

S.B. No. 1 (Plain)

METROPOLITAN POLICE

Special Report

SPECIAL BRANCH

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12th day of January 19 81

20/1/81

SUBJECT

Reference to Papers

Meeting and Rally by the East London Workers Against Racism (ELWAR) on 11.1.81

400/80/42

1. On Sunday 11th January 1981 between 10.30am and 12.15pm, the East London Workers Against Racism (ELWAR), as anticipated, held its first open air meeting at Brick Lane junction with Bethnal Green Road E2. Attracting some 50 members and supporters, the group, a 'front' organisation for the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT), had as its rallying theme 'Clear the fascists out of Brick Lane'.

2. Supporters began arriving in the area from 9am, collecting in small unidentifiable groups. Some sold copies of 'The Next Step' (organ of the RCT), while others roamed in the nearby market or remained at the Brick Lane junction.

3. At 10.15am approximately 20 National Front (NF) supporters, some selling assorted right wing literature, arrived on the scene and immediately 'occupied' three corners of this well known junction. This had the effect of stirring into action the ELWAR supporters, on the fourth corner, who until this time had no cause or objective to oppose. Gathering its forces, ELWAR, as a single and for the first time identifiable body, rallied its forces behind a large black banner, at the appointed venue near the junction.

4. At 10.30am, Fran EDEN, a leading member and the first of five speakers, started the meeting. She delivered a lengthy speech in her usual fanatical style. After vehemently accusing the NF of fascist attacks on black workers, she went on to castigate the Labour Party (Ian MIKADO in particular), which, posing as the 'workers Party' in the East end, failed to educate black workers and condoned fascists in the area. The Police were also subjected to much criticism, accused as being protectors of fascists, and of failing to apprehend fascist aggressors. The Royal Commission on Crime and the forthcoming Labour Party Conference were also selected for criticism. The remaining four speakers, including Judith HARRISON, who spoke three times, gave their addresses in the same fashion and along the same vein as EDEN. All were jeered by the NF supporters.

5. One of the speakers, after detailing support for the Irish hunger strikers, announced that ELWAR would be sending a contingent to Cardiff in two weeks time (no date given) to take part in the 'Bloody Sunday' march. He also stated that a meeting, in support of the Irish working class, would be held on Wednesday 14th January at Lambeth Town Hall.

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6. The NF terminated paper sales at 12 noon, opening time for local public houses. This resulted in the ELWAR rally being brought to a close and the participants then dispersed peacefully on a request from uniformed Police, who had more than adequately dealt with the event.

7. No future visits to Brick Lane were announced; however, it is felt ELWAR leadership will return to continue their anti-fascist crusade. It is also thought that the NF, having received this renewed attention, will escalate its paper sales' in the area.

8. Although effective in attracting attention, mainly because of the noise created, the meeting gained little support or sympathy from local inhabitants or market visitors. Only the NF, little opposed since the Anti Nazi League stopped campaigning in the area in 1979, appeared to enjoy their opponents' presence, never having received so much attention since the ANL days.

9. Appendix 'A' to this report contains the results of searches in Special Branch records on individuals and other subjects mentioned in this report.

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Sergeant

Submitted:

Detective Chief Inspector

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[REDACTED] DETECTIVE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT