

STOKE NEWINGTON AND HACKNEY DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

The Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign (formerly the RFSC - Defence Campaign) has been formed by defendants and supporters, to campaign for the dropping of all charges against those arrested during the Colin Roach campaign, and to back the demand for an independent public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach at Stoke Newington Police Station on 12th January, 1983.

The police and media have mounted a campaign of lies and distortion to cover up the truth of Colin's death, the police have tried to silence protests. On the third demonstration on 12 March, Mr James Roach, Colin's father, was arrested and beaten by the police, and 85 other people have also been arrested. We stand for the defence of black people, especially the youth and the democratic right to protest against the racist police. We call on all democrats and anti-racists to rally around and support the 86 defendants.

FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY! DROP THE CHARGES NOW!

POLITICAL BAIL CONDITIONS

Cirus Noor has had the bail condition imposed on him that he does not go within 2 miles of Stoke Newington Police station. The magistrate put the condition in this way after Cirus stated that he would not accept the openly political infringement of his rights that he not take part in future protests and demonstrations. On Saturday 26 March the police came onto a bus that was travelling through Dalston and arrested Cirus for breach of bail conditions.

Whilst Cirus was in the cells the Defence Campaign contacted Ernie Roberts MP, Jo Richardson MP, Stuart Holland MP and Peter Kahn, deputy leader of Hackney Council, who all phoned the police station. This almost certainly saved Cirus from a beating.

The next Monday the Defence Campaign mounted a militant and noisy picket of 20 people at Old Street Magistrates Court. Fearing the sight of organised protest, the police threatened arrests and forced the picket across the road. Supporters entered the courtroom as Cirus' case was due to begin. Within minutes we heard the screams of women outside the courtroom. The clerk locked the courtroom door. Mark Hunte, a witness to Cirus Noor's case, asked to leave the courtroom. He was arrested, punched in the stomach and dragged out of the court. In all, 7 people, all black, were arrested. They appear at Old Street Magistrates at 10am on 18th April.

Police terror tactics did not stop the voice of protest being heard, and the magistrate agreed to release Cirus Noor. A victory! But Cirus is still on the same political condition for his bail.

The police actions at Old Street threaten the right to register any community protest at the courts, but as Hackney Councillor, Denise Robson, one of the three councillors at court that day, states:

'By banning the group of demonstrators outside the court the police were demonstrating unnecessary aggression towards us. It is custom and practice to allow groups of demonstrators outside the courts. To stop it now is another bid to crush our campaign. I intend to go on further pickets of the courts. I think this is very serious indeed.'

Needless to say the Defence Campaign, led by the black youth, has not been deterred by the police and has picketed at every trial since Monday 28 March.

COURT BATTLE COMMENCES

The first defendants have been through the treadmill of British 'justice' called Highbury Magistrates. They are fighting for their rights and for the rights of the whole community. Not one defendant has pleaded guilty to the political frame up charges.

The case against Patrick Stewart was dismissed - the arresting policeman didn't even show up in court! Wellsworth Thomas was acquitted of threatening behaviour because of what the magistrate described as 'contradictions' in police evidence. But Wellsworth has effectively been fined - £25 towards costs.

In Richard Swaby's trial the magistrate explained police lies as 'certain points of evidence that raised doubts' and dismissed the case. Yet Carl Swaby, who complained at Richard's arrest, was found guilty of obstruction and assault for which he got a £35 fine and a conditional discharge. Is it a crime to protest at your brother's arrest?

Donald Thomas got a conditional discharge for threatening words and behaviour. Maurice Moses was found not guilty of threatening behaviour, but guilty of Actual Bodily Harm with a £25 fine, i.e. he was innocent of the original offence but guilty, in the eyes of the court, for being man-handled by the police! Again the magistrate imposed a punitive £50 costs against Maurice.

The court has been picketed every day. The Defence Campaign invited an observer from the National Council for Civil Liberties to witness how we conduct the pickets, and we thank them for their attendance.

We have won victories in the first week of frame up trials, but we must expect the prosecution to tighten up on their cases in the forthcoming trials. Defendants will have to make sure that all their available witnesses are at the court. A well conducted legal defence will improve each individual's chances, but the surest guarantee is the mobilisation of the community to back every individual before the courts. We have already seen that there is no justice except what we fight for.

APPEAL FOR FUNDS

The first six trials have resulted in the fines of £135. With nearly 100 trials to go there is a massive amount of money needed. The courts are fining us because we have stood up for justice and truth. We appeal most urgently for you to send donations to:

SN&HDC, c/o Oxford House, Derbyshire Street,
London, E2

COURT DATES & PICKETS

10am	7th April	- Highbury
10am	8th April	- Highbury
10am	8th April	- Thames Magistrates Aylward Street Stepney E1
10am, 2pm	12th April	- Highbury
10am	13th April	- Highbury
10am, 2pm	14th April	- Highbury
10am	18th April	- Old Street
10am	19th April	- Highbury
10am	20th April	- Highbury

If you can support the Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign, please fill in this form and return it to: Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign, c/o Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London, E2.

NAME.....TELEPHONE NO.....

ADDRESS.....

ORGANISATION.....