Some pages of this thesis may have been removed for copyright restrictions.

If you have discovered material in AURA which is unlawful e.g. breaches copyright, (either yours or that of a third party) or any other law, including but not limited to those relating to patent, trademark, confidentiality, data protection, obscenity, defamation, libel, then please read our Takedown Policy and contact the service immediately.
STRATEGIES AGAINST RACISM

VOL 1

A comparison of a social movement and case studies of anti-racist policy and practice in the local state

MICHAEL FRANK CRABTREE

Doctor of Philosophy

THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

September 1988

This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognise that its copyright rests with its author and that no quotation from the thesis and no information derived from it may be published without the author's prior, written consent.
The University of Aston in Birmingham

STRATEGIES AGAINST RACISM

A comparison of a social movement and case studies of anti-racist policy and practice in the local state

MICHAEL FRANK CRABTREE

Doctor of Philosophy
1988

The thesis compares two contrasting strategies employed with the aim of combating particular forms of racism within contemporary Britain. Both are assessed as political strategies in their own right and placed within the broader context of reformist and revolutionary political traditions.

The sociology of social movements is examined critically, as are Marxist and post-Marxist writings on the role of human agency within social structures and on the nature of social movements. The history of the Anti Nazi League (ANL) in the late 1970s and its opposition to the National Front is considered as an example of an anti-racist social movement based on the Trotskyist model of the United Front. The degree to which the Anti Nazi League corresponded to such a model is analysed as are the potential broader applications for such a strategy.

The strategy with which the ANL is compared is the development of anti-racist and equal opportunities policies within local government in the 1980s, primarily by Labour-controlled local authorities. The theory of the local state and the political phenomenon of municipal socialism are discussed, specifically the role of various groups operating in and around local authorities in the formation and implementation of anti-racist policy and practice. Following this general discussion, two case studies in each of the areas of local authority housing, education and employment are explored to consider in depth the problems of specific anti-racist policies.

In summation the efficacy of the two strategies are considered as parts of wider political currents in tandem with their declared specific objectives.

Key Phrases: anti-racism; social movement; Anti Nazi League; local state.
To my parents, without whom...
Acknowledgements

This thesis was researched and written in the period 1984-8 at the University of Aston. The impetus was provided by Pete Gibbon and Ahmed Gurnah at Sheffield City Polytechnic who first pointed me in the right direction. Thanks must go to Mick Rowlinson and Simon Read who provided much criticism and advice, not all of which was acted upon. Acknowledgements also to the interviewees and others who contributed to this work, especially the many municipal librarians who provided invaluable information. Special thanks must go to my supervisor, George Paton, who provided telling aid in the transformation of half-formulated notions into the the completed work here. On a more personal note, I would like to thank Marjorie for all her help and support and, of course, immeasurable thanks to Fran and Alice, the heirs to my invention. All errors below are my own.
## CONTENTS

### VOLUME 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Appendices</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Introduction</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Introductory themes</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 'Race' and racism</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Ideology</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 The State</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Theoretical perspectives</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Methodological perspectives</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 The anti-fascist social movement</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Key informants in empirical research</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Methodology for local state case studies</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10 Summary</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>2. The Nature of Social Movements</strong></th>
<th>43</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Introduction</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 The social movement as sophisticated collective behaviour</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 The social psychology of collective behaviour as social hostility</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Who joins a social movement</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Levels of social movement organisation</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 The sociologists of social movements</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 'Post-Marxist' writers on social movements</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Marxism and social movements</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 A Marxist revolutionary social movement - The Russian Revolution</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 Contemporary Marxist writers and social movements</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11 The United Front: Concept and Practice</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12 Summary</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>3. The British anti-fascist movement of the late 1970s and anti-racism</strong></th>
<th>83</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Introduction</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 The relationship between racism and fascism</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 The struggle against fascism in Britain in the 1930s</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Cable Street</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 The roots and growth of the National Front</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 The March on Red Lion Square</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7 The growth of the NF in 1976 and the start of a movement
3.8 The summer of 1976 and the growth of opposition to the NF
3.9 The NF arrives as an electoral force - 1977 and the GLC election
3.10 The Lewisham demonstration
3.11 The birth of the Anti Nazi League (ANL)
3.12 The organisation and running of the ANL
3.13 1978 and the initial confrontations between the NF and ANL
3.14 The first ANL Carnival
3.15 The NF and opposition in the East End in 1978
3.16 The struggles within the ANL
3.17 Carnival 2 and the build up to the 1979 General Election
3.18 The General Election campaign of 1979
3.19 The confrontation in Southall
3.20 The achievements, impact and decline of the ANL
3.21 Summary

4. The Local State and the development of 'race relations' policies
4.1 Introduction
4.2 The theory of the Local State
4.3 The politics of the Local State
4.4 The rise and fall of municipal socialism (1979-85)
4.5 The ratecapping campaign
4.6 Anti-racism in local government (1979-85)
4.7 The GLC and anti-racism
4.8 Structures and hierarchy
4.9 The role of elected members and officers
4.10 The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
4.11 Community Relations Councils (CRCs)
4.12 Community Organisations
4.13 The role of trade unions and workplace organisations in fighting racism
4.14 Summary

5. Housing Case Studies - Newham and Hackney
5.1 Introduction
5.2 The provision of council housing in Britain
5.3 Racism and the allocation of housing in post-war Britain
5.4 Housing and Newham's migrant communities
5.5 'Race relations' policies in Newham Council
5.6 Newham Council and racial harassment 227
5.7 Racial attacks and black self-defence in Newham 228
5.8 The Newham 8 Campaign 230
5.9 The Newham Monitoring Project 231
5.10 Policing and racial harassment 234
5.11 The eviction of the McDonnell family 236
5.12 The Court hearing 238
5.13 Support for the McDonnell family 241
5.14 The aftermath of the McDonnell eviction 244
5.15 Newham Council and the local police 246
5.16 Summary 248

Hackney Case Study
5.17 Introduction 258
5.18 Housing and Hackney's migrant population 259
5.19 The political make-up of the Borough 262
5.20 Hackney Council and the development of 'race relations' policy 263
5.21 The CRE investigation 268
5.22 Results of the CRE investigation 271
5.23 Conclusions of the CRE investigation 273
5.24 The response of the Council following publication of the Report 276
5.25 External opinion on the Report 281
5.26 Summary 283
5.27 Chapter Summary 284

VOLUME 2

6. Education Case Studies - Brent

6.1 Introduction 4
6.2 Brent Council - the immediate political history 8
6.3 'Race relations' policies in Brent 9
6.4 'Race relations' and education policy in Brent 12

Islamia Case Study
6.5 Introduction 18
6.6 The history of Muslim education in Britain 21
6.7 'Education for all': The Swann Report and its critics 24
6.8 Schooling and Muslims in Brent 28
6.9 The Muslim argument for Islamia 29
6.10 Running costs 31
6.11 The School's governing body 32
6.12 The response of Brent Council 33
6.13 Summary of findings 36
6.14 The roles of key and top influentials 38
6.15 External influences 42
6.16 Case study summary 43

Maureen McGoldrick Case Study
6.17 Introduction - The Offence
6.18 The role of the Governors and Parents
6.19 Political forces and top influentials within
Brent Council
6.20 The local NUT branch - Brent Teachers
Association
6.21 The BTA and the Maureen McGoldrick Case
6.22 Brent Black Teachers Collective (BBTC)
6.23 The Socialist Teachers Alliance (STA)
6.24 The legal battles and the resolution of the
dispute
6.25 Case study summary
6.26 Chapter Summary

7. Employment Case Studies - Liverpool and Islington

7.1 Introduction

Liverpool Case Study
7.2 Introduction
7.3 The history of the black presence in Liverpool
7.4 The development of 'race relations' policies by
Liverpool City Council
7.5 The post-1983 Militant-led Council
7.6 The development of 'race relations' policies under
Labour after 1983 and the Sam Bond dispute
7.7 The Black Caucus Account
7.8 The Liverpool Councillors Account
7.9 Interpretations of the Sam Bond appointment
7.10 The occupation of the Deputy Leader's Office
7.11 The campaign in the Liverpool labour movement
7.12 Grass roots organisation in and around
Liverpool 8
7.13 Case study summary

Islington Case Study
7.14 Introduction
7.15 The 'race relations' structures in Islington
Council
7.16 The development of 'race relations' structures
in the housing department
7.17 The provisions under Islington's Equal
Opportunities Employment Policy (EOEP)
7.18 The Nalgo strike
7.19 The procedural response of Islington Council
7.20 Case study summary
7.21 Chapter Summary

8. Conclusion

8.1 The contribution of the thesis
8.2 Summary - On strategies against racism
APPENDICES

1. The founding statement of the Anti Nazi League

2. Government expenditure controls on local government since 1979


4. The Non-Discrimination Notice served upon Hackney Council by the CRE

5. 'Race spies' and Section 11 funding

6. Voluntary Aided Status and Opting Out.

7. Costing by Brent Finance Department of the running of Islamia School if given voluntary aided status.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory themes.

It is to be hoped that the title of a thesis both indicates the purpose of the work and sets the fundamental terms of reference which shape it. The strategies in question in the title of this work are political strategies. They are specific in their focus, inasmuch as they are anti-racist, whilst at the same time being part of older and broader political traditions. Racism will be considered as an ideology which is not immutable but subject to both reproduction and alteration.¹ In this respect it will be submitted that strategies against racism are followed by those who believe that racism and its effects can be altered by human agency.

The object of this study is to compare two differing approaches to combating racism, the prime anti-racist strategies of the last ten years in Britain, and in that way to more fully explore the way racism is confronted by the two sides of the Left political tradition in Britain, of reformist and revolutionary organisations.² The choice of the two strategies, namely the ANL and the anti-racist policies of Left Labour Councils in the 1980s, was based on two considerations. Firstly both have attracted large numbers of anti-racist activists — those politically motivated to
not only fight racism but generally put that compulsion within a broader view of social dynamics. Secondly the way issues of racism are confronted by both strategies are reflective of the more anti-statist themes of 1970s in which the main objects of anti-racist attention were the police and extremist organisations such as the National Front and in the 1980s, when with the demise of the latter group the more widespread and amorphous racism in society was sought out at the local level via the local authorities.

The anti-racist social movement of the 1970s had its historical antecedents in the anti-fascist struggles of the 1930s and was led by a revolutionary group, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). The SWP argued for workers' self-activity, hostility to the established reformist political mechanisms within the capitalist state as a means for combating organised violent racism and its actions were built on an assumption that on the question of racism, as on others, the state could not be seen as neutral.

The other anti-racist strategy, that pursued by those advocating working within the capitalist state, whilst adopting a Left reformist stance has, in the 1980s, been exemplified in the renaissance of 'Municipal Socialism' and the theory of the Local State. Policies relating specifically to a division of the populace of the locale and the local authority's workers into sub-groups of women, ethnic minorities, disabled people and gay men and lesbians have been increasingly adopted. In particular 'race relations' policies have been initiated to redress what has been seen as a very obvious imbalance in terms of employment opportunities and service delivery within the realm of the local
council.

The thesis will draw out the contradictions between the two approaches to social change as expressed through the infra- and extra-state anti-racist strategies mentioned above and consider how these can be viewed as examples of reformist and revolutionary political theories in action. The revolutionary stance essentially locates racism within the capitalist system, irrevocably shaped by it, engrained in the activities of the capitalist state and only wholly removable by the abolition of the system which encompasses and reproduces it. It would point to the areas of corporate and state activity where unelected officials and groups have control. The structuralist Marxist argument, for example, emphasises the 'power' element in class power via the state and a suggestion that as has previously been shown, the position of socialist local councillors is such that they cannot operate truly autonomously under the weight of social forces over which they have no control, even with mass backing, unless they hand over the leadership of the campaigns to their own workers. Moreover, the humanist strand of Marxism in some respects throws up ways in which workers can use their potential power for change.

The reformist counter to both these variants would be to argue not only that revolutionaries actively hinder the processes of bringing about meaningful change by their 'come the revolution' abstentionism but that they also underestimate the importance of both major and small-scale reforms in improving the quality of life for people now, rather than in some Elysian future. In this respect the local authority with its
responsibility for housing, social services, education and employment, amongst others, wields considerable power. In the 1980s the 'local state', as it has been termed, has furthermore been seen by the reformist Left as a refuge from and a buttress against the worst ravages of "Thatcherism". "

When investigating contemporary themes such as these the researcher is always more likely to be overtaken by events and by the writings of others. Paul Gilroy, in his 'There ain't no black in the Union Jack', devotes a chapter to the comparison of the two anti-racist strategies. His arguments and appraisals are not concordant with those expressed in this thesis but his reasons for choosing them are valid. He sees the two currents as important:

because each has a clear and substantial commitment to the cultural dimensions of struggle, moving beyond the confines of formal politics into popular discourses, and because each in a different way articulates with a class politics."

Before venturing further into some of the questions raised here, it is important to invoke the conceptual and definitive criteria by which the thesis is moulded. This involves briefly discussing, for the purpose of this thesis, the nature of 'race', racism and their relation to the state and ideology. The general methodological framework can then be outlined before describing the actual work undertaken and what it is hoped will be gained by such a study.
1.2 'Race' and Racism

As Peter Fryer shows with excellent analysis, 'race' as a term used to divide up the human species has specific historical and social roots within the rise of capitalism and the advent of modern slavery. CLR James came to much the same conclusion when he wrote:

historically it is pretty well proved now that the ancient Greeks and Romans knew nothing about race. They had another standard - civilised and barbarian - and you could have a white skin and be a white barbarian and you could be black and civilised.\textsuperscript{12}

The usage of the term 'race' frequently goes unquestioned, certainly in everyday parlance and in academic discourse there remain writers who avoid the problem by not giving a definition\textsuperscript{13} and those who seek a more precise terminology which satisfies the various criteria set out by the vague way in which the idea of 'race' is commonly articulated.\textsuperscript{14}

There are some commentators such as Miles, Lecourt and Alexander, who argue that there is no scientific evidence that the multiplicity of human variation can be divided up along the lines of phenotypical or genotypical variations and do not wish to use the term 'race', because of its unscientific basis and ideological connotations.\textsuperscript{15} All seek to show, along Marxist materialist lines, that the question to be asked when looking at 'race' is not how the human species can be separated into holistic units by mental or
physical characteristics but why people should choose to delineate humanity thus. For as Miles and Phizacklea note:

'Races', then, do not exist; they are socially created by human beings. 'Race' is not an objective, biological feature; it is an idea. The human species is not naturally divided into discrete and distinct biological 'races'; it has divided itself into what is believed are 'races'... Hence 'races' only exist insofar as people think and believe as if they exist."

Racism, however, is a different matter. As much as 'race' is a human construction so its translation into an ideological setting inscribes social meaning on supposed biological difference. As an ideology racism is produced and reproduced under certain social conditions. The nature of racism and the way in which it is mediated can best be explained by referral to two key concepts for Marxists—ideology and the state.

1.3 Ideology

The boundaries drawn around what constitutes ideology are hardly narrow ones. The term has been formulated to distinguish the science of ideas from metaphysics; used in an everyday pejorative sense, e.g. when local politicians are attacked for acting 'ideologically'; and for Marx and Marxists after him, ideology is a given set of ideas which arise from a given set of material circumstances that are not immutable. The nature of the social circumstances do, however, wholly shape all ideas within human society. Larrain argues, as other Marxists would, that
because of the distortions of human relations in class society, the application of 'Concepts such as ideology ... cannot but imply a distorted state of affairs' and that ideology should be used in the context of discussing the class nature of society.

There has been much debate in the Marxist and pseudo-Marxist literature as to the true nature of ideology and whether there exists one ideology or many. From the concept of social being determining consciousness, as stated by Marx, to the structuralism of Althusser and the re-assertion of humanism by the post-Althusserians, attempts to develop a theory which can take account of a material base underpinning systems of ideas and practices altering that material base have proliferated. In his useful overview of the subject, Larrain raises a key issue:

Ideology unites in one phenomenon, consciousness and reality. This is the reason why ideology cannot be dissolved by mental criticism; it can only be dealt with by solving in practice the social contradictions which give rise to it ... In this sense, for Marx revolutionary practice and not science is the only way to overcome ideology. [my emphasis]

This is centrally important, as will be seen later, in the consideration of local authority anti-racist strategies which are in part based on the assumption that racism is a false idea that can be surmounted by appeals to reason and the dissemination of alternative ideas - an anti-racist counter-culture. To put it more explicitly, the Marxist argument is that the way to change the material basis of the ideology of racism is by bringing about
material change.

Marxist analyses of racism have at times tended to be reductionist - binding historical materialism within the base/superstructure straightjacket. For Cox, amongst others\textsuperscript{20}, racism developed during the nineteenth century period of slavery as a simple justification for the inhumane treatment of black slaves and has remained embedded in the national psyche ever since. This duality of a conspiracy theory (the assumption that racism was first used simply to justify slavery and then more recently to 'divide and rule' the working class) and idealism (that without the material basis of slavery for racism the idea has its own momentum) is most problematic and has been criticised by Gabriel and Ben-Tovim for not telling the full story whilst Fryer gives a fuller, more rounded attempt at an analysis of the roots of racism.\textsuperscript{21} Lecourt has also sought to re-assert the material base of racism as an ideology. He argues that there should be:

no intention of reducing racism to the realm of ideas ... ideas do not exist outside the apparatuses within which their reproduction occurs ... the predominance of a racist ideology in the ideological class struggle of a given social formation involves analysing the workings of the ideological apparatuses of the state and revealing the mechanisms whereby this ideology is reproduced.\textsuperscript{22}

This last theme of the production and reproduction of the ideology of racism is one that has been used to effect by Robert Miles\textsuperscript{23} who reasserts the centrality of the working class in the reproduction of the ideology of racism as part of the
contradictory ideologies prevailing at any time. He makes the point that racism as an ideology needs a material base to be rooted in and that however false, in some ways it must make 'sense' and provide real answers for people. For Miles the reproduction of the ideology of racism 'is not so much a function of ideas themselves but of the material context (which includes not simply the 'economic' but also the political and ideological) in which they are reproduced'.24

In sum, racism is best viewed as an ideology which is not straightforwardly disseminated through the working class by ruling class dictat but rather has its own conditions of generation and regeneration rooted within the material forces operating in capitalist class society. As such racism has a 'common-sense' element and does not have to be logically consistent to be prevalent. Despite appeals to scientific evidence and the 'all equal under the skin' argument, the idea of 'race' and the social meaning attached seem almost ineradicable. If anything the recent development of anti-racism in local authorities and elsewhere has heightened people's awareness of the importance of 'race'. For if there are no 'races', how can there be 'race relations'? If one is to offer a definition of racism, it seems that Miles comes nearest when he describes it as:

an ideology which ascribes negatively evaluated characteristics in a deterministic manner (which may or may not be justified) to a group which is additionally identified as being in some way biologically (phenotypically or genotypically) distinct.25
In part that ideology is mediated through the policies and practices of the state - whereby 'race relations' are managed. The nature and form of ideology is usually considered in relation to the state and in that respect an investigation of the ideology of racism in Britain is closely linked to the actions of the British state.

1.4 The State

The nature of the state will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 4 below, with reference both to the theorisation of the local state and municipal anti-racism in particular. The revival of interest on the Labour Left in local government and the politics of municipal socialism have come about in the Britain of the 1980s with the influence of the political current of 'Bennism'. As the Eurocommunist wing of the Communist Party might effectively be considered to be theoreticians for the Labour left, much of what Bennism consists of also comes under the aegis of Eurocommunism and this ties in with the notion of the 'relative autonomy of the local state'. Some writers of the Eurocommunist oeuvre, such as Stuart Hall, are rightly critical of the lack of success in Britain of 'race relations' policies but see the solution through greater accountability and responsiveness on the part of the state. Gabriel and Ben-Tovim write, in arguing for more sophistication from those who would disclaim the state as inherently racist, that:
a more satisfactory alternative is to assume that some manoeuvrability is possible within political practice. The policies themselves then justify careful examination. The economic and political constraints can thus be considered as the necessary framework within which variation is possible.\textsuperscript{28}

The problem remains in finding a realistic definition of the 'constraints'.

Robert Miles\textsuperscript{29} similarly urges an avoidance of the vulgar Marxists' automatic correlation between racist effects and racist causes in state activity. He questions the view that British capital and the state have consciously sought to divide the working class by the process of racialisation of part of the slave stock (and later the working class) and concludes that the state could not mediate racism at the behest of capital, if only because of the fractionalisation of capital and the semi-autonomous nature of the state in relation to capital. This does not, however, lead to the conclusion that the state acts in a racist manner. For Miles, the confusion occurs in others when they seek to prove the necessity of racism for capital - thereby confusing effect with causality.

The nature of the state, its position within modern capitalism and prospects for its reform are themes repeatedly thrown up in the course of the thesis. For more specific considerations of the effects of state racism in practice there are several worthwhile studies, for example in the collection by the CCCS and the writings of Castles & Kosack which focused upon the importance of black labour for British capital's post-war regeneration.\textsuperscript{30} In these studies of racism and the state much
debate revolves around the degree of intentionality and the degree of conscious racism prevalent in various parts of the state.

There is a black nationalist, radical anti-statist, vein of writing which homes in on the state as the key force in the reproduction of racism. The difficulty in looking too myopically at the state is one of losing the broader analysis which can explain why the state plays such a part in the reproduction of the ideology of racism within the framework of capitalist relations, not set apart from them. The conclusion forwarded by the anti-statists is that the working class has little to offer black people over and above their own involvement in the class struggle. The Marxist corrective might suggest that the state's task of class domination is not only basic but also its specific reason for existence and that it is a false premise to present a collective black 'community' of interests in Britain which can be used as an analytical tool in contrast with, or external to, class relations.

The definition of what the capitalist state actually consists of has been further developed by Althusser and Gramsci. More recently Alex Callinicos has paraphrased Marx (On the Jewish Question) in a piece which could have been directed at those who argue for the relative autonomy of the local state. Callinicos contends that:

Human emancipation can be completed ... not through the perfection of the state as an autonomous institution by means of its further democratisation; but by its abolition and with it the aboliton of the distinction between state and society.
The debate remains over whether the state carries out non-class tasks 'inevitably in class distorted ways for class ends with class consequences' as Hal Draper suggests; whether the state can be transformed and with it capitalist society or whether, as Lenin argued, 'the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution but also without the destruction of the apparatus of state power'. Having briefly raised the three key theoretical antecedents to the thesis — the nature of racism, its role as an ideology and the role of the state in the reproduction of ideologies — the general theoretical and methodological perspectives which inform the research can be set against them. The methodologies adopted here are shaped by the nature of the objects under investigation and therefore the anti-racist social movement and local authority anti-racist strategies are considered separately below.

1.5 Theoretical Perspectives

The theoretical basis for this thesis may at first sight appear to be a fudged compromise between Marx and Weber. What has been adopted is the delineation between explanatory and analytical theory as developed by Harold Fallding and from that to base this thesis within an analytical framework. There are parallels between the split in theories as laid out by Fallding and the twin currents in Marxism — scientific and critical — as identified by Alvin Gouldner. The work of Fallding thus provides a useful starting point for a delineation of the theoretical thrust of the rest of
the thesis.

One of Fallding's central claims in 'The Sociological Task' was that, 'To have a theory about anything is to have an explanation for it'\textsuperscript{36}. He argued that at the same time as there were coherent explanatory theories for social (and scientific) phenomena, there were also less grandiose tools in the theoretician's armoury. These he termed components of analytical theory - offering a way to conceptualise society in a cogent way without constant recourse to a fuller, broader theorem. The contention that Fallding made was that:

\begin{quote}
It involves no contradiction, surely, to acknowledge that explanatory theory is the ultimate goal of our science and to insist that we come to it by stages, each of which must be vigourous in itself.\textsuperscript{39}
\end{quote}

As a valuable post in this 'stagism', Fallding suggested the heuristic of the Weberian ideal type.

Weber sought to give ideal types a meaning different to that of purely descriptive concepts. If descriptive types gather together the salient features of empirical phenomena, then, as Anthony Giddens notes, ideal types are 'constituted by the abstraction and combination of a number of elements which, although found in reality, are rarely or never discovered in their specific form'\textsuperscript{40}. Most fundamentally for Weber, as Giddens argues, the transition from descriptive to ideal types takes place when we move from descriptive classification of phenomena towards explanatory or theoretical analysis of those phenomena. Giddens terminology clashes with that of Fallding somewhat - the former choosing to differentiate between descriptive and
theoretical/explanatory analyses and the latter using analytical and explanatory theories to express much the same division. There are some problems with both these modes of analysis or at least prospective problems, with their interpretation in terms of the holism of Marxism. The development of analytical theory, as Fallding would term it, can be seen as the position occupied by much standard sociological theory especially structural-functionalism which runs as a counter-current to Marxism.

Whilst not wishing to enter the Marxism/sociology debate here, the implications from Fallding are that there are elements of sociological theory which, whilst resting upon certain assumptions regarding the nature of society, can be held to be 'above ideology'. It is one thing to recognise one's theoretical antecedents and quite another to deny or deny by omission, their existence. There are some examples of sociological research in which the writers seek to set out their theoretical stall above any one paradigm, in an effort to most fully represent the complexity of modern society. In a similar vein many notions antithetical to the basic premises of Marxism, re class society etc, seek to nestle under the wing of Marxism (as will be seen in Chapter 4). For that reason alone it is worth reiterating the argument of Gouldner:

Marx did not think of his theory simply as a social science (the view of "clubby" academicians who want to "normalise" Marxism into something familiar). It was also a doctrine of violent revolution.
If Gouldner chooses to locate within Marxism two tendencies - scientific and critical - then thesis may be defined as both analytical and critical. It is analytical in Fallding's terms; not a contribution to explanatory theory but a supportive analysis to Marxist theory on racism and relations to the local state. Similarly, the thesis also has a critical side which, as Gouldner somewhat simplistically puts it, eschews the tendency to 'plunge into action at some point, in the expectation that action will resolve epistemological ambiguities'.

