

BRADFORD 12 TRIAL DRAWS TO AN END

SWP - 12 JUNE
1978

THE BRADFORD 12 trial is drawing to an end. Increasingly the issue is being seen as whether those who are victims of racist attacks be allowed to defend themselves. JOANNA ROLLO reports from Leeds.

ON 11 JULY last year Jennifer Gordon was working in the 4th Idea bookshop in Bradford. She was telephoned by a friend who'd heard coachloads of skinheads were coming to Bradford.

Jennifer passed the information on to Tarlochan Gata Aura who decided to make the 'petrol devices' (that such devices can't be scientifically described as bombs has been one line in the defence).

She also phoned the police.

Detective Superintendent Holland's investigation team either didn't know this or ignored it.

Holland said he 'knew what sort of answer to expect' if he questioned the bookshop because of 'constant trouble between right and left there'. By this he meant a four year saga of racist attacks on the bookshop and its staff.

Patrols

Other witnesses confirmed that attacks were rumoured.

Tim Whitefield, senior community relations officer from Bradford and Keighley, heard rumours in the middle of the week. Skinheads who'd attacked pubs and cafes in Leeds Road that Monday had threatened to come back in force at the weekend.

He telephoned Bradford police's community affairs officer—Inspector Richards.

For the same reason, said Marsha Singh of the Asian Youth Movement, the AYM had organised street patrols that weekend.

Two Bradford bus drivers gave more evidence of police handling of racist attacks.

Gurdiff Singh was

attacked last May by three white men. His injuries kept him off work for six weeks.

He has heard nothing from the police since.

Singh Saudi, who has worked on the buses since 1958 was attacked and punched in the face by a lorry driver. The police arrived, were very reluctant to ask the lorry driver for his name and address, told Singh they could do nothing and he'd have to take it to court himself if he wanted to pursue the matter. He too spent several days off sick.

Beaten

In their statements from the dock the defendants told of their personal experience of racism. Most have suffered attacks.

Sabir Hussien, 20, a textile worker now unemployed said: 'I have worked in factories with National Front supporters and I know what they look like. If a skinhead attack was coming we had to defend ourselves.'

Giovanni Singh's brother Alfonso was attacked and beaten up by four skinheads a couple of weeks prior to 11 July.

Seal

'When the Khan family was burnt to death in Walthamstow,' said Saeed Hussein, 'my mother was so frightened she made my brother seal up the letter box.'

Prosecuting counsel Kennedy summed up his case at the end of the trial's sixth week. 'There is no escaping the conclusion that the petrol bombs were not made for self defence' he told the jury. 'They were made to be used in a civil disturbance.'