on his arms - what more 'evidence' do they need! To add insult to injury, the police asked a local paper not to mention that NF was carved on the arm of the victim as "it might put off white witnesses with racist sympathies from coming forward".

In Birmingham a group of Asian youths were attacked by racist thugs. A few of them were so badly beaten up that they had to be hospitalised for many days. In addition an Asian house was firebombed. The police have yet to respond constructively.

In Dewsbury racist attacks have been on the increase. When Black people demonstrated to protest against this increase in attacks onto their communities, the response of the police has been to criminalise their actions by arresting black people.

Recently, in Southall, Raj Thakker was

knifed.

It is time that this comes to a stop. 'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH'. Our communities have had too much to put with. It is time we stood firm, IT IS TIME TO FIGHT BACK. From their experiences, black people have been left with no other choice except to defend themselves, as did the Newham 8 when their community was under attack from white racist thugs. However, when black people defend themselves against these attacks, the police criminalise their actions and arrest them, while their racist white attackers are allowed to get off scot free. This is exactly so in the case of the Newham 8 who were arrested on September 24th.

The charges against the Newham 8 are a challenge to our right to defend ourselves against racist violence. The police are continuously harassing and intimidating the black community. This increasing intimidation by the police, which is backed up by the courts, is to criminalise any resistance against this oppression.

We must unite, organise and fight back and state clearly that we will not put up with any form of intimidation or oppression. We must support any forms of resistance and defence of our people. It is for this very reason that we have to support the Newham 8. They stood in defence of their community, we in turn must stand by them.

# **SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE**

# ALL OUT — OCTOBER 24th

The trials of the Newham 8 start on Monday 24th October at Snaresbrook Crown Court. Over the last few months the campaign has been concentrating its activities both locally and nationally as a build up to the trials.

The build up to the trials of the Newham 8 highlights the ability of the community to organise itself. Because the arrests primarily came about from racist attacks in and around schools, school students and teachers have been extremely supportive of the campaign. Students have been consistently publicising the campaign and the national march against racism and racist attacks within their schools and youth clubs.

Black workers at the Ford factory in Dagenham and the Sunblest bakery have spontaneously raised the issue amongst their fellow workers. In addition they have also raised valuable funds towards the campaign and are now mobilising towards the National March.

Over the last few weeks street meetings have become a daily phenomenon. Various members of the community are distributing leaflets at underground stations. Grocery shopkeepers are giving out leaflets at the cash tills. Leaflets and posters have gone up on various shop windows. The issue is being raised at Gurdawara, mosques, temples and other places of worship. People are discussing the issue in cafes. The whole community is involved in the build up to the trials of the Newham 8. The campaign has provided a platform for the community to voice out their protest at the constant attacks on their commun-

ities and their disgust at the response of the police and authorities.

Together with this massive support and mobilisation for the campaign, there has also been right wing pressure building up. The local media has throughout the weeks played up the proposed march to be something Black people are over-reacting to. Common captions include 'Race fury March' and others. The police, too, have come out with their normal divertory tactics of trying to get the date or route of the march changed. Failing this they have tried to intimidate the organisers to get the march banned altogether by stating that West Ham Football Club plays at home on the day proposed for the march. In other words what the police are saying is that Black people should stay at home when white racists are on the streets. There is no way we are going to put up with this intimidation.

The local Chamber of Commerce too has voiced its opposition to the march stating that 'traders will lose their trade'. Well, our reply to the cronies in the Chamber of Commerce is that the campaign has the support of the majority of Asian shops. In addition the survival and wellbeing of our people is much more important than the profits they make.

The response of the community to the campaign has been extremely good. It has appropriately taken up the challenge of the State. The community fully realises that it is not only the Newham 8 who are on trial, it is themselves who are on trial.

—————→ OCT 24th, 10am. ←—————  
**PICKET SNARESBROOK CROWN COURT**

## ***Message from the NEWHAM 8 defendants\_\_\_\_\_***

This is a message from the Newham 8 defendants to all their supporters.

"We the Newham 8 appeal to all our supporters to organise and mobilise support for the defence campaign. Our trials come up on the 24th of October at Snaresbrook Crown Court. We have been put on trial for doing no wrong at all, we are not criminals. Our only actions have been to defend ourselves and our communities from racist attacks. For these actions we have been made criminals. For too long our people have been intimidated by racist attack and also by the police. It is time we stood up and along with us others will stand up and fight back."

## **RACIST ATTACKS IN DEWSBURY**

The Asian community in Dewsbury, Yorkshire, is facing increasing racist attacks and police harassment.

On Sunday 27th July, in two separate incidents, a gang of whites armed with iron bars and sticks, assaulted Asians. One of the Asian youth had his skull fractured. On both occasions the police took no adequate action.

However, at 4 a.m. the following morning police raided an Asian home, arresting three brothers on charges of actual bodily harm, damage to police property and causing an affray. Later that day, a protest march, called to demand the release of the brothers, was stopped on its way to the police station and police dogs released in the crowd. Two children were bitten.

The following weekend, on Saturday, 30th July, the local community organised a march through the town. The march was attacked in two places by racist white youth, who rushed at the marchers chanting fascist slogans.

Following the march, five more Asian youths have been arrested and the police have stepped up action to further intimidate the black community in Dewsbury.

Since then the Dewsbury Defence Campaign has been set up demanding an end to police harassment and for all charges against the Asian youths arrested to be dropped.

## **NATIONAL CAMPAIGN against THE POLICE BILL**

Cases like the Newham 8 and Colin Roach are nothing new for our community. Since we were brought to this country to meet the needs of a labour starved economy we have suffered from racism and racist attacks, both by fascist thugs as well as the police and at the hands of immigration officers.

All the illegal police practices that have been directed against our community e.g. police stop and search, strip searches, which have been going on for years are now going to be legitimised in the forthcoming Police and Criminal Evidence Bill. The NCAPB has already started to fight against the provision of this Bill and support groups are being set up all around the country. NCAPB supports the Newham 8 campaign.

## **COLIN ROACH**

There cannot be many people who are not aware that on the 12th January this year, Colin Roach met his death in the foyer of Stoke Newington Police Station. He is not the first black person to die in this particular police station. The black community were not happy about the police's attitude to the family and indeed the whole affair, nor was the black community prepared to accept as truth the lies put up. We demanded that there be an independent public inquiry. Since then nothing has occurred to make us feel that the police have given a true account of the events as they know them to have been. In fact the violent reaction to our demonstration and their continued efforts to hinder us has convinced us of what we already believed that there is a cover up of some sort. The police are of course well backed up by the popular press, the courts and the State. Still our resolve has not diminished in the slightest. We are at present getting together a delegation to meet the Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, where we will present him with documented facts to back up our demands. Also we are in the process of petitioning the European Parliament. This, however, is a long and drawn out affair. In the light of the Home Secretary's decision not to allow a public inquiry we are seeking legal advice about the possibility of bringing an action of Mandamus against the Home Secretary to force him to correctly use his discretion and reach a reasonable decision based on a reasonable assessment of the facts. Another thing we may be able to do is take action against the police regarding the criminal way they have reacted to the campaign. These are the present activities of the campaign and it can be clearly seen that the direction and the issue of the campaign remains the same despite efforts to confuse them. We still demand a full and open independent public inquiry into the death and circumstances surrounding the death of Colin Roach.

## **PICKET 24<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER**

The trial begins, we want people to pack out the court at Snaresbrook for the length of the trial.



# News from Support Groups

## SHEFFIELD

Two successful public meetings were held in Sheffield and support for the Campaign has been very good. A benefit held on behalf of the Campaign by the Asian Youth Movement attracted 350 people and also raised valuable funds. Local groups from Sheffield and neighbouring towns have affiliated to the support group and have been publicising the campaign and mobilising support for the national march and the trials through street meetings and local group meetings. (Badshah)

## BIRMINGHAM

The Campaign has been publicised widely through local progressive groups and a public meeting was held in the beginning of September. The support group is currently mobilising support for the national march on the 24th September. A benefit is to be arranged in the near future. (Kalpana)

## N.E.LANCASHIRE

A number of public meetings have been held in various towns in Lancashire. These include Blackburn, Burnley, Preston and Manchester. The Asian Youth Movement (Nelson), N.E.Lancashire Campaign against Racism and Fascism, and LPYS, have been actively working with various local groups in the areas in publicising the Campaign and building support leading to the trials on 24th October. (Lekha)

## LEICESTER

A successful public meeting was held which attracted large numbers of local black youths. Support from various black groups has been increasing and mobilisation for the march and trials is in full swing. (Alex)

## NOTTINGHAM

The Campaign has been widely publicised throughout the local groups. A public meeting was held and support from various local groups has been encouraging. (Neil)

## NORTH LONDON

Street meetings are being held every other day in building support for the Campaign. The North London support group has also held public meetings, benefits to publicise the case of the Newham 8. Troops Out Movements have been particularly active in

North London. An extremely successful joint benefit was organised for the Newham 8, Broadwater Farm and May 13th Defence Campaign underlining the political importance of uniting all struggles. (Chetan, Dee)

## SOUTH EAST LONDON

Supporters of the Newham 8 support group have been extremely supportive in publicising the case, holding public meetings and mobilising support for the National demonstration and trials on the 24th.

## Conference on Racism, the Police and Education.

DATE : SATURDAY 1st OCTOBER

TIME : 1.00pm to 6.00pm

VENUE: PLASHET SCHOOL, PLASHET GROVE  
EAST HAM, LONDON E6.

SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP TEAMS :

A.SIVANANDAN PAUL GILROY C.PRESCOD  
CECIL GUTZMORE JOHN FERNANDES

## List of Supporters

Tony Banks MP, Ron Leighton MP, Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!, Hammer-smith College Students Union, Hammer-smith College Labour Club, Stepney & Poplar LPYS, Socialist League/Socialist Organiser, Brent East LPYS, Peckham LPYS, Walthamstow Labour Party, Chelsea Labour Party, Hounslow LPYS, Newham NE Labour Party, Newham NW Labour Party, Revolution, Leyton Labour Party, Militant, Plashet Ward (Newham) Labour Party, Voluntary Action (Lewisham), Socialist Teachers Alliance, City of London Poly Labour Club, Revolutionary Communist League, Norwood LPYS, Walsall NALGO, Twickenham LPYS, W.London Irish Solidarity Campaign, Durham Univ.Students Union, Lanchester Poly Students Union, Islington Unwaged Centre, Caribbean Labour Solidarity, York LPYS, Islington NALGO, Campaign Against Racist Laws, National Campaign Against the Police Bill, Leeds NALGO, Ken Livingstone-GLC Councillor, Paul Boateng-GLC Councillor, Newham Monitoring Project, Sheffield AYM, Bradford AYM, Manchester AYM, Nelson AYM.