1.6 Methodological Perspectives

In the first chapter of their book 'The Local Politics of Race', Ben-Tovim et al present a spirited defence of the role of the researcher as wholly involved with and having an effect upon the subject of their research. Not all researchers explicitly share their commitment to 'inject the products of social science into the political and policy process'. The methodology of this thesis is, in some respects, moulded by and a response to, prior 'race relations' writings. The choice of categories in the case studies in the 'local state' section, for example, owes a debt to Daniel. Approaching the task from a Marxist viewpoint there are a number of forthcoming texts which offer a critical analysis of the failings of previous state initiatives on racism but are less than straightforward on the Marxist approach to fighting racism as a part of the struggle against capitalism. On the other hand, there are several studies, ranging from the liberally concerned to the urban managerialist, on the various
ways that local authorities can seek to lessen the effects of racism remove discrimination by greater integration of 'race relations' structures within a corporate management organisation and the increased political commitment of senior officers and councillors.\textsuperscript{48}

In emphasising their approach to what is essentially action research, Ben-Tovim et al argue that,

In our view 'research' should be seen as a normal attribute of political action which involves, or should involve, a form of analysis based on a realistic and concrete assessment of the balance of political forces and the consequences of different courses of action.\textsuperscript{49}

This thesis features to a large extent an investigation of the local policy making structures on 'race relations'. What are drawn as conclusions, however, may not have as direct an input as Ben-Tovim et al would hope for in terms of improvements to be made in local authority policy and practice. The research is more generally concerned with identifying and establishing the limitations upon the various groups and interests involved in the local politics of anti-racism and thus suggesting the constraints on how far local authority anti-racism can hope to develop.

The other major part of the thesis looks at what may be attainable through the development of an anti-racist social movement and whether the specificity of a social movement is both a positive factor and at the same time a self-imposed limit on its aims. As mooted earlier, this research did involve a considerable degree of researcher involvement, not only participant observation. The formal procedures of the research process were followed where appropriate but by necessity
these were supplemented by the involvement of the researcher in political campaigns and making political interventions, which in some eyes might seem to subvert the notion of the impartial observer. While there are ambiguities in the analysis and the political thrust of Ben-Tovim et al, they are critical of those who argue for value free-research on 'race' in condemning the abstention of the researcher from the research-based intervention. They write:

Attempts to depoliticise the research process are unrealisable and serve to undermine attempts to mount a serious and effective challenge to institutionalised racism and inequality. In our view the focus of the research question, the context in which it is carried out and the use to which it is put make research process political from beginning to end.60

This thesis, is, therefore political and deals with a highly politicised subject. What it does not do is to seek to avoid the political attitudes and roles of influencers within anti-racist activity. Nor does it assume that the fundamental weaknesses of either strategy against racism can be located without recourse to their relations to the capitalist state and the way in which change is brought about in capitalist society.

1.7 The anti-racist social movement in Britain in the late 1970s.

An obvious, though important starting point is the fact that the anti-racist social movement, under the auspices of the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), was a short-term contemporary event, being most active in the period 1978-79. While it can now be looked at in its totality with
the benefit of a decade's reflection it is not long enough ago in
historical terms to have merited the scholastic works from which the
enterprising researcher can draw inspiration (or information). In that
respect the definitive account of the anti-racist movement has still to
be written and this can be only one view of it.

Looking at the anti-racist movement as a whole has led, for
the purpose of this thesis, to a study revolving around the ANL and its
relations to the rest of the movement and to the British state,
particularly the police. This is not only because of the primacy of the
ANL and the challenge it presented to the National Front (NF) but also
because of the stress it placed on the avoidance of the usual forums of
political change, the local elections, the council chamber and the
Houses of Parliament. It will be noted that often in the course of the
thesis the ANL is referred to as though it was the movement. This is
not done with the intention of ignoring the contribution made by others
but rather to highlight the leadership in the movement given by the ANL
and its centrality in the demise of the NF (although this is contested
by some chroniclers of the period who would point to the way Margaret
Thatcher assumed the racist mantle in the run up to the 1979 General
Election.57) The questions have to be raised not only of the import of
the ANL in the defeat of the NF but also the degree to which its
tactics brought it to the fore of all anti-racist groupings at the
time. In the adoption of a conceptual framework with which to explore
the ANL as an anti-racist mass social movement, there were two central
elements to be integrated - the analytical and contextual.
The analytical framework is built around the problematic of the sociology of social movements. Much of this field has been informed by social psychologists and influenced by the works of Erving Goffman and the theory of symbolic interactionism in exploring motivational forces which drive individuals into collective social activity. The majority of this work, emanating from the United States, drew upon the experiences in the US in the 1960s of the civil rights movement, the women's movement and the gay rights movement.

Neil Smelser's 'Theory of Collective Behaviour', although now dated, is still noted for typologising and analysing the various forms of collective behaviour which at their most complex fuse into the social movement. The key areas to be explored for Smelser were - (i) whether social movements are more sophisticated forms of collective behaviour; (ii) whether there are different levels of social movement activity which can be delineated; and (iii) if it possible to assess who joins a social movement. For the purpose of this thesis these questions have been best explored, from a social psychological angle, by the American writers Lofland and Zircher & Snow. In particular they attempt to draw out the psychological and motivational aspects appropriate to the type of social movement under analysis here.

The emphasis on the sociology of social movements is made to place the anti-racist movement in a sociological context which not only provides a suitable working typology of the movement but which can fully take account of the political motivations and internal political ferment and contest for ideas within a social movement. The representation of the movement may not be easily accommodated within the models provided by the above mentioned writers, not least because of
their broader assumptions about the nature of conflict and change within society. There are also difficulties in including the cognitive angle in terms of social movement organisation, ideology and strategy within such a framework which is presented at the level of relating to the pre-constituted movement. Whilst the synchronic analyses of the above authors have uses in typologising social movements, it may be that without taking a diachronic view the root causes of discontent which throw up social movements are played down or ignored completely. It was with this in mind that a comparison was drawn between a social psychological analysis of social movements and what Marxist writers had to say on the motivation of individuals acting in concert to bring about social change.

Apart from the works of Heberle, Touraine and Roberts and Kloss there has been little written on social movements, qua social movements, from the Marxist or quasi-Marxist school. There is a clear anti-psychologism in a writer such as Poulantzas, who in his famous debate with Milliband stressed the importance of viewing individuals as 'bearers' (trajér) of social relations (echoing Althusser). By contrast Sartre and Thompson sought to re-assert the humanist element in Marxism which takes account of the way individuals are positioned within social activity and engage in collective action in concert. The attempts of Marxists to put the individual into historical forces, primarily classes, without locating any key individual as the driving force of history, gives a more rounded if less constructed analysis of the impetus behind social movements. Once again the issues of Marxist humanism - as
with those of the sociology of social movements - are raised in
Chapter 2 not for their divertive merits but in an attempt to
develop a typology for the anti-racist social movement which could
take account of societal factors, such as class relations and
political currents, whilst taking account of what made the ANL
attractive to non-aligned individuals.

The contextual perspective refers to the historical
forebears of the anti-racist social movement. As will be noted in
much greater detail in Chapter 3 below, although the images of
Civil Rights demonstrations in the U.S. may seem more relevant, it
would be inconsistent to seek to explain the British anti-racist
social movement of the late 1970s without recourse to its
historical forebears. The ANL was a body built broadly along the
lines of the United Front, as formulated by Leon Trotsky in the
1930s, which drew upon the historical precedents of the Left's
struggle against fascism in the 1930s, particularly in Britain.

Whether the ANL actually approximated towards a United
Front, and whether such a model was appropriate for 1970s Britain
will be considered below, as will some of the most apposite of the
many critiques of the strategy and tactics employed by the ANL. The
main tenets of anti-racism proposed by the ANL were the self-
activity of those opposed to racism and outright physical
opposition to the NF and other fascist groups. Furthermore, mass
propaganda was disseminated in an attempt to build groups away from
the leaderships of political parties, trade unions etc. who were
not all supportive of the tactics of the ANL.

Although there is no inevitable connection between
racism and fascism, nor a Chinese wall dividing them, the racism practised by fascist groups such as the NF was central to their political ideology. It is worth reiterating that the NF's major recruitment factor was its policy on 'race'. Similarly, sections of the opposition to the NF noted the popular racist vein which the NF tapped and were at pains to stop the NF being able to capitalise and more particularly mobilise upon popular racism and convert it into the basis for a potential fascist mass movement. This brings in to question the ways in which such a movement could be applied to a more amorphous ideology such as racism rather than the specifics of nascent fascism and brings into question the flexibility of the ANL model as an anti-racist social force operating outside of the state in its national or local forms.

1.6 Key Informants in Empirical Research

Many of the secondary sources were national and local newspapers, as well as journals and the publications of the major combatants - the ANL, the SWP, Communist Party and the Labour Party. Reference is also made to leaflets and less formal publications. Interviews were conducted with key informants in 3 separate areas. These involved individuals in the leadership and national organisation of the ANL and the SWP at the time (for a list of interviewees used see Notes). These people provided politically informed analyses and assessments of the movement and gave a more holistic viewpoint on the role of the movement. Where interviews were undertaken with ex-members of the ANL from local
branches, particularly in Sheffield, Birmingham and London, these helped to flesh out the picture of local organisation and structure, both in terms of the relationship between the various bodies comprising the ANL and the use of cultural politics, such as Rock Against Racism, as a unifying force. The third group of respondents were those in affiliated and interested organisations who held differing views about how to fight racism and the highly racist neo-fascism of the NF. These included the Labour Party, the Communist Party, and the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Each of these, whilst expressing their abhorrence of the NF, came into conflict with the group which was the largest anti-fascist force at the time, the ANL.

The technique used was straightforward - a fairly open-ended interview was adopted which consisted of leading the interviewees through the key events of the period so that their recollections had certain cognitive hooks to hang upon. This was then followed up with questions relating to a more general appraisal of the merits and demerits of the ANL, the political debates running through the movement and the possibility of a future mass movement taking on a similar type character in the future. In this way the particular facets of the movement were drawn out and thus the strengths and limits of this strategy. It further led to a process of ascertaining how good a fit the ANL was with either the classical United Front model or with the social movement models discussed in Chapter 2.

The intention of the study was to build up a picture of the period 1977-79 in which the NF, a small fascist party, was of
the opinion that it could grow substantially by the mobilisation of popular racism. Approaches were made to the NF and other individuals involved in the far-right for information but with little success. The one-sidedness of the primary sources is therefore acknowledged. The opposition, coalescing around the ANL, was able to set itself up as a pole of attraction for anti-racists opposed to the the NF but in the process of doing so attracted others. For the SWP, the question is raised as to the role of a leading body within the ANL, which wholly overestimated the esprit de corps and revolutionary potential of the anti-racist movement. The debate over the degree to which the NF was stopped by the ANL is aired, along with the other possible reasons for the Front's demise. The concluding Chapter returns to the two main themes of the investigation of the ANL as an anti-racist social movement - the degree of its success and its application as a general anti-racist strategy.

In contrast, the focus for anti-racism in the early 1980s moved from the streets and mass mobilisations to the Town Halls and committee rooms of Left Labour councils and that provides the other strategy under consideration in this thesis. The comparison between the two strategies is also reflective of different epochs in British history. The ANL was formed towards the end of the last Labour Government and overlapped with the series of public sector disputes labelled the 'winter of discontent' when strikes and mass mobilisations were more commonplace and the ideas of self-activity outside the confines of the local state were more prevalent. By comparison, local authority anti-racism is almost
wholly a product of the Thatcher years and, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, must be appraised both in terms of the Conservative Government's relations with local government and the Labour Left's perceptions of the failings of the Callaghan and Wilson Governments.

Local Authority Anti-Racism in the 1980s.

1.9 Methodology employed - fieldwork for case studies

As with most other areas of study, research on the problems of initiating and developing anti-racism policies within local authorities can be undertaken in a number of ways. Both operational and methodological factors precluded the choice of a quantitative approach to the investigations. The two main factors which shaped the style and content of this major section of the thesis were both geographical and temporal. The political analyses were enhanced during the course of research (1984-88) by the collapse of much of what could be called 'municipal socialism' in the face of fiscal and political crises.

To help build up a general picture a purely exploratory pilot study was initiated within the W. Midlands area. This consisted of contacting officers within local authorities in the W. Midlands and discussing their policies and practices with key informants in the area of 'race relations'. It soon became clear, however, that there were more fruitful areas of study in other parts of the country, most crucially London, which would provide
better and more relevant subjects for analysis. This should not be dismissed as anti-parochialism, although there may be elements of truth within that notion. Rather it is an admission that what councils are struggling with in the W. Midlands at the moment in terms of anti-racist policy-making and implementation, even in a city the size of Birmingham, is at a lower level, is shaped by different traditions and is in many respects less sophisticated than that of many London Labour-controlled authorities. Given that London was where the greatest number of anti-racist activists were, and for the formulation of a strategy the presence of activists was important, it is perhaps unsurprising that the clearest example of the problems of municipal anti-racism occur there. The emphasis of the thesis was thus drawn to the metropolis, though not entirely.

One of the single most important features about the development of local authority strategies against racism is that they are in their infancy. It was in the 1976 Race Relations Act that the onus was first put upon local authorities to attempt to lessen racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. In the decade-plus since then the uptake of this responsibility has been varied from authority to authority and it has been to the alleged weaknesses of the Act that activists working within local government have sought to develop their own specific anti-racist policies. What it did provide for some local authorities for the first time was an implicit admission in law that institutional racism did exist and gave local councils a legislative peg on which to hang their policy frameworks.

Since the 1976 Act, though mostly since the early
1980s, there has been a steady growth in the number of councils adopting anti-racist policy statements, setting up 'race relations' units and appointing 'race relations' advisors, introducing contract compliance rules and instituting other policies aimed at the minimisation of racial discrimination. What this has led to in terms of research is the problem of investigating an area of policy making and implementation which in many respects is so recent that it is difficult to ascertain the degree of success of such policies. A way round this difficulty was found in what may be termed 'ambulance chasing' - to be more precise exploring those authorities where on specific issues, the 'race relations' policy was found to be lacking or the whole anti-racist procedure was in crisis. This may appear to over-dramatise the situations by choosing the scenarios where conflict was paramount but the fact that some of the contradictions, expectations and conflicts in local anti-racism are writ large in the case studies here does not invalidate them or deny their import.

To assess the relationships and conflicts within and around the local state anti-racist venture, it seemed to be most appropriate to look at those areas where the apparent concensus had broken down over the formulation or implementation of 'race relations' policies. This was where there was open conflict over the best way to fight instances of racism; where racism was coming from individuals or was part of the institution of the local authority itself; or where the people supposed to be carrying out the policies of a council were deemed not to be the best suited to the task. It was with these instances that certain structural
factors limiting anti-racist strategies as well as previously unthought of factors came to light. The conclusions drawn from the six case studies presented below may not always throw up better 'race relations' policies for local government but they contribute to the debate over the 'Local State' concept and its efficacy for anti-racist practice and 'municipal socialism' in general.

Hamerseley & Atkinson sum up the intentions of this research method thus:

Social events themselves may also stimulate research, providing an opportunity to explore some unusual occurrence or to test a theory. Notable here are...political crises that promise to reveal what happens when the limiting factors that normally constrain a particular element of social life are breached. At such times social phenomena that are otherwise taken-for-granted become visibly problematic for the participants themselves, and thus for the observer.**

As Hamerseley & Atkinson point out, most ethnographic research has been concerned with developing theories rather than merely testing existing hypotheses. The research undertaken here in local authorities' strategies against racism was generated by a variety of means. Primary approaches were made to the local authorities themselves - to top and key influentials** within the local council structure. That involved seeking senior officers for interviews and information, broadening the sweep to junior officers where necessary, though more than once a degree of 'economy with the truth' was required to elicit responses from officers all too wary of any potentially adverse publicity. The access accorded to a
researcher is at best irregular, despite the best efforts towards an organised and equitable representation in each of the case studies (for a list of interviewees used see Notes).

The overt political input had then to be taken into consideration both through the very direct influence of local councillors and the more distanced actions of trade unions and external pressure groups. In each of the case studies the amount of consideration given to the relevant groups is directly related to their relevance to the case in question. The methods of gleaning information were not always formal interviews, other methods adopted including attending political meetings, pickets and demonstrations and drawing on informal discussions in a variety of venues. Once again, as stated above, this involved a considerable degree of participation on my part in the political process. It could not have been otherwise.

In the conclusions to each case-study chapter reference will be made to the work of both Merton\textsuperscript{51} and Offe\textsuperscript{62} who have both attempted to come to terms with the ambivalent and contradictory positions occupied by those working within the state. Merton expresses through sociological ambivalence the processes through which structures generate the circumstances in which ambivalence is embedded in statuses and status-sets. In the application of the societal divisions of 'status-sets' and the implicit anti-Marxism, in Merton's analysis are problematic, his work does have its merits, not least in his stress on the centrality of conflicts of interests and values. Offe goes beyond Merton's approach and seeks to bring out the inherent contradictions in the capitalist system.
which, he believes, are refracted in the relationship between 
legitimacy and efficiency in the demands of the state. The merit of 
both works is in restating the notions of ambivalence and 
contradiction which will be presented as characterising the 
positions of the local statists’ attempts to combat racism.

The case studies show how serious problems have 
repeatedly come about as Labour councillors seek to implement 
radical programmes against hostile circumstances over which they do 
not have control. The importance of the case studies is not in 
their proscriptive ability, rather they attempt to show some of the 
inherent problems and failings of Left reformism as attempted most 
recently through the strategy of municipal socialism and in 
particular as a means of attacking the causes and effects of the 
ideology of racism. The local authority case studies comprise: an 
eviction of council tenants for racial harrassment in Newham; the 
CRE investigation into council housing in Hackney; the Islamia 
School’s quest for voluntary aided status and the Maureen 
McGoldrick saga in Brent; the appointment of Sam Bond as the head 
of Liverpool’s first Race Relations Unit and the strike over racial 
harassment in Islington’s Housing Department.

1.10 Summary

The conclusion will have to confront the question which 
haunts all research which takes on case-work. Are the case studies 
indicative or merely illustrative of general themes? Do even six 
different case studies provide an accurate picture of municipal
anti-racism and can the Anti Nazi League or any other anti-racist movement be described as a typical anti-racist movement? Inevitably the degree of interpretation lies in the hands of the researcher. The themes reiterated below beyond the bounds of anti-racist strategy will be those which determine other political strategies, the relationship of politics to the state and the influence of ideology and its reproduction in modern Britain. It is an interactive process in which the strategies themselves can have an effect on the way 'race relations' are constructed. But it would be remiss to include too many tentative conclusions in what is supposed to be an introduction. The comparison, which takes anti-racism as its motif, is whether political change is best achieved through the organs of the state or separate from it.
CHAPTER 2

On the nature of Social Movements

2.1 Introduction

If, as was suggested in Chapter 1, the coalition of anti-racist forces which gathered in opposition to the National Front in the late 1970s, especially around the Anti Nazi League, constituted a social movement, how is this movement to be approached? It can be viewed as an aberrance, a specific reaction to the specific political and social circumstances of the time. It can be typologised by attempting to probe the motivations of the individuals and groups which joined the movement via their social networks, the degree of organisation of the movement or the degree of social hostility developed by the movement. Another approach, the one which is seen as to be the most appropriate here, is to find precedents and comparative movements which the movement under consideration can be held up against. Thus, although the other views will be considered for their worth and the insight which they can project into a study of the anti-racist movement, it is the perspective, of the model of the Trotskyist United Front which has proven most illuminating.

At one time Marxists may have been annexed from other social theorists by their assertion of the centrality of the working class as the agency for fundamental social change. In the last 25 years, various American and European academics have held up social movements as new
social collectives which can prefigure a new historical epoch. For writers such as Andre Gorz, Alain Touraine in France, Alvin Gouldner in the U.S. and Jurgen Habermas in Germany, the new movements have gone beyond the problems of instigating workers' revolution and have entered social relations without the old parties and their constituents. As Aronovitz notes, 'Social movements became the euphemism for the "new" subject.' Furthermore, many of the demands of those movements for sexual liberation and racial equality have been taken up by those involved in the municipal socialism enterprises discussed below (see Chapter 4).

For many on the Left the social movement has become a new form of political expression unencumbered by any reliance on what is usually termed the 'white, male' working class and has the added attraction of being apparently autonomous and infinitely more flexible. There has developed, particularly in America, a sociology of social movements which stresses the conflictual aspects of society thereby to some extent escaping the Parsonian web. However beyond the psychological and structuralist theories which still hold sway in the social movements debate, those writers approaching the subject from a supposedly Marxist standpoint, at least which includes an element of class society, offer a relatively uncritical appreciation of the new movements which belies the rigorous criticisms applied to Marxist theory.

At one level, a social movement is a group of people seeking to make their own history. That axiom will not, however, serve the purpose as a definition, precisely because whilst having some authenticity it is lacking in definition. Herbert Blumer experienced
the same problem in calling social movements 'collective enterprises to establish a new order of life'. If this interpretation catches some of the flavour, it remains couched in ambiguities. At the same time the specifically political nature of social movements is such that it contains within it a resonance of the division of the economic and the political under capitalism. Heberle comes closer to the essence of social movements when he defines them as 'a specific kind of concerted-action groups; they last longer and are more integrated than mobs, masses and crowds, and yet are not organised like political clubs and organisations.' This definition, though, has an essentially descriptive rather than explanatory usage.

Social movements in the post-war period have been considered in mainstream sociology as disruptive forces and channels for popular protest. Many Western, specifically American, observers focused on social movements as a category for investigation in the 1960s, a period of mass political upheaval and 'movementism'. Much of the research was aimed at movements as singular movements and the way in which their reform could lead to social integration (although the late 1970s on both sides of the Atlantic saw a neo-conservative tide undermining social movements and in some cases their disintegration). Some writers (Blumer, Toch & McLaughlin) have stressed the psychological aspects in which a social movement is 'an effort by a large number of people to solve collectively a problem they feel they have in common.' For others (Cantril, King, Gusfield & Wilkinson), temporal and geographical factors emerge to explain 'a group venture extending beyond a local community or a single event and involving a systematic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behaviour and social relationships.'
A major factor in the problematic of isolating the essence of social movements is the diversity of groups under consideration. Within the ANL, for example, there was more than one Trotskyist grouping, the Communist Party, parts of the Labour Party, religious groups, black organisations and trade unions, as well as number of personalities from the arts and sport. Non-Marxist writers (especially those coming from the field of social psychology) have tried to ascribe equal weight to differing movements, from the religious to the secular, revolutionary to reactionary and co-operative to schismatic. Marxist writers, by bringing in a historical perspective and reiterating the fundamental contradictions inherent in class society, by and large do not see groups seeking to change the social order as 'deviant' nor do they equate a religious cult with a revolutionary movement, for example. This is not meant to suggest, it must be noted, that there is a collective opinion on the question, which at its heart, reflects the ability of the individual, through collective means, to have an influence upon society.

An important starting point is the work of Rudolf Heberle. In his 'Social Movements: An Introduction to Political Sociology', Heberle invokes the political element, using the political as the primary characteristic for a social movement, in that 'it aims to bring about fundamental changes in the social order, especially in those basic institutions of property and labour relationships.' This includes workers' movements, anti-colonial movements, peasants' movements and, of course, fascist movements. Heberle excludes, however, religious movements because of what he sees as their inherent conservatism in accepting the basic social structure of society.
He goes on to describe social movements as attempts to change power and order in relation to social trends and tendencies. These trends, he argues, are most frequently unplanned, 'the aggregate effect of many individual actors'. This is a notably voluntarist approach but Heberle makes a further key point on the composition of social movements. Roberts and Kloss give the best summary of his position:

Movements are special kinds of social collectivity that is not organised but may have many members who belong to organised groups; therefore a movement is a social collective that has some element of planning or of goal orientation within it. Insofar as social movements that seek to change the power relationships of a society are political or pre-political there is planning within the movement. [3]

In the anti-racist movement of the 1970s, for example, which is examined in Chapter 3 below, there existed an amalgam of organised groups which brought about centralised political planning within the movement - whilst each group attempted to retain a degree of ideological autonomy. An account of such social movements has to take account of the different ideologies of the participants and participant bodies as they entered the movement.

Whilst Heberle is a useful beginning there are two other strands to be followed. One expressly tries to confront the nature of social movements and their joiners, particularly the latter. This comes from an interactionist perspective, rooted in social psychology. Smelser, Lofland" and others have attempted to explain why individuals join social movements and what are the natures of the movements' internal structures that may regulate this. The counter-current comes
from a Marxist direction and tries to put in some context the reasons
why individuals are spurred to action, given particular historical and
social instances, within a more generalised view of class relations
underpinning a capitalist society and all that encompasses. The
frameworks outlined below by the social psychologists have only limited
explanatory and critical worth in terms of their classification of
aspects, of factors of social movements. They are limited by their
overriding methodological individualism. From that perspective a social
movement is looked upon as a body which a free individual may or may
not join as they choose. What they do not attempt to explain is what
throws up a particular social movement or to contextualise a movement
historically or socially.

Inasmuch as they claim to eschew 'environmental factors' (Lofland's term) they are presented with profound problems when
attempting to get at the root of often nebulous social movements. As
Heberle outlined, there is a pitfall in treating social movements as
instances of collective behaviour (thereby avoiding a discussion of the
ideological constructs of the movement) because treating social
movements, like the worldwide labour movement, for example, on the same
level with forms of irrational mass behaviour clearly portrays a
political bias.' Lofland has written that 'I may well have produced
as critics would have it "a mere catalogue of cryptic accounts" based
upon an assortment of unrelated principles of classification. But even
so, there is a fundamental mission of generic rescue to be
performed.' But what Lofland fails to admit is that that very process
of generic rescue is not value-free.

The Marxist appraisal of the merits of social movements
inevitably has to focus on the two of the linked points relating to the classification of social movements, namely the relationship of the movements to the working class and the relationship of the movements to the state. It is to the reformist or revolutionary character or potential of the movements within a given set of circumstances, the balance of class forces, economic and political factors etc which provide the determinants of aims, success or failure of the movements in question. It is there that the Trotskyist model of the United Front, which completes this Chapter has a greater merit. As Engels suggested, 'The condition of the working class is the real basis and point of departure of all social movements at present ... A knowledge of proletarian conditions is absolutely necessary to be able to provide solid ground for socialist theories ...'. The anti-racist social movement should, therefore, be considered in the light of the condition of the working class in the late 1970s and not discussed in an ahistorical vacuum which dissects the 'movement', to the detriment of the 'social'.

2.2 The social movement as sophisticated collective behaviour.

Neil Smelser's 'Theories of Collective Behaviour' was a milestone in the sociological study of collective behaviour. In it he gave a continuum of collective behaviour forms from the simplest, panic, to the most complex, the social movement. In the Smelserian plan there is an elaborate classification of determinants that must take place sequentially for a particular level of collective behaviour to occur.
There are six determinants:\n
1. Structural Conduciveness - channels for discontent
2. Structural Strain - stress factors
3. Growth of a generalised belief
4. Precipitating Factors - flashpoints
5. Mobilisation of participants - outbreaks of hostility
6. The operation of social control - preventative/responsive

At one level, this classificatory method is useful for it allows one to enter certain interrelated factors into each of the six categories thereby giving a neat sequentiality to an event (and to some extent denying the input of human agency). To take an example - the clash between the National Front and the ANL in Southall in April 1979:

1. Underlying institutional racism, deprivation, discrimination and self-organisation against racial and police harassment.

2. The intention of the NF to march through the Southall area following a general election campaign which had seen numerous confrontations between the NF and groups opposed to it.

3. The generalised belief that the NF should not be allowed to march through such a sensitive area with apparent police protection and no protest from local residents.

4. The refusal of the Home Secretary to ban the march and the Council to deny the NF the use of its premises. The instigation of a peaceful protest march and a counter-demonstration.

5. The clashes between counter-demonstrators and the police before and during the meeting.

6. The immediate and long-term responses of the state, through the Police, Judiciary, Government etc in terms of greater
policing resources and and the labelling of both ANL and NF as 'extremists'.

What is striking is that the use of Smelser's typology compresses the ideology of racism and its effects into the initial category but then polarises to particular events and has to generalise to once again take in response of the state. At the same time the model is somewhat static and its analytical and explanatory values are problematic. There are as many questions thrown up by the typology as there are ways of categorising the action which fits into it and the relevant noteworthy criteria.

The all-encompassing nature of his work invites the criticism that he is merely stating the obvious. For if an anti-police demonstration can be worked into the same framework as a complex, developed social movement, then Smelser has offered an infinitely flexible but shapeless formation. The development and decline of the ANL could be put into the six categories listed by Smelser. But so could the events of one particular demonstration e.g. Southall in April 1979. Smelser has to stretch his theory, through his 'value added' method to cover the gamut of panic to social movement, claiming that all these phenomena emanate from a 'generalised belief'. As Heberle has argued, 'It seems, however, that there is a qualitative difference between the belief among a rioting crowd that "the police are acting brutally" and the belief in a better social order ... based upon a rational critique of the social order.'

This effectively leads on to other criticisms of Smelser. Social movements exist in his writings as outbursts of irrational mass behaviour, or at least forms of action that are out of the ordinary. As
such he is expressing a bias towards an essentially conservative status quo. The emphasis he places is upon panics, riots and hostile outbursts to the point of dismissing the constituent ideas of a social movement which are often based, however vaguely, upon critiques of existing social relations. As a final note it is also worth commenting that his typology assumes the inevitability of social control which seemingly fails to account for successful social movements which modify or alter the means of social control.

Smelser's considerations were made some time ago and it might be more profitable to consider some of the more recent contributions to the sociology of social movements from the U.S. especially given the experiences of the 1960s and the growth of the women's and civil rights movements. John Lofland, for example, has written on the nature of collective behaviour and has also attempted to extend what he sees as individual propensities for collective behaviour to the more organised social movements. As found with Smelser, the tenability of his explanation for individual involvement is greater for the most spontaneous examples of collective behaviour rather than for the more considered strategies pursued by a particular social movement.

Lofland sees collective behaviour as being founded upon three dominant 'primary emotions' - fear, hostility and joy, for according to Lofland, although there are 'several competing schemes of fundamental emotions ... [there is] virtually complete agreement that these three are among the most fundamental and even, moreover, trans-specific'. In other words collective behaviour is collective psychodrama, in which individuals group together because of their
collective emotional instability. Lofland, however, is a social psychologist and cross-tabulates these inner conflicts with the organisational forms in which collective behaviour occurs. To this end Lofland distinguishes between the crowd, the mass, the public and the social movement. If there is one section of Lofland's work which might have some relevance for the study of racist and anti-racist social movements it is the notion of 'hostility'.

2.3 The Social Psychology of Collective Behaviour as Social Hostility

For Lofland collective hostility has three levels. Firstly there is the symbolic - speeches rallies and taunts. Secondly, there is hostility towards property. Here Lofland brings together such disparate activities as going on strike, organising boycotts, looting and firebombing. The third level involves hostility towards other human beings. Furthermore, there are three basic parties to collective behaviour - the individual (or agent thereof), a section of the citizenry, or the establishment. Of the nine possible combinations of parties, with either as aggressors or those victims of aggression, Lofland sees five as being the most relevant. These are:

- Citizen vs. Individual - e.g. mob attacks
- Citizen vs. Citizen - e.g. political clashes
- Citizen vs. Establishment - e.g. protests and riots
- Establishment vs. Individual - e.g. bourbon lynchings
- Establishment vs. Citizen - e.g. official riots

Now if these categories are to be put to some use or have any analytical meaning, one might assume that there are delineating
factors which stop a blurring of the meanings of who is a citizen, an individual or a member of the establishment. Whilst the examples given by Lofland perform this task adequately, one only has to add some historical or more sophisticated elements to confound much of his categorisation. Lofland’s snapshot view can deal with social relations on an epiphenomenal level and in stasis. His synchronic schema is difficult to use with some clarity and this is best explained by giving a further example.

To take the five year period (1975-80) in the growth of the racist and anti-racist movements in Britain in the period it can be argued that members of the same social movement would be constituted by Lofland as citizens (C), individuals (I) or establishment (E). Clashes occurred between racists and anti-racists (C vs. C) but the anti-racists also attacked the police (C vs. E) and conversely the police attacked back (E vs. C). At the same time individuals, particularly black youth, in the movement faced police harassment (E vs. I), anti-racists would harass racist individuals (C vs. I) and occasionally the Home Secretary would ban a National Front meeting or march (E vs. C). One can go on like this until all the combinations have been exhausted for both racist and anti-racist movements. It is now unclear what the schema really shows in explanatory terms. Lofland cannot show the difference between tacit support by some sections of the establishment for a social movement which other sections find reprehensible. Nor can he explain how an individual is constituted as a citizen, some of the time, or what boundaries are drawn by the term 'establishment'. It is easy to give examples of each category, as Lofland does, whilst ignoring the grey areas.
It can be argued that Lofland is discussing essentially crowd behaviour - an integral part of the anti-racist movement - but his categories do not allow for the variety of circumstances which came about without sacrificing analytical clarity, the differing nature of the clashes and the role of the state (especially the police), even under these situations which most clearly fit the crowd hostilities format. Specifically, Lofland has no real scope for understanding the actions of the state in what crowd behaviour will be tolerated and what will not. The defence of freedom of assembly and free speech were regularly invoked to allow the National Front to march and meet in areas with a high black population. The threat to public order, although stressed, was deemed to be a lesser menace. In such combative situations the police have resources that the crowd do not. Indeed the complexity of the situation with the police defending the NF from counter-demonstrators often led to, in the course of one demonstration:

- C vs. C - Anti-NF groups rally against NF march
- C vs. E - To get to the NF, anti-NF forces attack the police
- E vs. C - The police attack back, whilst protecting the NF
- C vs. I - Individuals thought likely targets are attacked by all

Once again a continuum of incidents can bring about any combination of Lofland's collective hostilities. Likewise the three levels of hostility can frequently spill over into one another such that any demarcations between them are purely subjective.

The key difficulty with Lofland's explanations lies in his usage of dominant emotion as a means of classifying forms of collective behaviour. Notwithstanding his avoidance of a consideration
of the relativity, if not volatility of emotions, he has perceived the motivation to action the wrong way round. Emotional experience and expression is essentially social\textsuperscript{20} - just as mind and self, which are required for emotional experience to be possible, are social.\textsuperscript{21} Accordingly it is 'life and society' which determine the nature of social movements and collective behaviour, not perceived emotions. If the emotions of the contributors to collective behaviour and social movements are not the paramount issue, perhaps it is in the psyche of the movement members that reasons can be found for their willingness to join together in collective action.

