

S.W. No. 1 (Plain)

METROPOLITAN POLICE

Special Report

SPECIAL BRANCH

11th day of November 1981

SUBJECT

Reference to Papers

War Against Racism

400/81/168

1. This report summarizes the contents of a document entitled 'Evidence to the Greater London Council Police Committee - October 1981 - Racist Violence and Police Harassment, published by Workers Against Racism (WAR). A satellite of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), WAR focuses on the single issue of racism and comprises five regional groups - East London (ELWAR), South London (SOLWAR), Coventry (COVWAR), Manchester (MANWAR) and Wycocba (WWAR) - which operate in areas with high immigrant communities.

2. The document, which is in five parts, is highly critical of traditional policing methods, which are branded as racist, and of the GLC Police Committee as a result of its recommendation for community policing and greater control of the Metropolitan Police by the GLC (following the July riots in Brixton). WAR in contrast to these recommendations for more democratic policing, demands support from the GLC for those organising against the Police and against racial violence. Its demands are:-

- i) No facilities on GLC estates for 'community policing'.
- ii) Financial support and facilities from the GLC for WAR groups and defence committees.
- iii) £5000 towards the legal costs of families prosecuting the Police.
- iv) Withdrawal of support from all local police/community relations liaison schemes.
- v) Full support for black youths on trial as a result of the April and July revolts.

3. The report continues by citing several cases of families in the Brixton area which have 'suffered brutal treatment at the hands of the police'. Other cases quoted relate to 'racist' attacks where police have taken no action or obtained no result. It is claimed that these families have since, with the help of SOLWAR, decided to bring prosecutions against police for injuries and damage inflicted. Several cases in East London are quoted as being similarly dealt with by ELWAR and the inference throughout the report is that the WAR groups are the vanguard in protecting their own communities against racist and fascist attacks, a job with which the police cannot and will not deal.

4. As a result of its experiences WAF suggests 'If the GLC Police Committee is serious about stopping racial violence, it should throw its full weight behind us. Not only because we're effective and the police aren't - but also because isolating the racists and fascists is a job for the working class to deal with not the police'.

5. The document would appear to be a desperate attempt for recognition and attention from the 'left-wing' GLC. It epitomises the extremist, elitist and alarmist attitudes which have in the past alienated the RCP and its satellites, not only from the broad and ultra left political area but also, from the very communities in which they operate.

6. Within the London area ELWAR and SOLWAR are extremely active organisations for their size, to the extent that they create an impression of having far greater support than they actually command. Their failure, thus far, to gain more active support from other ultra-left and immigrant groups has disappointed the RCP leadership, which seeks constantly to find a cause celebre to give impetus to its political ends. For this purpose ELWAR and SOLWAR play on the fears of their respective ethnic minorities with a view to undermining authority and damaging police relations with the coloured population.

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