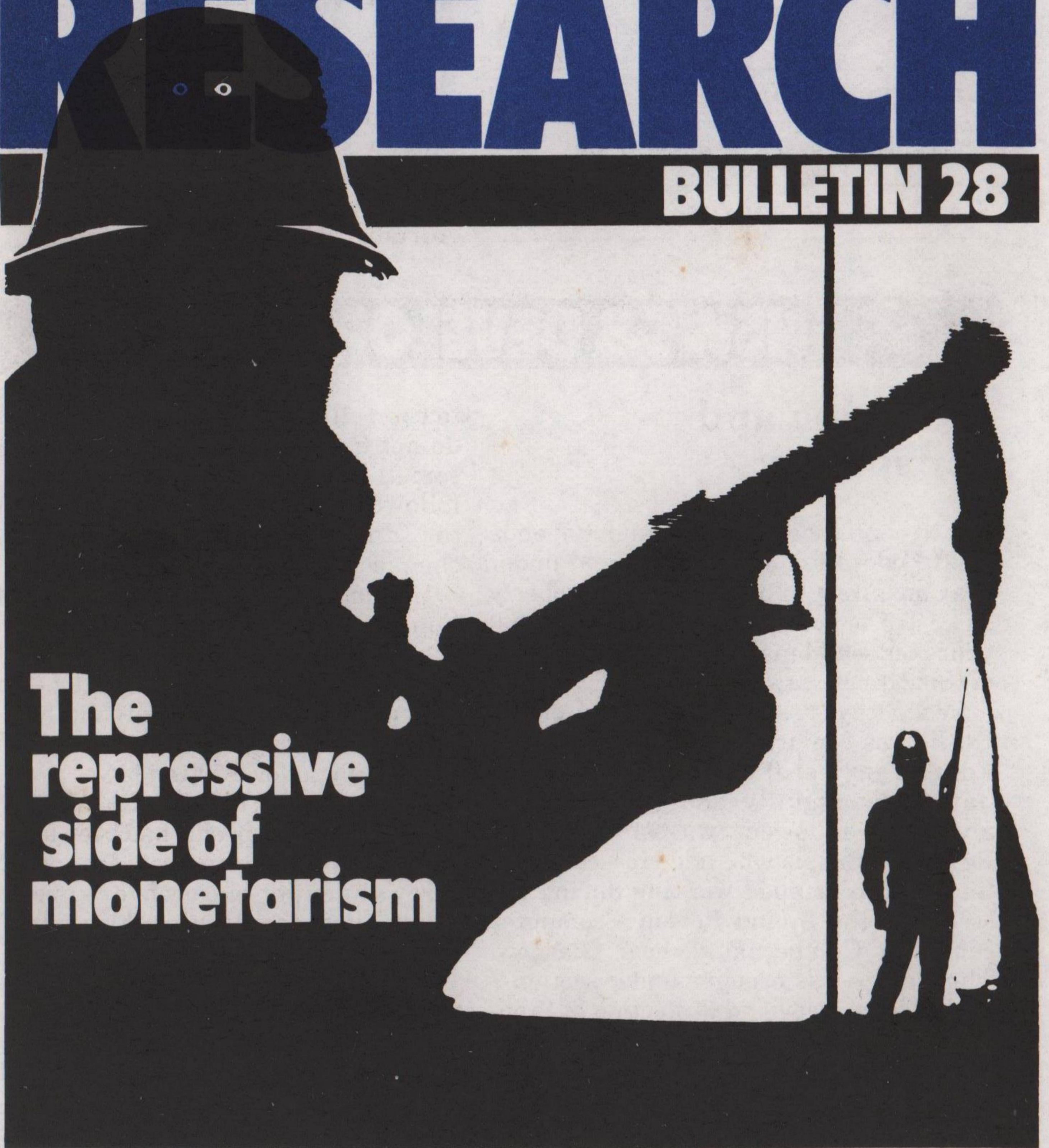


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STATE RESEARCH

BULLETIN 28



**The
repressive
side of
monetarism**

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State Research is an independent group of investigators collecting and publishing information from public sources on developments in state policy, particularly in the fields of law, policing, internal security, espionage and the military. It also examines the link between these fields and business, the Right and para-military organisations.

Among the contributors to this issue of State Research Bulletin were Tony Bunyan, Martin Kettle, Brenda Kirsch, Shelley Charlesworth, Paul Gordon, Chris Farley, Steve Peak, Joe Sim, Ed Maloney, Phil Kelly, Sarah Spencer, Adrian Yeeles, Francesca Klug.

•NEWS & DEVELOPMENTS•

Picketing and conspiracy

The recent case of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation official convicted under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act 1875 is not only the first case for 60 years but could mark a revival in the use of this obscure law.

Ted Elsey, assistant secretary of the IRSF, was convicted and admonished at Edinburgh Sheriff Court in December of having 'wrongfully and without legal authority' followed two senior Inland Revenue officials who had crossed picket lines and continued working during the strike at the Inland Revenue computer centre at Cumbernauld, near Glasgow. The charge was brought under section 7 of the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act 1875, which prohibits following someone from place to place with a view

to compelling them to do something they do not have to, or to abstain from doing something they are entitled to. Elsey had followed the two officials on the motorway to Edinburgh as they transported tax cheques.

His defence was that he had no intention of compelling the strikebreakers to do anything. He wanted to know where the papers were going so that he could persuade the workers receiving them not to process them, something he has a legal right to do under existing law.

The court rejected this. It said that the way in which the people had been followed was a civil wrong in Scots law and that Elsey's intention had been to compel them to abstain from collecting the papers. The case is now being appealed.

The case is the first for 60 years under the Act. (The Shrewsbury pickets were charged with 1875 Act offences in 1973 but these were dropped and more serious

common law charges of conspiracy used instead.) When first brought the charges were dismissed by Sheriff Nicholson in July as being insufficiently specific. The charge was then pursued on the advice of Lord MacKay, the Lord Advocate. This authorisation from the senior law officer in Scotland, along with Sheriff Nicholson's warning of a likely prison sentence of anyone convicted in future, suggests that the law, though unused for so long, may be used in future against people taking industrial action.

The Scarman Report

The Scarman Report fails to confront the central issues raised by the riots in Brixton in April last year, and those throughout London and more than thirty cities in the country, because it refuses to recognise the underlying racism which permeates British society, not least of all within the Metropolitan Police. Consequently, far from being the balanced and fair Report as portrayed in the media, it is one of the most conservative reports to have been produced in recent years.

Despite the substantial body of evidence presented to the inquiry which documents case after case of racial harassment by the police Scarman concludes:

'I find that the direction and policies of the Metropolitan Police are not racist. But racial prejudice does manifest itself occasionally in the behaviour of a few officers in the streets' (para 8.20).

The Report thus exonerates the actions of the local Brixton police over the years and that of the Metropolitan Police as a whole; supports the continued use of the Special Patrol Group which 'has become the target of sustained criticism in some quarters not because of its failings, but because of its successes'; and expresses approval for increased riot training and the introduction of CS gas, water cannon and plastic bullets ordered by the Home Secretary William Whitelaw.

The 'myth of police brutality'

The Report, having rejected police racism as a cause of the riots, looks elsewhere for an explanation. Part of the blame is attributed to the actions of 'a few officers' and ill-considered operations like 'Swamp '81' – when between April 6 and 11, just prior to the riots, there were 943 stops on the streets (more than half of them of black people) leading to 118 arrests and 75 charges being made. But the real reasons, the Report says, lay in the poor environmental conditions, where a black community suffers from 'racial disadvantage' (an euphemism for institutionalised racism) and the failure of community 'leaders' to act responsibly by working with the police.

High unemployment and the lack of leisure facilities means that: 'the street corners become the social centres of people, young and old, good and bad, with time on their hands and a continuing opportunity, which, doubtless, they use, to engage in endless discussion of their grievances' (para 2.11). In this environment, the hostility of the black youth to the police has 'infected older members of the community'; so that 'in Brixton, even one isolated incident of misconduct can foster a whole legion of rumours which rapidly become firmly held within the community'. This encourages a 'Myth of police brutality and racism to develop' (emphasis added).

The Report singles out for criticism the role of community 'leaders' in particular the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth (CCRL) which withdrew from the police liaison scheme because it was a mere talking shop which was continually by-passed by the police, and the Lambeth Council whose report on police activities harmed 'the cause of police/community relations in Brixton'. The withdrawal of the CCRL was preceded by a whole series of incidents, especially the use of the SPG in the areas, which culminated when three black members of the CCRL were

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wrongfully arrested simply because they wore sheepskin coats similar to those worn by people the police were looking for after an incident in a pub (see *Bulletin* no 11). The 'Sheepskin Saga', as it became known, led the Lambeth Council to set up an inquiry into police/community relations. Its report, 'The Final Report of the Working Party into Community/Police Relations in Lambeth', found widespread evidence of police harassment and warned that unless the police stopped acting like an 'occupying army' relations with the black community would reach breaking point.

The Report, however, concludes that the police and the community leaders must accept 'a share of the blame'. This perspective leads Scarman to two of his conclusions. First that it is time that the role of the community relations councils (CRCs) was reviewed' (para 6.36). The primary duty of CRCs Scarman says is 'to foster harmony, not to undermine it'. Therefore, if CRCs are placed, as they are, in a position of having to choose between representing effectively the interests of the black community and 'keeping a dialogue going with authority' (that is, the police) then their duty lies with the latter role. Second, Scarman concludes that voluntary liaison schemes, from which the community 'leaders' can walk out, should be replaced by permanent local liaison committees imposed by Act of Parliament.

Accountability and consultation

The issue of making the police accountable to the communities they serve is completely fudged in the Report. Although it suggests that there could be community involvement in deciding the policy and operations of the police 'without undermining the independence of the police or destroying the secrecy of those operations . . . which have to be kept secret' the Report contains no proposals to extend the statutory powers of local police

authorities outside London to cover operational practices. Nor does it propose any changes in accountability in London. The police authority for London would remain, as it has been since 1829, the Home Secretary and not the Greater London Council. Exactly why we are not told, except a vague reference that a transfer of power would probably be unacceptable to Parliament.

On the issue of formal accountability to locally elected police authorities the Report proposes no changes at all. This is despite Scarman's own assertion that accountability is the constitutional mechanism that ensures 'the police are answerable for what they do'. And further, that in London the essential link of accountability is 'tenuous to vanishing point'.

In line with his findings that there should be statutory local liaison committees Scarman places great emphasis on 'consultation', making it quite clear that 'consultation' and accountability are quite distinct. This new concept elevated by Scarman as the means for ensuring that the confidence of the community in the police is restored is a dangerous proposal, and one which Whitelaw has understandably seized upon. Although Scarman says that these bodies should have 'real powers' and should 'not simply be a statutory talking shop', no proposals are put forward as to exactly what powers they would have. This is left to the Home Secretary to decide, as is the composition of these liaison committees – they 'might' include local councillors and 'perhaps' other community representatives. If the experience of liaison committees in the past teaches us anything then the danger if this proposal is implemented throughout the country is that community 'leaders' will, by law, be co-opted to help police the community they supposedly represent.

This proposal, together with the much vaunted introduction of 'community policing', represents an important shift in the nature of British policing.

Fire-brigade and community policing

As already indicated Scarman accepts the need for the retention of 'fire-brigade' policing, such as the use of the SPG. The Home Secretary, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner and other chief constables have made it quite clear that this policy will continue in Britain's urban cities. Alongside 'fire-brigade' policing, 'community policing' schemes are to be introduced, backed no doubt by statutory liaison committees.

'Community policing', as it is emerging, does not mean more control of the police by the community, but more control by the police of the community. Thus, in a special issue of the journal *Race and Class*, 'Rebellion and Repression: Britain '81', it is argued that:

'community policing merges at the local level the coercive and consensual functions of government, enabling the police to wield a frightening mixture of repressive powers, in the one hand, and programmes of social intervention on the other, as mutually reinforcing tools in their effort to control and contain the political struggles of the black and working-class communities'.

'Community policing' will not mean a return to the old system of what is now termed 'preventive policing', which meant having large numbers of officers on the beat. Instead it will comprise a two-pronged strategy. More officers will be put on foot patrols but as many if not more will operate under the 'fire-brigade' policing policy of mobile patrols ready to rush to trouble spots. At the same time the services of social and welfare agencies of local government are to be harnessed, together with community 'leaders', to help police the community.

Training

Scarman's proposal which received most attention in the media concerned the

need for longer initial police training (which is soon to be increased from five weeks to six months) and for special training in community relations with particular reference to the black community. Exactly the same proposals emerged from a major four year review of police training and police/community relations between 1969 and 1973. Scarman's recommendations on training in community relations almost exactly mirror those made, and later adopted, in the *Report of the Working Party on Police Training in Race Relations* set up by the Home Office and which reported in 1971. A decade later the cities of Britain were in flames.

Monitoring the police

The formation of a Federation of Police Accountability Groups in London is expected to be one outcome of a conference to be held at County Hall on 20 February. The conference will bring together, for the first time, the many local police monitoring groups which have sprung up throughout London during the past year, encouraged by strong support from the Police Committee of the Labour-controlled Greater London Council.

Unlike the ill-fated London Campaign for a Democratic Police Force (see *Bulletin* no 18), which was initiated centrally by a number of national and regional organisations, each monitoring group has begun as a local, borough-based initiative, arising out of public concern about local policing practices. Although each is developing its own monitoring and campaigning priorities, they share two common objectives: to monitor the activities of the Metropolitan Police and to build up a London-wide campaign for changes in the law to make the Met accountable to the people of London. The object of the February meeting will be to discuss practical issues relating to the organisation of the groups, their relationship with the GLC, and how

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to develop a coordinated campaign strategy. The formation of a Federation would facilitate links between existing groups and act as a catalyst for the formation of new groups covering other Metropolitan Police districts.

CAPA

The driving force behind the conference is the Community Alliance for Police Accountability (CAPA) in Tower Hamlets, set up in May last year after a public meeting to protest about a police raid on a multi-racial party in a local nursery. The most advanced of all the groups, CAPA already has two part-time workers and is funded by the GLC.

Working closely with tenants, local lawyers, black groups and Tower Hamlets Association for Racial Justice, CAPA monitors and publicises the policies and practices of H division of the Met, in particular the incidence of racial harassment and the failure of the police to respond to racist attacks. Unlike later groups, CAPA does a considerable amount of casework, giving advice on how to make a complaint against the police and on legal proceedings. Since October, it has run a 24 hour emergency 'phone line, manned by 30 volunteers trained by local lawyers.

CAPA is liaising closely with the GLC Police Committee Support Unit, set up after the GLC elections last May to fulfill the Labour Party's manifesto commitment to 'monitor the work of the Police force as a prelude to it gaining control of the police'. It is applying for additional funds from the GLC to enable it to employ more workers to meet the increasing demands on its already over-stretched resources and has produced an interim report in the first six months of its work in which it concludes that: 'incidents giving cause for concern are not isolated "one rotten apple" types of occurrences but form the pattern of routine, and presumably therefore, unquestioned police policy and behaviour'. CAPA intends to present its evidence, and

concrete proposals on increasing police accountability, to the GLC, the borough and local MPs.

The Lambeth Police Monitoring Group, initiated by Lambeth Central Labour Party, was formally launched at a public meeting in December 1981, attended by over 70 people. Now backed by Lambeth Trades Council, the leader of the Borough Council, the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth, local MPs, youth groups, lawyers and other political parties, the group is preparing an application for GLC funding for a full-time worker. Initially it intends to build up a picture of policing in L division, conduct a survey of local opinion on the police, and compile a list of observers available at short notice to observe, from the sidelines, any future street clashes with the police. Its long term objectives include campaigning for the abolition of the Special Patrol Group, Police Support Units, Illegal Immigration Intelligence Unit and illegal political surveillance.

The group's steering committee has issued two statements, the first in response to the Home Secretary's statement on the Railton Road raids in July which it described as 'totally inadequate' and indicative of the 'the shortcomings of a system in which the Metropolitan Police are accountable for their behaviour to just one person, the Home Secretary, and not to the people who pay £271 million a year through their taxes for the force'. The second statement was in response to the Scarman Report. The Group is working with CAPA in organising the February conference.

Haringey Independent Police Committee was initiated by the North London Group of the National Council for Civil Liberties at a public meeting in July 1981, followed by later meetings attended by Labour and Liberal Party representatives, tenants, youth and black groups, and has the support of Haringey Trades Council. If successful in obtaining funds from the

GLC for a worker, the group hopes and has the support of Haringey Trades Council. If successful in obtaining funds from the GLC for a worker, the group hopes to monitor and publicise information about Y division of the Met and advise the public on police complaints. It will give evidence, based on the information it has collected, to the GLC's current public enquiries into vandalism and racial harassment.

In formation

A number of other groups are in the process of formation. In North Kensington, a group backed by, among others, the Black People's Information Centre, the Mangrove, and the local Labour Party, held its first public meeting in January this year. Attended by over 50 people, the meeting adopted a formal constitution and elected a steering committee. It resolved to concentrate on monitoring policing activity initially, rather than campaigning, and will seek GLC funding to produce leaflets and posters advertising 'contact points' where the public can report incidents. The information will be passed on to the GLC Police Committee Support Unit.

Wandsworth Standing Conference on the Police, sponsored by Wandsworth Community Relations Council and Wandsworth Legal Resources Project, held a preliminary meeting late last year and plans a public meeting in March. In Camden, a somewhat heated inaugural meeting on 4 December was sponsored by the Committee for Community Relations and 12 other local organisations, including the Trades Council. The meeting voted to set up a monitoring/campaign/defence group, now operating under the working title 'Camden Campaign for Police Accountability'. A first meeting of the campaign will be held in February. The contentious issue was the extent to which the group would undertake research/monitoring work rather than active cam-

paing, the meeting being strongly and vocally in favour of the latter.

Also involved in the February conference is Islington Police Monitoring Group, currently building up a picture of the local force (N Division), and encouraging local support, before 'going public'.

The GLC's manifesto commitment on the police, followed by the setting up of the Police Committee and its Support Unit, was the first major initiative in a campaign for greater accountability. The local monitoring committees are similarly filling a political vacuum and meeting a local need met by no other organisation. Recently however, Lord Scarman has recommended the establishment of statutory 'liaison' committees for 'consultation' between the police and community leaders, and Borough Councils, such as Hackney, may set up Council Police Committees after the May elections. If these various committees *are* established the role of these community based police monitoring committees may be less clear to the public although their work, as independent watchdogs and channels of public protest will be no less important.

Racist attacks – the Home Office study

Over 60 years after Charles Wooton drowned after an orchestrated attack on Liverpool's black community by its white inhabitants, and over 20 years after a similar 'riot' in Notting Hill, William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, initiated a study to discover 'the truth' about 'racial attacks.' According to Mr Whitelaw, 'the failure to appreciate the seriousness of the problem hitherto has been largely due to a lack of reliable information about it.' (*Racial Attacks*, Home Office, November 1981).

The police survey

The Home Office study was set up in res-

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ponse to a report by the Joint Committee Against Racism (JCAR) on *Racial Violence in Britain* (1981) (see *Bulletin* no23). Whilst the JCAR report documented attacks by white people on black people, the Home Office study was 'broad-based' in nature, so that it would 'command the widest possible support'. In this way it accorded with the pleas of Jill Knight MP, who called for it to include attacks on white people who were 'being harassed on a racial basis' (*The Times*, 10.2.81).

From this starting-point, the study examined all 'inter-racial incidents' recorded by police forces in 13 areas over a two month period. For this purpose, forms were completed by the reporting officer for every incident where the victim was of a 'different ethnic origin' from the alleged offender. Amongst other information solicited, the forms asked whether the victim or the reporting officer believed there was a 'racial motive' to the incident, and if so why. The study team classified the incidents into four categories according to the degree of evidence of a 'racial motive'. For there to be 'strong evidence' of such a motive, the police had to consider that there were sufficient grounds, but there had also to be an independent indication, such as a racist slogan. Where such independent indications existed, but the police did not consider the incident to be 'racially motivated,' there was only 'some indication of a racial motive'. The same applied to incidents where the victim believed there to be a motive but the police did not.

There is a little discussion in the report of the nature of those attacks categorised as 'racial'. However some indication as to the variety of crime included is provided by the statement that '20 of the 24 victims of handbag snatches or theft from persons, judged to be racially motivated, were white'.

The report found 'a considerable degree' of agreement between the victims and the police as to whether 'racial motives' were involved. Where there was disagreement,

it was the victim, rather than the police officer, who was 'reluctant to ascribe a racial motive'. As this was in sharp contrast with the findings of the JCAR report (and every other report on the subject) the authors of the study conceded that participation in the survey may have had 'some effect on police attitudes' (para. 36).

On the basis of the findings of the police survey it was calculated that, taking into account their relative proportions in the population, Asians were 50 times more likely, and other black people 36 times more likely, to be the victims of 'racial attacks' than white people. It was estimated that about 7,000 'racially motivated' incidents are reported in England and Wales in a year and that this estimate was 'on the low side.'

Other findings

In addition to the police survey, information was gathered by members of the study team in meetings with senior police officials, local community liaison officers and local authority officials. Meetings with 'ethnic minority community representatives' were arranged through the local community relations councils. Although the report says that 'their views, as much as those of the police and local authorities' formed 'the basis' of the report's conclusions, there was no attempt to examine allegations by communities of police mishandling of racist attacks beyond providing the police view of the matter. In fact one of the conclusions of the report was that 'the police were generally willing to take positive action to combat racial attacks' although they were 'often ill informed about them and sometimes inadequately prepared to tackle them' (para 85).

Indeed many of the criticisms by the minority communities of the police handling of racist attacks were thrown back at them by the authors of the study. They were berated for not reporting many offences (para. 86); they were blamed for their 'failure to understand the limita-

tions set on police action by the law and by police procedures' (para. 81); and they were asked, as a 'natural response' to criticisms about the police 'about their own willingness to join the police' (para. 53). It was also alleged that 'ethnic minorities commonly regard most attacks on them as racially motivated, even when there are no indications to this effect' (para. 81). This is impossible to square with the findings of the police survey, referred to above, that they were less likely to do so than the police. In a particularly disturbing passage, the report referred to 'a tendency within the police and local authorities to regard the ethnic minorities as a homogeneous group, in which the attacks experienced by the Asian communities were considered in some sense to be offset by the alleged anti-social activities of young West Indians.' (para. 39). Instead of explicitly rejecting such an approach to policing, which suggests 'offsetting' attacks on some members of the community with the criminal acts of others, the report appeared to suggest that a distinction *should* be made between Asians, who are seen to be predominantly victims of attacks, and young West Indians, who are seen to engage in 'anti-social activities.' As if this wasn't enough, this distinction stands in contradiction of the report's own findings which showed a high level of attacks on Asians *and* West Indians.

The extreme right

Other than very brief sections on local authorities, the media, and political leaders and government, there was little attempt to place racist attacks in a wider social or political context. Where this was done, it was largely confined to a discussion of the role of 'extremist organisations.' The report found no evidence to support the theory of a 'conspiracy possibly international in its ramifications', to organise attacks on minority communities, but suggested that the propaganda of such groups is 'crucial' in creating a climate

conducive to such attacks. Such groups were predictably compared with 'groups of the opposing extreme left' which 'counter-attack with their own publicity' (para. 73). Evidence of the paramilitary activities of Britain's fascist organisations, provided by *Searchlight* and others, was ignored.

Responses to the study

Official responses to the Home Office study have been generally favourable, if somewhat sparse. The Association of Chief Police Officers, for example, whilst describing the study as 'a meaningful initiative' emphasised the need for 'ethnic groups . . . to recognise and conform to the existing law of the land with all the difficulties there are in its enforcement' (*Memorandum to the Home Affairs Committee*, December 1981).

In line with the recommendations of the Home Secretary in his foreword to the study, the Greater Manchester Police have introduced a scheme to monitor all incidents with 'racist connections' and have proposed that, where necessary, further investigations be carried out, possibly by specialist officers (*The Times*, 17.12.82). The Metropolitan Police, despite a reference by Acting Commander Richard Wells to 'a high proportion of myth and rumour in this field' (*Sunday Times*, 8.2.81), stressed the importance of not being 'complacent' about the 'level and effect of such attacks' (*Memorandum to the Home Affairs Committee* December 1981). The memorandum revealed that it already operated a system for identifying 'racial' incidents, on the basis of which 277 incidents were classified as 'racial' in 1980 and 727 in 1981 (to 1 December). Included in this number were incidents involving 'concerted action by or against members of an ethnic group' including 'action which is directed against the police.' Recognising that such a system has not been useful in identifying 'minor incidents,' the Met expressed an intention to introduce a new system involving col-

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lection of information on 'racial attacks' at police district level. The proposed system would involve the central monitoring of this information, 'to discern trends,' by the Community Relations Branch, follow-up visits to victims by local Home Beat Officers, and the introduction of 'racism awareness' into police training. Confidence that this new system might involve a more useful definition of a racist attack than previously is not inspired by the Met's concluding remarks in the memorandum that, 'racial attacks effect all parts of the community', and that 'the impact of street crime committed by black youths on elderly white women cannot be passed over lightly.'

There has been no police support for the establishment of specialised police units to investigate racist attacks as originally suggested by JCAR. The Home Office study found no widespread support for this suggestion either by the police or by the minority communities who were concerned that 'racial violence' should not be 'tucked away to be dealt with exclusively by specialists' (para. 78).

The main parliamentary interest in the findings of the study has been by Harvey Proctor MP, who asked the Home Secretary whether he would now '... initiate a repatriation scheme, including resettlement grants, for all those who wish to take advantage of it' (*Hansard*, 27.11.81). His proposal exactly matched that of the British government in 1919 which, in response to concerted attacks on the black community, offered them cheap berths on ships to encourage them to 'go home'.

Increased police powers used as expected

The increased police powers given to the Scottish police by the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 1980 have been used as anticipated by opponents of the law.

According to official figures, in the five months from June to October 1981, some 8,290 persons were detained by Scottish police under section 2 of the Act. This allows for the detention for up to six hours, of a person believed to have committed an offence punishable by imprisonment (see *Bulletin* no 16 and 21). It is not yet known how many of these 8,290 were arrested and subsequently charged. Nor can the figures be compared with any previous period as the detention powers were designed in the words of Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, Malcolm Rifkind, 'to regulate by statute the questioning of suspects at a police station' a practice whose extent was unrecorded (*Hansard*, 9.12.81).

Opponents of the law also anticipated that the law would not just be used widely but would be used in political situations also. This has also happened. On 23 November, Strathclyde Police detained under the Act 108 people attending an Ulster loyalist rally on Glasgow Green. The detainees were taken to a police office, their names and addresses taken and then released. A report was submitted to the procurator fiscal (the public prosecutor) who decides on what charges if any follow (*Hansard*, 10.12.81).

Deportation: new police guidelines

New instructions on reporting immigrants convicted of criminal offences and who are liable to deportation were issued to the police by the Home Office in November, 1981. The new instructions, contained in Home Office circular 104/1981, follow the review set up by the Home Office after the case of the Hampshire bus driver who was visited by police after a conviction for a speeding offence. The man was a British citizen born in Singapore and Home Office minister, Timothy Raison, said subsequently that the case 'exposed the fact that the guidance given to the police by

this department about the circumstances in which reports should be made is in need of some clarification' (see *Bulletin* no 20).

The new guidelines say that the police should make reports to the Home Office Immigration and Nationality Department where a person who is subject to a time limit on his or her stay, or who has been in the country for less than five years, has been convicted of any offence which is punishable with imprisonment, 'irrespective of the sentence'. Given that the vast majority of offences are imprisonable in law, this means that people can still be reported for minor offences. Where someone is settled in the country and has been here for at least five years, the police are asked to make a report only where an immediate or suspended prison sentence is imposed, or a hospital order made under the Mental Health Act 1959.

The circular also indicates that a new reporting form will be issued to police forces replacing the different forms used at present and which require varying amounts of information. The circular also warns police against questioning suspects about their immigration status before charging, saying that place of birth supplied when charged or summonsed should indicate whether or not a person is liable to deportation. If false information was thought to have been given, 'the police would normally make further inquiries regardless of the person's colour or apparent racial origin.'

The powers of deportation given to the Home Secretary are extensive and widely used. The Immigration Act 1971 provides for the deportation of non-patrials in a number of circumstances, including where recommended by a court, following a conviction for an imprisonable offence, or where the Home Secretary considers deportation would be 'conducive to the public good', including cases of conviction not followed by a court recommendation for deportation. In 1980, 616 people were deported after a court recommendation,

although 126 people recommended for deportation were allowed to stay (*Hansard* 27.4.81). In the same year 66 people were deported on grounds of 'conducive to the public good' (*Hansard* 6.2.81).

NATO base gets go ahead

Government plans for a massive expansion of the Stornoway base (see *Bulletin* 22) received the go-ahead from the planning enquiry in December. The inquiry itself took place in March 1981 and Secretary of State for Scotland, George Younger, announcing the decision in December said that the expanded base was necessary to strengthen NATO in times of 'tension and war'. Younger said that Stornoway would be used to support maritime operations in the 'Iceland-UK gap' and to counter attacks from the north-west, but, as was pointed out in the *New Statesman* (11.12.81) these reasons were not supported by previous statements made by Defence Under-Secretary of State, Geoffrey Pattie. Pattie had said in a lecture given to the Air League that the threat of an air attack from the north-west was unlikely as NATO's forces 'were more than a match for the Soviets at every stage of the conflict'. Pattie had also described Britain's capability to fight surface ships as an area of 'over-investment'.

It seems clear that the Stornoway expansion is designed, as Younger said, 'to provide cover for transatlantic sea and air lines and to provide a staging post for flights from North America'. Thus Stornoway would act as a support facility for American moves into Europe. Although Younger indicated strict restrictions on the use of Stornoway by the Ministry of Defence, such as no Sunday flying except in emergencies, limited night flying and exercises limited to six weeks in the year, the extensive local opposition to the plans has heard it all before (see *Bulletin* No. 22). Indeed, the opposition largely con-

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vinced the inquiry inspector who concluded that, on local planning grounds, there was a 'presumption against the development', which could only be overcome by convincing evidence of national need. The inspector made no recommendation either for or against the plans because consideration of strategic issues had been ruled out, from the start. In the end, the decision lay with the government.

Work is expected to start on the expansion, estimated to cost £41.5 million, in early 1983. Meanwhile, pressure grows without much hope for an inquiry into the defence issues behind the plans and, despite the experience of the inquiry, for another inquiry into the plans to expand the Coulport depot on the Clyde to take the Trident missiles.

New Year honours

Police figured prominently in the New Year Honours list announced at the end of 1981. Knighthoods were awarded to two chief constables, John Hermon of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and George Terry of Sussex, who was last year's President of the Association of Chief Police Officers. A CBE was awarded to Raymond Anning one of the Inspectors of Constabulary and the first head of Scotland Yards complaints branch, A10. OBEs were awarded to Assistant Chief Constable Robert Killen of the RUC; Peter Neivens who retired as Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police to take up a post as executive director of the Playboy Club; Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ronald Steven-ton of the Metropolitan Police, Matthew Stirrat, Assistant Chief Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland; and Assistant Chief Constable Thomas Watkinson of Lancashire police. MBEs were awarded to eight serving officers.

MPs featuring in the honours lists included Home Office Minister of State,

Timothy Raison, who was appointed to the Privy Council, along with Douglas Hurd, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Awarded knighthoods were Tory MPs Anthony Fell and Victor Goodhew, both of whom have been members of the Monday Club.

From Tory supporters, financial and political, outside parliament, life peerages were awarded to Sir (William) Nicholas Cayzer, chairman of British and Commonwealth Shipping Co., which gave a total of £200,058 to the Tory Party between 1973 and 1980. Cayzer is also on the central council of the Economic League, the anti-union, blacklisting employers' group. In addition, he is a director of the monetarist 'think tank', the Centre for Policy Studies, set up by Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph. Cayzer is also director of some 67 companies. Many are subsidiaries of British and Commonwealth but others include Meldrum Investments (£2,000 per annum to the Tories) and Alliance Assurance, a subsidiary of Sun Alliance and London Assurance (£30,000 to the Tories in 1979).

Knighthoods went to James Cleminson, chairman of Reckitt and Colman, which gave £180,000 to British United Industrialists between 1972 and 1980 (this organisation is believed to raise money for the Conservatives from industry); Trevor Holdsworth, chairman of Guest Keen and Nettlefolds which gave £236,990 to the Tories between 1972 and 1980, and £7,000 to the Centre for Policy Studies between 1974 and 1980; and Adrian Swire, deputy chairman of John Swire and Sons, a shipping company, which gave £7,000 to the Tories between 1979 and 1980, and director of Brooks Bond Liebig which gave £66,000 to British United Industrialists between 1973 and 1980.

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The repressive side of monetarism

The monetarist policies of the Tory government are generally presented as an economic theory: the switch from public to private sector; the rundown of the welfare state and local services; the emphasis in solving inflation through the combination of stringent pay restraint and the creation of mass unemployment. But monetarism also depends on a level of political repression – most harshly developed in the Chilean junta's version of the Chicago school of Milton Friedman.

In this background paper we attempt to give a mid-term report on the actions and thinking of the Tory government and its contribution to increased repression in Britain. This is a vast subject to tackle and what follows should be regarded as a tentative and preliminary approach. We have especially concentrated on the areas of industrial relations, the police, defence, state racism, public order, censorship and the media, as well as Northern Ireland, where state policy and practice has had tremendous implications for the direction of the British state as a whole. We have not been able to include other vital areas, such as foreign policy, the civil service, the challenges to local government democracy, prisons and sentencing policy, or the intelligence services. An analysis of these areas would help to produce a more coherent picture of the monetarist state.

What follows does, however, indicate an extensive encroachment on the rights and civil liberties of trade unions, the black and immigrant community, political activists etc. But more than mere encroachment on rights there has been a 'disciplining' of society, a theme which is developed in the section on industrial relations. Tough laws in parliament accompanied by a significant shift in the mass media's ideology have been important mechanisms in this process. But there has also been an increasing shift of decision-making from elected bodies – both parliamentary and local government – to non-elected judges, police chiefs and top civil servants. Representative democracy has probably never been as remote from the electorate as it is now. The extra-parliamentary activities of monetarism have however been matched by extra-parliamentary reactions, not only in the continuing situation in Northern Ireland but also now from youth and the black community in Britain's inner

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cities who too have been excluded from representative democracy, a situation intensified by the changes in policing and state racism which we examine here.

All the areas which we examine here have experienced a significant change since the advent of the Thatcher led government in May 1979. However these changes would not have been possible without the authoritarian actions of the previous administrations both Labour and Tory which allowed the monetarist state to take the form it has.

Policing under the Tories

Developments in policing since the Tories came to power were, in part, signalled by one of Mrs Thatcher's first acts – to increase the pay of the police (and the military). The restraints of wages in the public sector necessitated by monetarism left the forces of law and order exempted. Indeed it is argued that a free market economy requires a strong state, with the police in the frontline, to manage the social and political effects of rising levels of unemployment. In particular, to attempt to contain crime and disorder in the inner city ghettos where teenagers, white and black, leave school knowing that many of them face a future of permanent unemployment.

But when seeking to assess the changes in policing that can be directly attributed to the present and past Tory governments it is important to distinguish these changes from the long-term changes which Labour governments of the 1960s and 1970s sanctioned. The Police National Computer planned during the 1966-1971 Labour government, came into operation under the Heath government, and was fully operational during the last Labour government. Similarly, the growth of the Special Branches throughout the country, and of the para-military Special Patrol Groups and Police Support Units spanned the lives of Tory and Labour governments alike in the 1970s (see *Bulletin* no 19). And, it was a Labour government that in 1977, for the first time, used troops backed by local police forces, to replace an entire workforce in the firemen's strike.

Police or politicians?

Police chiefs' pronouncements on a whole range of issues now command almost as many column inches as their political masters. Gone are the days when chief constables were seen and not heard, when they worked through the channels of government to bring their views to its attention. Not only do they press their views on

increased police powers, the jury system, subversion, homosexuality, morality and the unemployed, they reserve particular venom for their critics, including elected parliamentarians. For example, in September 1980 James Anderton, Chief Constable for Greater Manchester, referred to police critics as 'creepy and dangerous minorities . . . who are obviously using the protection imparted by our very constitution in order first to undermine it and then eventually to displace it'. Exploiting the precedent set by Robert Mark, when he was the Commissioner for London, police chiefs and organisations use the media to appeal over the heads of the politicians to legitimate their practices. They have, as Mark openly proselytised in his book, *The Office of Constable* where his contempt for politicians was all too evident, taken to seeking the approval of 'public opinion' rather than working through the formal machinery of accountability which, with all its limitations, provides a basis for change.

The political intervention of police chiefs has in the past few years been accompanied by growing demands throughout the country for greater accountability to the communities they police (see *Bulletin* 23). There have been clashes between local police authorities, such as in South Yorkshire and Merseyside. The Greater London Council is campaigning to have a police authority comprised of democratically-elected local councillors.

These demands for democratic accountability have been reinforced by revelations over the number of deaths in police custody, the lack of protection given to working class and black communities, the excessive use of stop and search in urban areas, cases where officers have not been brought to justice (as in the murder of Blair Peach by a member of the SPG) and unsolved murders (for example of the black teenagers in the Deptford fire).

Attitudes towards the police have crystallised along the lines of class and race. The Tory government presides over a society where the only growth 'industries', apart from unemployment, are the prisons, which are full to bursting point, and the police force, which is up to, and in many cases over, its authorised establishment. As the argument swings between reducing the prison population and building more prisons, army camps have been made available to cope with the overflow. And while the police can present crime statistics as indicating dramatic rises in crime rates then their demands for more personnel are likely to be met in the near future (a rise from 26,000 to 30,000 is the Metropolitan Police demand). Such demands not only command right-wing support but also reinforce the needs of the state for a strengthening of the forces of law and order to meet the growing resistance on the street of decaying urban centres.

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It is in these centres that social neglect and permanent unemployment, alongside aggressive fire-brigade policing, finally provoked a massive reaction in the riots of the summer of '81 (see *Bulletins* no 24, 25 and 27). To buy time the government set up the Scarman Inquiry, to look not at the riots all over London and in more than thirty cities in July, but into the events in Brixton over one weekend. Heseltine spent a few weeks in Liverpool lending a deaf ear to those prepared to talk to him. On the ground the government's response has been two-fold. To authorise the issuing of special riot gear and weapons (CS gas, water cannon and plastic bullets) detailed in a working party report presented to parliament by Whitelaw on October 30, 1981. On the other hand Whitelaw is desperately seeking, by using the formulation of 'consultation' (not accountability) proposed by Scarman to create a new series of 'buffer' police-community liaison committees comprised of hand-picked community 'leaders' to try and pre-empt a repetition of the summer of '81. The tactics used to try and head off the anger of the black community, and especially the black youth, are now to be attempted on the community as a whole. Whitelaw's meeting in January with selected community leaders and politicians from Lambeth was one of the first steps in this new strategy, a strategy that hinges on the concept of 'community policing' (see the Scarman report in this issue).

Development of the racist state

The Tory government came to power on a strong anti-immigration line. Just prior to the election Thatcher had said in a television interview that the British people were afraid that they 'might be rather swamped by people with a different culture' and Tory policies reflected this. In particular, the Tories committed themselves to the establishment of a register of dependants eligible to settle in the United Kingdom (anyone not so registered would lose his or her entitlement); to the admission of people over the age of 18 only if they fulfilled stringent conditions of entry as 'distressed relatives'; to 'firm action' against illegal immigration; and to the enactment of a new law of nationality. Within months of election the government introduced new immigration rules. Presented to parliament in November 1979 and in force on 1 March 1980, the new rules went some way to meeting the government's commitment. Stringent controls were introduced on husbands and fiancés seeking entry, although a 'concession' was made in the case of those coming to live with or marry women born in the UK or with a parent born in the UK. Sons over 18, but under 21, would no longer be admitted as dependants, while parents and grandparents

would only be admitted if they qualified as 'distressed relatives'. General conditions of temporary entry were also tightened considerably.

The rules, described by the Home Secretary as 'clearly sexual discrimination', were said by many experts to be likely breaches of the European Convention on Human Rights, but failed to satisfy right-wing Tories like Enoch Powell and Harvey Proctor who continued to argue for repatriation. Firm action against illegal immigration has been seen in the continued rewriting by the courts of the definition of illegal entry, resulting in the removal of over 1,000 people each year, the threatened removal of whole communities of migrant workers, and the ruling of the House of Lords in the case of Zamir that intending immigrants have a duty of candour and are obliged to supply information even if they are not asked and even if they genuinely have no knowledge of its possible relevance.

Raids by the immigration service and the police on the homes and workplaces of black people increased in number and scope and an increasing number of other agencies – social security offices, hospitals, employers, schools and housing departments – have been tacitly encouraged to check the immigration status of black and 'foreign looking' applicants. The inquiry into establishing a system of internal control on immigration promised by Whitelaw in opposition has not taken place, but the system of internal control already in operation has been further developed. The idea of a register of dependants eligible for settlement finally appeared to have been dropped. Ministers, despite their manifesto commitment, had equivocated on this since taking office and in December 1981, Home Office officials told the parliamentary Home Affairs Committee that the plan was impracticable.

The new British Nationality Act was passed in 1981, to come into force in January 1983. The law, in effect, severely restricts the acquisition and transmission of British citizenship and, in effect, marks the end of the process of redefinition of nationality which has been under way since the first immigration control measures of the 1960s. The law was passed despite opposition from a broad spectrum of the population.

As the racism of the state in keeping people out increased so, in the years of the Thatcher government, has internal state racism increased. Control of the black community has been a major part of policing and a major factor in the development of 'hard' policing. The government's only response to the St. Paul's riots of 1980 was to set up an enquiry into the police handling of public disorder, while the main response to the riots of the summer of 1981 has been to make available more repressive equipment and technology to the police.

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Despite the experience of the Bristol trials where 12 people accused of the serious offence of riotous assembly were either acquitted or proceedings dropped, serious charges of conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm and endanger property have been brought against a number of young black activists in Bradford following disorder there. Elsewhere, summary charges, avoiding trial by jury, have been generally brought by the police. The 'sus' law was scrapped eventually in July 1981 but replaced by an updated version in the Criminal Attempts Act.

The period has been one where the security of the settled black community has been struck at not only by immigration and nationality law but by policing and the law on the streets, a confirmation in practice of a civil status which is effectively second class.

Public order

The right to assemble and protest peacefully for political and industrial aims has been severely curbed under the Thatcher government. Over a great number of years the nature of policing demonstrations and picket lines – the use of the Special Patrol Group, police horses, helicopter surveillance etc – has acted as one sort of deterrent to those wishing to express a viewpoint publicly. The deaths of Kevin Gateley and Blair Peach and police excesses at Grunwick all occurred before the Thatcher government took office.

What has been different with the Tories is the proximity with which they have worked with the police in interpreting and developing the public order legislation which governs marches and demonstrations. Police calls for advance notification of marches have been widely taken up, and limitations on mass picketing have been forthcoming in industrial relations legislation

Apart from developing new law, a major change under the Tories has been the way in which the Public Order Act 1936 has been used. Whereas the police previously were reluctant to use this to prevent National Front and other racist marches, under the Tory government there has been a liberal use of this Act to ban *all* marches. Blanket bans have now become a convenient tool, not just to extricate the police from the unseemly position of having to 'protect' National Front marches, but also when widespread community unrest seems likely. Hence the extensive use of bans which went almost unremarked in the summer of 1981. In fact during 1981 there were 31 bans – a figure seven times greater than that for the whole of the 1970s.

State Research and others have consistently argued that the imposition of blanket bans is a misinterpretation and distortion of

the Public Order Act. The high courts (Lord Denning again) upheld that only blanket bans were possible under the Act in a ruling in May 1981. However in the same month, the Scottish Secretary gave permission for a selective banning in Strathclyde region, where only marches concerned with Ireland were to be covered by a banning order (see Diary). The interpretation of banning marches by selected organisations, on selected subjects, in selected areas has also recently been upheld by Lord Scarman in his report on the disturbances in Brixton in April 1981. He suggests that if it is deemed 'impracticable' to use existing public order legislation in this way, then the Act should be amended to allow for selective banning.

Advance notice of marches (and resulting financial penalties for non-compliance) is gradually creeping onto the statute books. As well as this curb on spontaneous demonstration and the heightened surveillance which it brings, the other dangerous proposal gaining ground is the extension of public order law to static assemblies. This idea again originates with the police and, as it is designed mainly to limit further the possibility of mass picketing, will undoubtedly be taken up by this Tory government.

Industrial relations

A key aspect of monetarism is the need to discipline the workforce to make its policies acceptable. The creation of mass unemployment, through deliberate dismantling of the public sector and as a consequence of government economic policy in the private sector, disciplines the workforce indirectly. Fewer workers means fewer trade union members; a big pool of unemployed help to keep those in work 'in check', as they can always be replaced. Tory measures to 'help' the unemployed perpetuate this sort of discipline, for example by teaching the 'skill of taking orders' (MSC guidelines) in youth training courses. In addition, cuts in the social security system (unemployment benefit levels held down, Earnings Related Supplement abolished) and the whittling down of Labour-created employment protection measures (against unfair dismissal, maternity rights etc) make it clear that the unemployed, low paid and 'weak' workers are no longer to be 'pampered' by the state.

Disciplining of the stronger sections of the workforce has been two-pronged. Through *monetary* measures collective bargaining has been curtailed by the imposition of cuts and cash limits in the public sector, and a credit squeeze which has made it more difficult for private companies to pay higher wages. (At the same time the complete lifting of exchange controls has made it even more attractive for private industry to export capital and invest abroad.)

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The second prong to hold down organised labour has been the attack on trade union rights by *legislation*. The Tories have been assisted in this task by the ideological back-up of the mass media, now almost universally antipathetic to the very existence of trade unions (except in Poland). But they have also been assisted by certain sections of the judiciary, such as Lord Denning, whose legal attitudes and decisions have acted as frontrunners for the introduction of new Tory legislation.

The strike weapon especially has been singled out by the Tories who, through a whole series of measures have gradually clawed back union rights on strikes, picketing and sympathetic action. The approach is to punish unions both legally and financially (the latter through the lifting of immunities; allowing anti-union groups and individuals to sue etc). Union strength is also being interfered with through proposals to dismantle the closed shop. Interference in internal union procedures has also been suggested in the idea of state-funded secret ballots, although this proposition is no longer at the forefront of Tory policy, especially since Heseltine's attempt to introduce a similar concept into local government had to be scrapped.

Whereas the Heath government blundered in introducing a virulently anti-union Industrial Relations Act in one foul swoop, prompting mass demonstrations and its eventual scrapping as a first item of Labour policy in 1974, this Tory government has brought in similarly vindictive proposals; but only after a whole series of legislative changes and other measures, including mass unemployment, have 'softened up' the audience. The proposals introduced by new Employment Secretary Norman Tebbit in November 1981 go even further than the 1971 Industrial Relations Act. They give the judges an even greater say in deciding the legality of union actions, put trade unionists in great risk of imprisonment for carrying out activities, now accepted and could lead to wholesale plundering of union funds. Some proposals would put unions back to the precarious position they were in *before 1906*.

These many attempts to channel the state into disciplining the workforce and dismantling the unions have not been met wholly unresisted. The TUC Day of Action in May 1980, the People's March for Jobs and Jobs for Youth campaign in 1981, and steel, civil service and rail strikes have been some of the responses. The attempts to maintain rigid cash limits on pay in the public sector have been continuously broken with pay rises exceeding 6%: fire brigades 18.8%, miners 13%, local government white collar 13%, water and gas workers 12%, and 7.5% for civil servants after their historic 21 weeks strike. The government's economic measures have also been blatantly unsuccessful even at its heart: holding

down the money supply. This was growing at an annual rate of 26% in 1980 despite Tory targets of 7-11%. The Tories' emphasis on pandering to small businesses, plus the failure to bring down interest rates etc, have also led to disquiet from the CBI and other sections of big business.

However, despite resistance and criticism, the Thatcher government has already succeeded in subjecting even the strongest elements of the organised working class to the disciplining of the legal system and state interference, a process which it will take many years now to dismantle.

Censorship and the media

The media in Britain have never been 'free', but during the course of the Tory government, censorship, bias and restrictions on public knowledge have intensified. Not only have tough legal measures been taken in the shape of the Contempt of Court Act, but the broadcasting system in particular has become more subject to government intervention. Public information about the activities of the state has thus become even more limited, and a Freedom of Information Act now seems even more remote. Indeed, the Tories' only attempt at law reform in this area, in the Protection of Official Information Bill in 1980, would have strengthened secrecy and outlawed the publication of information on the military, the Foreign Office, the police, prisons, surveillance and state plans for intervention in strikes. The bill was only withdrawn in the wake of the Anthony Blunt fiasco, which would never have come to light if the bill had been law. If anything, the media has moved closer into partnership with the state, not only with the continuation of the D-notice system, but also with the swapping of information between the press and the police.

In content, the hostility towards the trade unions – well-documented by the Glasgow Media Group – has continued in coverage of industrial disputes, the TUC's Day of Action in May 1980, etc. On the political front, media interference in Labour Party affairs, and its hounding of Tony Benn and other left-wingers, has been matched by the favourable and warm coverage given to the Social Democratic Party – the first media-created party in British politics. Racism in press coverage continued with widespread distortion of the Deptford fire rally in January 1981, and the treatment of the urban unrest in April and July 1981.

Even before the more restrictive Contempt of Court Act came into force in August 1981, the existing law was used to inhibit freedom of information. In November 1980, the High Court found NCCL's legal officer, Harriet Harman, guilty of contempt for

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showing Home Office legal documents to a journalist *after* they had been read in open court. The Court of Appeal rejected her appeal in February 1981, and a final appeal was made to the House of Lords in November 1981.

The Lord Chancellor Hailsham described the new Contempt of Court Act, 'my little ewe lamb' as 'liberalising'. But this new law in fact imposed new restrictions on the freedom of the press as well as jurors. It is now an offence for the press to interview jurors, even where juror and case are not identified. Bans on reporting of proceedings can also be imposed, and the first such ban was made in November 1981 in a gun-running case. An appeal by the National Union of Journalists to the Court of Appeal was rejected in December by Lord Denning, who said that the Act was not a measure to restrict press freedom: 'It is a measure for liberating it'.

In August 1980 a Commons select committee on defence reported that the D-notice system (the voluntary self-censorship by the press of defence and intelligence matters) was not useful and appears as 'covert censorship'. It recommended thorough reform. However a Ministry of Defence (MoD) white paper in 1981 rejected this approach, and in January 1982 the MoD published a revised set of D-notices which, in more general terms than previously, urged self-censorship on the naming of the heads of M15, M16, or their agents.

Tory attacks on the BBC began in November 1979, when Environment Secretary Heseltine condemned BBC coverage of an anti-cuts march: 'the battle against inflation is too critical to allow slap-happy selective journalism to undermine the national will to defeat inflation'. A *Panorama* film of IRA gunmen in 1980 was attacked by Thatcher, banned by the BBC board of directors and seized by the Anti-Terrorist Squad. In June 1981 a Granada *World in Action* programme on the Northern Ireland hunger strikes was withdrawn after the IBA had asked for extensive changes. In July 1981 the media were criticised by the Tories for causing 'copycat' rioting. Meanwhile, Fleet Street editors were cooperating with the Metropolitan Police by handing over photographs of those involved in the disturbances.

The appointment of Tories to head the BBC was consolidated in August 1981 when former Conservative executive member Sir William Rees-Mogg was appointed as vice-chairman; former Tory candidate George Howard had been appointed the new chairman the previous August. Rees-Mogg was once on the Conservative Party's 'propaganda' committee – the National Advisory Committee on Political Education. Later in August 1981, the BBC cancelled the Dimpleby lecture, when it rescinded its original invitation to anti-nuclear campaigner EP Thompson.

Northern Ireland

Two and a half years of the Thatcher administration in Northern Ireland have seen little change in police and army tactics in dealing with the Provisional IRA. The process of 'Ulsterisation', ie the gradual withdrawal of the army in operational roles in favour of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, (RUC), which was started in 1976 remains at the core of the government's security policy and continued despite setbacks for the government like the hunger strikes. From a peak of 30,000 troops in the early 1970's the army strength is now less than 10,000, only about half of whom are actually 'in the field'. Correspondingly the strength of the RUC has increased to around the 8,000 mark with a further 4,000 or so full time and part time reservists. The locally recruited part time and full time British Army regiment, the Ulster Defence Regiment, (UDR) has jumped to 7,000 strong. This inexorable arming and training of two forces which are almost totally protestant in make-up clearly has inherent dangers in the event of widespread community violence – as nearly happened twice during 1981 – or in the event of radical changes in British government policies in Northern Ireland.

An essential concomitant of the Ulsterisation policy has been a programme of community relations work designed to make the police more acceptable in the eyes of Catholics and freer to patrol and police republican areas. There are now only two areas where the RUC is not completely free to patrol and where the army plays the dominant security role. These are West Belfast and South Armagh, on the border with the Irish Republic. Both of these areas are Provisional strongholds and it is the latter of them which has seen the most intense community relations exercise. This has taken two forms. Firstly the apparent toleration by the police of petty crimes such as joyriding and burglary. The inability of the IRA to deal with this had, up to the start of the hunger strikes, caused pressure by Catholic priests and politicians for 'normal' policing in West Belfast. The practice by the army of shooting joyriders dead clearly had a counter effect and caused intense friction for a while between the police and the army, until it was stopped two years ago.

The other visible part of the community relations exercise was a series of secret conferences and seminars organised by the Chief Constable, Sir Jack Hermon during 1979 and 1980. These seminars were attended by Catholic doctors, businessmen, lawyers, teachers, clerics, politicians and trade unionists, many of whom came from West Belfast. There was unanimous agreement that a higher police presence was necessary in West Belfast. The start of the hunger strikes, and especially the deaths caused by reckless firing

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of plastic bullets, came when this sort of pressure was at its highest. The net effect was to reverse nearly all the gains made by the RUC in the previous three to four years and thus to seriously damage the 'Ulsterisation' process.

In dealing with the IRA itself there have been two major changes in security tactics. The first of these was the scrapping of the army's SAS-style undercover ambushes which accounted for several IRA deaths but which also resulted in the deaths of a number of innocent civilians. This tactic 'The kill don't question' policy – was scrapped because of its general adverse affect on Catholic opinion. The second change has been the virtual halting of brutality during police interrogation sessions; this was brought about by the Bennett inquiry. Suspects are now televised and recorded during questioning and have the right, if they ask for it, to legal consultation after 48 hours of arrest. Some lawyers claim that this loophole is abused. Some lawyers are also beginning to mount a campaign to protest against the increasing use by police, and equal acceptance by the courts, of *alleged* verbal confessions. During the brutality controversy RUC interrogators *forced* suspects to sign confessions which, despite retractions, were always accepted by the courts. Now this cannot be done and more use is being made of *alleged* verbal confessions. Increasing use is also being made of informers, most of whom are blackmailed into that role, to infiltrate the ranks of the IRA. Not only do these informers provide valuable information but their discovery causes widespread suspicion and demoralisation within IRA ranks.

The most interesting, but least known-about development, has been the increase in co-operation between the RUC and its counterpart in the Irish Republic, the Garda Siochana. It is known that both Special Branches liaise closely and it is also known that police commanders on opposite sides of the border meet regularly to exchange information. None of this has been formalised as yet but it could well happen within the context of the closer Anglo-Irish co-operation begun two years ago. This is also likely to lead either to the Republic granting extradition or the creation of an all-Ireland court. Facilities for interrogation by one force in the other's territory are also likely to be introduced. Existing legislation, first used two years ago, already allows for prosecution in one jurisdiction for crimes committed in the other.

The British army's presence in Northern Ireland continues to have tremendous ramifications for the British state as a whole. Techniques of riot control have now been put to use in mainland Britain. The 'community relations' approach of the RUC bears similarities to the type of consultation followed by chief constables in multi-racial British cities. And the Prevention of Terrorism Act,

under which 5,061 people were detained between 1974 and the end of 1980, is now well into its eighth year of operation.

Defence

In early 1979 defence appeared to be almost a backwater of British politics. Virtually ignored by the public and by political radicals, the secretive, wasteful world of the armed services was suffering from the success of its own propaganda: half a decade of ritual griping about Labour defence 'cuts' (that had actually improved the efficiency of the military) had induced a demoralisation manifesting itself in 16,500 applications to leave the services early in the month before the general election. But in reality the defence machine was (and is) one of the major priorities of the establishment, absorbing today £12,700m a year and having immense power not only in itself but also over the rest of British society. However, it has taken 2½ years of Toryism to force the military into the place it deserves at the forefront of public consciousness. This has happened through: the boosting of the military's self-image with the Tories' 'law and order' philosophy and high pay rises; the highlighting of the privileged position of the military by pushing up defence spending while simultaneously cutting social service provisions; warmongering by the British and American governments, partly to justify increased spending; the re-emergence of civil defence as a priority, leading many people to join the anti-war movement; the continued presence of troops in Northern Ireland; and the threatened and actual use of troops in strikes.

The most immediate change for the services after the general election came with their 33% pay rise, that immediately reversed the drift into civilian life. More subtle, but perhaps more significant, was the shift in the morale and self-regard of the military. Within the space of a few months the armed forces turned from an inward-looking, defensive, almost sour, conglomerate into an arrogant, self-assured body whose time had obviously come. By the autumn of 1980 the military could stage the biggest mobilisation of the armed forces since 1945 – Operation Crusader, costing £8m – with a convoy of tanks blocking the Winchester by-pass to celebrate themselves with a champagne breakfast at the roadside.

1979

May. Coincidentally or otherwise, the week of the general election also saw the previously almost forgotten (but now very important) topic of chemical and biological warfare (CBW) revived with

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speculation from the Americans that Russia had deployed CBW weapons in Eastern Europe. This real or imaginary threat from the Soviets (very little hard evidence of it or any other Soviet CBW threat has yet been produced) has led to the stepping up of 'protective' CBW training for the British armed forces and an apparent desire from the USA to deploy their CBW devices in Britain.

June. The month after the general election saw the first Tornado aircraft off the production line. The Tornado, otherwise known as the Multi Role Combat Aircraft, is a joint production of Britain, West Germany and Italy. Their construction has been, and still is bedevilled by extremely costly errors, and each of the 387 planes that the RAF will buy to form the backbone of the RAF until the end of the century will cost at least £12m.

August. By now the future path of the armed forces under the Tories was clearly defined: the annual defence budget was to increase by 3% pa no matter what happened to the rest of the economy (Treasury insistence on some tokenist cuts was agreed however); the Americans were pushing the Cruise missile very determinedly in the direction of European bases; and Trident was being forecast as the replacement for Polaris.

December. Tory defence policy hit the headlines when NATO ministers meeting in Brussels agreed that Cruise missiles were to be deployed in Europe. 164 were to be based in Britain, reflecting the Americans revised belief that a limited nuclear war is winnable. A few weeks previously Trident had indeed become Britain's post-Polaris choice, while at Christmas the Soviets invaded Afghanistan and the subsequent Western warmongering convinced many people that World War Three was just around the corner. Added to this a government rethink of home defence, the first since 1972 and part of their overall review of contingency planning, showed that there were no plans to protect the civilian population from anything (only to defend the government from external or internal aggression). The public anger that this realisation provoked in early 1980 has persisted and indeed increased and for many has become the focus of their hostility to the Tories military policies. The apparent threat of nuclear war currently dominates discussions of the military but it is interesting to recall that in 1979 the issue seemed very remote.

1980

April. Thatcher announced that arms sales overseas were to be boosted to £1200m that year. In the same month forces' pay rose yet again (this time by 20%) while an Army Colonel was dismissed from the service with disgrace for fiddling his travel expenses.

August. A three-month moratorium on defence contracts was forced on the MoD by the Treasury in an attempt to curb the Ministry's profligacy. Rumours of substantial 'cuts' in the defence budget continued through the autumn, with murmurings about Defence Secretary Francis Pym resigning over the issue, while service chiefs demanded – and got – an audience with the Prime Minister and secret documents were leaked to the Press Association from a high-level defence source to embarrass the government into sparing the MoD from the axe hanging over it. In reality the cuts proposed were largely attempts to curb overspending and to stop more of the military's wilder fantasies of becoming unnecessary realities at the public's expense.

December. It was announced that the MoD had overspent by £250m, and in the New Year the recalcitrant Pym was replaced by John Nott.

1981

January. Cuts of £200m were made (at the same time it was revealed that an error costing £35m had been made in converting nine VC10 planes for military use). Less than a month later Nott had to admit that the previous summer's economies had been ineffective and that the MoD's cash limits had been exceeded yet again, this time by £254m, and that this figure could well rise to £400m by the end of March. The winter of 80/81 also saw troops intervening in the prison officers dispute, with Army camps being used as prisons. The use of troops for strike-breaking – a device reviewed by the Labour government – was adopted enthusiastically by the Tories and the public threat of 'sending in the squaddies' has undoubtedly influenced many industrial disputes since then. Another threat to the working class appeared at this time with the revealing of a government plan to recruit (some called it conscript) young unemployed people into the Army for six months. After considerable public outcry this plan was shelved in June 1980.

The major part of 1981 was dominated, however, by the gradual dawning of the truth about the cost of Trident: not £5,000m as the government had first claimed, but probably £8,000m. The implications of this have been and will continue to be felt throughout the services. Massive pruning of other sectors of the military is being undertaken to pay for Trident, one example being the axing of eight warships and the shutting of Chatham Dockyard announced in June (and Navy Minister Keith Speed's sacking for resisting these cuts). In July the Times reported that Defence Secretary John Nott had said that the cost of even Chevaline (the temporary Polaris updating project) had 'gone bananas'.

