

S.B. No. 1 (Plain)

METROPOLITAN POLICE

SPECIAL BRANCH

Special Report

2nd day of March 1982

SUBJECT

1. The following information has been received from a secret and reliable source:-

2. "On Friday, 26th February, 1982, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1, between 7.30pm and 9.15pm the London area of Workers Against Racism held a public meeting under the title of its latest campaign 'Cleanse our Ranks', which alludes to racist attitudes in the Trade Union movement. Approximately 55 persons attended.

3. Chairperson for the meeting was Frank RICHARDS. The main speaker was Judith HARRISSON who spoke for about one hour primarily on activities designed to oppose nationality checks being carried out in dole queues and at hospitals. HARRISSON drew attention to the ruling that persons residing in Britain for less than one year would no longer be entitled to free medical treatment. It was basically, HARRISSON stated, an attempt by the government to test how far militancy in the public service unions had been defeated, in order to push through even more extreme measures against both immigrants and the unions themselves. So far an anti-racist work was concerned, HARRISSON pointed out that the newspaper 'London Labour Briefing' had carried a major article on the work of East London Workers Against Racism (ELWAR) and exhorted its readers to join in WAR activities.

h. Dealing with the Scarman report and the awaited figures showing increased crime in immigrant areas, HARRISSON stated that even if the increases were true it merely demonstrated the extent to which the black population was bearing the brunt of the economic recession. There would undoubtedly be further riots this year and it was important that everyone made proper preparations, in order to take full advantage of the situation. Last year, she added, everyone was ill-prepared and surprised by events (at this point a black member of the audience shouted out 'you bet your life there will be'). HARRISSON's only indication of such preparations was confined to the setting up and organising of efficient defence committees.

Reference to Papers

Workers Against Racism (ELWAR)

L00/81/138

BOX 550

TO [redacted]
- 8 MAR 1982
P.A. IN [redacted]

M.P. 78



5. Following HARRISSON's speech Keith THOMPSON made an appeal for money to buy fire extinguishers/alarms systems for families currently being defended in Plaistow and West Ham and mentioned the recent case of an Asian man who had been set on fire by racists in West Ham. The collection raised just over £100.

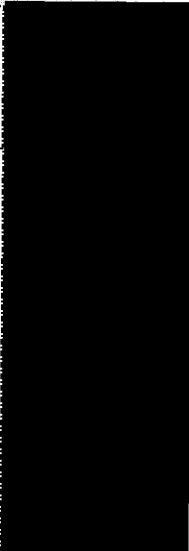
6. The debate which followed added little to HARRISSON's speech although it became clear that there were a number of people present employed at Unemployment offices who were taking part in the pilot scheme for the nationality and residence checks. One girl from the Battersea office outlined the action her office was taking but stated that they were receiving insufficient support from groups such as Workers Against Racism. [Privacy] emphasised the importance of preparing for the anticipated confrontation with the authorities this year. She stated that should the authorities win, greater repression could be anticipated in future.

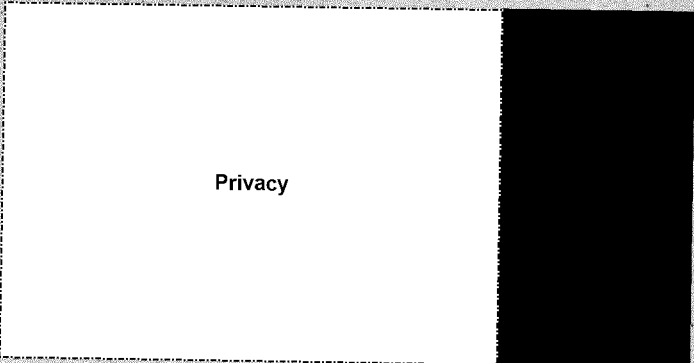
7. The one remaining event of interest was a confrontation between [Privacy] and a black member of the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) at the close of the meeting. The RCG comrade stated that groups such as the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) made him laugh because they would not take up arms against the state. This resulted in [Privacy] calling him an 'Uncle Tom' and both parties being discreetly separated by other members of their groups.

8. The following persons were identified as being present at the meeting:-

Frank RICHARDS	RF 402	[Privacy]
Judith HARRISSON	RF 402	
Keith THOMPSON	RF 402	

[Privacy]





9. Reference to organisations mentioned in this report:-

Revolutionary Communist Group 1,00/81/118

Revolutionary Communist Party 1,00/82/18

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Nigel Short

CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT