

NATIONAL FRONT MEETING23RD APRIL, 1979SOUTHALL TOWN HALLPART 1PRELIMINARIES - CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT DEE AND CHIEF INSPECTOR [REDACTED]

1. Resultant upon the letting of the Southall Town Hall by the London Borough of Ealing to the National Front for a public meeting on the 23rd April, 1979, at 7.30 p.m., a great deal of concern was expressed within the Community by the various factions and organisations representative of it, and by members of the race relations industry active within it.
  
2. After a considerable amount of dedicated work over the past two years by our Community Liaison Officer, Chief Inspector [REDACTED], a ready communication exists between not only the leaders of the various associations, temples, clubs and churches, but also amongst the many shop keepers and citizens of the town in general. It was therefore we felt, apposite, to call together as many of the influential members of the Community as possible prior to the Meeting of 23rd April, 1979, and Chief Inspector [REDACTED] Detective Inspector [REDACTED] of Special Branch and I, met those mentioned in the schedule at Appendix 'A', in the Classroom at Southall Police Station on Tuesday 17th April, 1979, to discuss the situation.

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3. The intention to hold a peaceful March on ~~23rd~~ April was discussed and every point was made relevant to the need to discipline and control the persons involved - particularly the young ones. In the event this was achieved despite the intrusion of outside agencies, particularly the left wing influence.
  
4. I described to the assembled company the concern that we, as police officers, felt about the reaction of the Community towards the letting of the Southall Town Hall and itemised in particular the following :-
  - (a) The violence that would be engendered by mass protest.
  
  - (b) The need for police to be very active indeed on such an occasion, thereby straining the very many personal relationships which exist in the Community between all ranks of the service and all members of the Southall Community.
  
  - (c) That the intrusion during an election period of people with very extremist views would feed upon the receptive Indian youth, and thus cause added aggravation to the already existing difficult relationships between the elders and youngsters of the Community (perhaps a reflection not only of an immigrant community, but that existing today in present society of all communities).

4. (Continued)

(d) That at the end of any large scale police operation and indeed at the end of any large demonstration of political influence, when the dust has settled, and those involved have moved away, those remaining require to continue to live and work together, and that any confrontation situation between the Southall citizens of whatever persuasion, and whatever walk of life be they policemen or shopkeeper, youth or elder, black or white, could only be detrimental eventually to relationships.

(e) That there was no way whatsoever, in which police could intervene in the letting of the Town Hall based upon the law as it is, especially in election year when the Local Authority are involved in the letting of the Town Hall for the purposes of a public meeting to advertise political candidates and views.

5. Chief Inspector 5 and Detective Inspector 6 and I pleaded most strongly, that all members should go back to their community, and endeavour to persuade them all to shut up shop, and spend the time in their houses and resume work the following day, leaving the National Front to hold their meeting and retire from the town without notice, and certainly without disturbance.

6. There was a great deal of heat engendered by the groups and it was quite clear that they considered, for whatever reasons, that a protest was necessary and would be held. This would take the form of a peaceful march and a peaceful sit-down outside the Town Hall. I warned them of the consequences, what might happen if matters escalated, and drew their attention to the relevant points I have outlined in 4 (a) - (e) above.

PART 11

THE MORNING OF THE MEETING

7. Arrangements had been made to police the town generally by way of mobile reserves from 12 noon until 3.00 p.m., when the majority of the serials would be employed to hold the plan designed. In the event, as a result of information received from Special Branch that the Southall Youth movement intended to protest themselves at 1 o'clock, from their Headquarters at 46, High Street, two serials namely 39 and 40 were brought on as a measure to ensure that the Town Hall was held against possible intrusion, to supplement the mobile reserves.

[7]

8. Chief Inspector [REDACTED], who was in charge of the reserves and is attached to Southall, will adequately describe the build-up of events. Suffice to say that I, with the serials concerned, took up a position at the Town Hall and throughout the ensuing disturbances, were intent to hold the Town Hall against such intrusion. In the event, neither

8. (Continued)

I nor my serials became involved in the disturbances described, but I deemed it necessary to take this action to ensure that should, at this early stage, our defences be broken, the Town Hall itself would be held against the highly charged and intoxicated youth.

PART 111

AT THE TOWN HALL

9. I was engaged outside the Town Hall, with Superintendent 8, my Deputy, inside.
10. The arrival of the National Front at 7.30 was peaceful, and effected from the direction of Lady Margaret Road. The choice of the twenty persons 'members of the public' was arranged by way of taking five at random from the four cordons at each crossroads. On their arrival at the Town Hall, I formed them into a queue. They were then interviewed by a steward of the National Front at the gate and, apart from one person at the rear of the queue within the gates, were allowed into the hall without question. At the end of this selection with the quota in the hall having been reached, the meeting started and <sup>the hall</sup> ~~it~~ was closed. There was no disorder during the meeting and apart from certain <sup>hand</sup> signs displayed by the National Front members and the singing

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10. (Continued)

of the National Anthem <sup>during a break in the meeting and again</sup> as they attempted to leave through the front doors, which was subsequently prevented <sup>by police</sup> to ensure peaceful dispersal, there was no disturbance. I accompanied the National Front members to the rear of the hall, into the car park and away through Lady Margaret Road from whence they came.

CONCLUSION

11. There is little else factually that I can contribute, but I consider it right to add that I saw several of the community leaders subsequent to the National Front meeting, who as has been their usual attitude during the years I have served at Southall, immediately raised the police/immigrant issue, without extending their minds towards the very reasons this disturbance took place and towards which we all need to work for good community relations. I am aware, and have been for years, that the young ones within the community of Southall will produce the policing <sup>problem</sup> factor of the future. This, nevertheless is no different to that which exists in any community of similar situation, save that it may be described as being aggravated by the colour of the skin and the culture within which this youth is attempting to find its identity. I am sure that at no time did they intend to involve themselves in so serious a disorder as that which was occasioned, and were in fact stimulated by outside influence of Left Wing origin. They are, and will be, a problem for the future and we shall need to talk. Perhaps not yet, but soon. There is no

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11. (Continued)

doubt that the young Asian community, who are so bound up with Indian politics, and indeed politics in general, have been swept along on the tide of the election and have found themselves in the First Division without having passed through the lower Leagues successfully. Unfortunately they lost the ball on this occasion. They must be led and advised, and in a town like Southall, no-one is more cognisance of this fact than I, Chief Inspector [REDACTED] and my officers.

12. A lot of words have been written and will continue to be so on this particular issue, and I hope that the practitioner, and by that I mean the officers at Southall, will be given a fair hearing to contribute.

## MEMBERS OF A MEETING - SOUTHALL POLICE STATION

TUESDAY 17TH APRIL, 1979

C.H. Man.

- EERC

Privacy

Rangaria Sabha, Southall

Southall Chamber of  
Commerce

Rangaria Sabha, Southall

- ECKL

- Anti Nazi League !!!

- ECRC

Southall Chamber of Commerce

I.W.A. Southall

- RANGARIA SABHA

SID STUDENT'S FEDERATION :

- E.C.R.C. Exec. NCCL.

N.Y. Co-ord. NAAy.

CHURCHES (Methodist Church).

UNITED ANGLICAN CARIBBEAN SOCIETY

St Anselms Church + E.C.R.C.

I.W.A. Southall

Indian Social + welfare society

Southall Youth Movement

Privacy

NOTE:

Father Tony BRUNNING of St. Anselm's Catholic Church was unable to attend and was seen separately prior to this Meeting.