•REVIEWS & SOURCES•

Books

The Abuse of Power: Civil Liberties in the United Kingdom, by Patricia Hewitt. Martin Robertson, Oxford, 1981, 295 pp., £15 cloth, £4.95 paper.

The purpose of this book by the general secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties, is not at all clear. It is not, on the author's own admission, an academic textbook, but neither, appearing in an academic series, is it a popular account of the state of civil liberties. There is little in it that will be new to the people most likely to read it, presumably people who already read the *Guardian*, *New Statesman* and *State Research*.

What is presented instead, is a survey of very recent developments in some areas of civil liberties, including, police powers and the criminal process, police accountability, surveillance and privacy, censorship and secrecy, discrimination and public order.

Such a collation could be useful but Hewitt's account lacks any theoretical framework or analysis, either of the nature of civil liberties or of their erosion. This seems to be confined to the book's title. The various 'abuses of power' are never answered. Why more police powers, why more surveillance, why state racism, why legal sexism, why increased censorship? The questions are apparent, but an answer or explanation is never attempted. The usefulness that a book of this sort might have in describing and defining the problem and thereby indicating some possible solutions is therefore severely limited.

There are, in addition, various other problems with this book. It is not, as the sub-title states, an account of civil liberties in the United Kingdom. It is an

account of some civil liberties in England and Wales and, to a lesser extent, in Northern Ireland (which is largely confined to one chapter). Scotland is mentioned only on three occasions (with a minor error each time). Yet, one would have thought the different laws and legal system of some importance to the 5½m people who live in that part of the United Kingdom.

Important areas of civil liberties are either neglected or inadequately treated. There is nothing on mental institutions while prisons are dealt with in just over three pages. (At the same time Hewitt complains that the rights of women are not always regarded as a civil rights issue and are omitted from two civil liberties texts.) The security service, MI5, is mentioned only in passing, while there is no discussion at all of the increasingly important and changing role of the army in domestic politics. Nor is any attention paid to the development of a 'third force' within the ranks of the police. The development of internal immigration controls and the increasing surveillance of the settled black community is seen only in terms of the police and not in terms of an increasing number of state agencies, and even then is dealt with too briefly to give due emphasis.

A good bibliography might have filled gaps in the text but Hewitt's bibliography has some curious omissions. Harry Street's 'standard text on civil liberties' is about England and Wales, not about the United Kingdom. While the reader is referred to numerous official reports on Northern Ireland, there is no reference to John McGuffin's book on torture by the British army, *The Guinea Pigs*, nor, surprisingly, to this year's winner of the Cobden Trust civil liberties award, *Beating the Terrorists* by Peter Taylor. On penal policy Jimmy Boyle's first-hand account of every aspect of prison life, *A Sense of Freedom* is ignored.

There are, in addition, various minor, but irritating errors in the text itself. *Police Review* is not the journal of the Police Federation. The immigration service and the police have not begun to raid workplaces employing black workers: they have been doing so since the law came into force in 1973. Baroness Seear is neither a professor nor on the staff of the London School of Economics.

More important than these errors and omissions is the absence of the 'cogent and incisive analysis' promised by the book jacket. The conclusion is merely a reiteration of arguments for and against a Bill of Rights, with the government being urged to establish a Human Rights Commission and press for changes in the complaints procedure under the European Convention of Human Rights.

The book, the author says, reflects the priorities and pre-occupations of the NCCL over the last decade (though not necessarily its policies). It suggests no awareness of the rapid and deep decline of civil liberties during that decade, no sense of urgency. It fails to assess and understand the failures and successes of the recent past and, in doing so, suggests no reason why the experience of the next decade should be any better.

LAW AND ORDER: Arguments for Socialism by Ian Taylor, London, Macmillan, 1981. £4.95, Paper. £15, cloth

Crime and punishment have always been of central concern for the right in general, and the Conservative Party in particular. In election manifestos, media broadcasts and speeches, as well as newspaper editorials, party members and supporters have usually been willing to articulate their views on crime and to offer solutions in the form of more intense and repressive punishment. Thus, the issue of law and order formed a crucial plank in the Conservatives' electoral strategy in 1979 as they stridently condemned rising

crime rates, deteriorating moral standards and the decline in public order. They also provided easy, succinct answers to these problems in the shape of more police, greater police powers, harsher prison regimes and tougher trade union legislation.

The Labour Party has never really been able to offer those who traditionally vote for them any answer to the problems of crime – real or imagined – which confront such groups in the inner cities, in particular. Where the party has offered solutions, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, these have generally been the antithesis of any true socialist strategy for change. Indeed, such measures have usually involved the introduction of more repressive measures. Thus, the draconian Scottish Criminal Justice Act, pushed through by the present government, had its origins in a similar bill proposed by the last Labour government and which only failed because of the dissolution of parliament before the general election in 1979. Similarly, maximum security dispersal prisons, the increase in the length of sentences, the serious attacks on the integrity of the jury system, the increase in fire-brigade policing techniques and the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, have all occurred under, and with the sanction of, various Labour governments.

It is in this context, that Ian Taylor's *Law and Order: Arguments for Socialism* attempts to illustrate how traditional Labour Party philosophy has perceived social problems in general, and crime in particular. In the first three chapters of the book, Taylor traces the Labour Party's views on crime, and the ideology underpinning them, from the post-war reconstruction of capitalism from 1945 through to the present. Taylor indicates how the Labour Party's analysis of crime never seriously questioned the fundamental inequalities and iniquities in capitalist social arrangements but instead explained it in terms of broken

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homes, poor education, and unequal opportunities. Legislate for these and crime, if it did not disappear, would certainly diminish. These chapters thus try, sometimes in a very truncated and superficial way, to situate and contextualise historically, the liberal-democratic perception of crime.

It is, however, the long fourth and final chapter of the book, spanning 100 pages, which should prove to be the most contentious. It is here that Taylor discusses practical attempts to make interventions which will bring the state to heel and make state servants accountable. In this chapter, he addresses the question of how a 'practical socialist criminology' can be achieved, and identifies five potential agencies which would form the basis of such a task. These are involvement in the National Prisoners' Movement, involvement with the various groups critical of police policies, and involvement with socialist lawyers, civil liberties groups and the women's movement. Taylor argues that socialists should involve themselves in the practical issues and daily politics of such groups for 'any new socialist criminology must be formed in the practical context responding to problems that arise in popular experiences of the existing penal and welfare systems and, in particular, to popular demands for policing and a sense of social order' (p 125). It is along this axis that Labour politics must move.

While one wouldn't argue with this general point, the reasoning behind some of Taylor's specific recommendations is faulty. Thus, he maintains, that 'sections of the white working class population living in particular parts of London have in recent years come to demand the kind of reactive fire-brigade policing that is provided by the SPG' (p.151), in particular to combat mugging and rowdy street parties. While some working class communities might feel the need for greater protection for their community it is debateable if their demands extend to the

kind of saturation, high-technology policing exemplified by the SPG. Many of these communities, indeed, would take the opposite view and are highly critical of the SPG's techniques and policing methods. As the events of the summer of 1981 indicated, white people as well as black people were openly and bitterly critical of the role of the SPG in their communities.

Furthermore, while white working class communities do have legitimate fears about crime and disorder, the book itself falls into the trap of implying that crime is the only fear within these communities, a ploy often adopted by the Tories. The people in such communities do not discuss crime, 24 hours a day. Other issues also concern them – unemployment, bad housing, poor schools, high rents and rising food prices are also widely discussed and debated. To single out crime, and people's concern about it, in a sense depoliticises the everyday political vision of many in these communities who do see the problems facing their areas as being due to the arrangements in the wider social systems. For them it is high financiers, property speculators, merchant bankers, and stock-exchange personnel who need to be policed, and not solely their local communities.

There are other bones of contention in the book: the usual over-estimation of the impact that the women's movement has had on the consciousness of working class women; an under-estimation of the contradictions and fractures within the state apparatus itself which can be usefully exploited; and sometimes a failure to carry his arguments through to a logical, socialist and non-hierarchical conclusion. Thus, Taylor argues that a socialist conception of 'youth control'; would be the utilisation of community homes which would be responsible to 'a committee consisting in part of social work professionals but also elected representatives of the community from trade unions through to parents groups' (p 119-120). It is

debateable if such homes would be necessary in a socialist society, but if they were then it would seem logical that other young people themselves should be involved in the running and organisation of them and not solely those people, ie adults, who are the original source of many young people's legitimate grievances.

Overall, however, Taylor has, unusually for an academic, written an interventionist, readable and, despite its faults, important book in terms of summarising major areas of debate in crime control policy in recent years. At the end of it, it is to be hoped that it might influence the flow of the debate within the Labour Party and on the left in general. It may, however, be on the streets again that the issues of crime, punishment and accountability will be fought over – and decided – rather than in the narrow confines and bars of the Palace of Westminster.

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