2.4 Who joins a social movement?

In their 1981 article 'Collective Behaviour: Social Movements', Zurcher and Snow adopt a pluralist, relativist attitude to different social movements, claiming value-judgement immunity, indeed 'Dependant upon the goals of the movement and the values of the observer, and the degree of correspondence between the two, a movement can be heroic or despicable.'\textsuperscript{22} These writers seek to examine the processes of participation in social movements, through recruitment, commitment-building and conversion processes. They are critical of existing psycho-social explanations of social movement recruitment in which 'the underlying assumption is that movement joiners differ from non-joiners in terms of personality characteristics and/or cognitive orientation'.\textsuperscript{23} In the same way, the joiner is ascribed the traits of deviance, susceptibility and lack of personal identity. The shortcomings of this approach are stressed by Zurcher and Snow, i.e.
that alienation, deprivation and frustration have been linked with apathy as well as activity. If frustration and discontent fertilise the ground of movement participation, then, to quote Trotsky, 'the masses would always be in revolt'.

To counter these psychological observations, the writers offer the concepts of (i) social networks and (ii) ideology. The role of pre-existing social networks is given the greater stress of the two, their functions being to aid 'the emergence and spread of radical or reformist collective phenomena'. They then go on to give several examples where the majority of adherents of a social movement were recruited by members who were pre-existing friends, acquaintances or kin. Their definition of ideology is somewhat non-specific claiming that, 'It provides both a picture of the world as it is and as it should be'. This vagueness is compounded by Zurcher and Snow's belief in the mobilising capacity of ideology as a link between the prospective participants 'life situations' and the goals of the social movement.

For these social psychologists there is an interplay between ideology and social network which determines the spread of social movements. The tenets of movement ideology are systematically brought through to the prospective participant by intellectual and emotional ties in social networks. Before leading on to a less plausible burst of symbolic interactionism, they home in on a central theme. 'The key to understanding recruitment, conversion and commitment resides in the interaction between the participant and the movement.' What Zurcher and Snow cannot explain is what constitutes the movement beyond its ideology or beyond the individual foibles of its members. They are
therefore at a loss to explain the success of a movement at a particular time with an ideology which was seen as unsuccessful in years previously. As with the ANL, the ethos of anti-racism and its organised political forms became more apposite when the NF appeared to be a growing racist force and when overt racial violence by an organised electoralist group was regularly making headlines.

Even Heberle alleges that 'amongst the founders of militant social movements, political as well as religious, we find a fair proportion of abnormal personalities, especially of neurotic or paranoid individuals. The same is true of early adherents of such leaders, the first disciples or followers.'\textsuperscript{239} The central point, the raison d'être of a social movement is its aims and intentions and the economic and political power which it has to achieve them. These are surely more clearly found within the concrete specifics of the historical and geographical instances than in personality profiles.

Zurcher and Snow see society as composed of individuals up to the point of them becoming movement members who then disappear to their individual isolation afterwards. But this is not empirically true, disregarding as it does, the complexity of the relations between organisations within social movements. The anti-racist movement, for example, drew on trade unions, political groups, religious groups etc. which had vastly conflicting ideologies within the movement but still held the general aims without being equally constituted individuals before and after the life of the movement. Zurcher and Snow would probably argue that this was covered by the theme of social networks, but they still do not explain how groups or networks with diffuse class and political interests can go on to coalesce in a social
movement. Before going on to draw together some general criticisms of this approach to social movement membership, there is one last level of analysis which Lofland has returned to in his more recent work and that is the internal organisation of the movement.

2.5 Levels of social movement organisation

In one of his most recent works, Lofland has chosen to focus upon social movement organisations as 'holistic organisational structures' and particularly on the local level - the operating end of the movement. At this point the concept of the 'modal member' is introduced - the most frequent or dominant type of member within a social movement. Lofland then goes on to describe the levels of mobilisation of modal members within the local settings. In this case there are five levels:

1. Study groups with student members - discussion groups
2. Fellowship locals with adherent members - more formal and more organised
3. Congregational locals with parishioner members - many more activities, a place of assembly, membership loyalty expected
4. Sect locals with sectarian members - distinctive definition of the situation. Not very different from (3) except members have a high self-conception, totality of outlook and hostility to state and society. Sect locals push the boundaries of effort for volunteers.
5. Cell locals with conspirator members - 'terrorists', 'fifth columnists'.
What has to be noted firstly is the imprecision with which boundaries are again drawn.\textsuperscript{31} If Lofland is prepared to draw up what at times look like arbitrary delineations, then surely there must be some clarity to his vision. The result is that while a group can be placed in an appropriate pigeon-hole Lofland does not explain how it moves to another level or what effect the 'outside world' has on any of these categories. For example, it may be said that at least for (1) to (3) above, the deciding factor is size. For a small grouping it may start off as a study group whilst in effect also being a sect (as the usage of the term sect usually implies a small political/religious grouping). For the purpose of this thesis at the point of its growth the National Front may have been a congregation but with sect members in it i.e. the party cadre. But if one broadens out into the whole neo-fascist movement there were also elements who were either purely in study groups and foresawed too much overt political activity\textsuperscript{32} whilst at the same time others were solely involved in terrorist cells.\textsuperscript{33} In which case, a variety of sub-groupings or factions under the umbrella of a movement fits awkwardly with Lofland's approach.

2.6 The sociologists of social movements

The question was posed above as to how much of the sociologists' descriptive and analytical themes could be adopted in providing a framework to analyse the ANL. Peppered throughout the writings are continual expectations of the free individuals who join social movements voluntarily. But social movements do not appear out of thin air, ready constituted. Rather, they are the sparks struck off by
conflicting social forces. The sociologists discussed above take the social movement as ready-formed and strongly-led, with established peripheries of people joining, being held or leaving. The behaviour of those involved is drawn under the wing of collective behaviour at times arbitrarily. The panic of a crowd situation is deemed as a suitable descriptive category for comparison with an organised social movement. The two categories, however, cannot then be said to be comparable on the same plain - one is related to an organisation, the other to a specific event.

The problematic remains as to whether the sociological conservatism of the writers considered above necessitates the avoidance of an enquiry into the role of the state in social movements (apart from Smelser's reference to a generalised 'social control'). Although the anti-racist social movement was anti-state, the conflictual strategies inevitably brought in the forces of the state, especially the Police. Smelser's work is too broad-based, too all encompassing and falls down because it is too easy to pick holes in the conflation of social movements into collective behaviour. Similar objections can be made to Lofland's writings on collective behaviour which appear more convincing and less problematic when applied to simple forms of the phenomenon. As soon as the cognitive aspect is brought in - via movement organisation, strategy and ideology - writers like Lofland and Smelser shy away from a detailed examination of their effects. Their examples tend to be uncomplicated Weberian ideal-types and have limited value in helping the understanding of the way contradictory and conflicting internal factions operate within the bounds of social movement (as in the AML).
Whilst Zurcher and Snow acknowledged the importance of ideas and social network - which could very tenuously be translated in Marxist terms into ideology and class relationships, their imprecise usage of the terms tends to raise problems of the incisiveness necessary for analytical purposes. When, in the quest for an appropriate typology of social movements which can provide a clear model to hold up to the anti-racist movement, attention is drawn towards those writers claiming some form of Marxist influence on their work, other dilemmas come to the fore.

2.7 'Post-Marxist' writings on Social Movements - Touraine and Foss & Larkin

One writer to take cognisance of both Marxism and the Marxist revolutionary tradition in the study of social movements is Alain Touraine. Describing himself as a 'post-Marxist'\textsuperscript{34}, Touraine sees a social movement as 'the collective organised action through which a class actor battles for the social control of historicity in a given and identifiable historical context.'\textsuperscript{35} The 'historicity' of which he talks is the work which society does upon itself, in terms of the invention of norms, institutions and practices guided by what Touraine calls 'the great cultural orientations' - patterns of knowledge, types of investment and cultural orientations. It is the struggle for control of this historicity which is, for Touraine, the key to the class struggle. In this respect, social movements are not marginal, epiphenomenal or abnormal but are, in Touraine's words, 'the central forces fighting one against the other to control the production of
society by itself and the action of classes for the shaping of historicity.\textsuperscript{36}

As Touraine notes, in the development of social movements, the character that they adopt, through the progression of time, can be one in which they do not run to the necessary detriment of the process of capitalist accumulation or undermine the role of the state etc. Indeed both the U.S. black civil rights movement and women's movements in the 1960s have succeeded in gaining some concessions from state and capital bringing black and female faces into management and corporate positions.\textsuperscript{37} There is no hard and fast rule that social movements should have a solely reformist or potentially revolutionary character, for that depends both upon the composition of the movement and the hold that revolutionary ideas (or those based on class struggle) have.

Unlike Lofland who argues that in the case of collective behaviour, and by inference nascent social movements, 'only a modest amount of reflection on social life is required to recognise that ... emotions are especially entailed in collective behaviour',\textsuperscript{38} Touraine suggests that the state of emotional arousal of those involved may well be very interesting but has little value in analysing the movement or act of collective behaviour. If anger or hostility is a defining variable then 'football hooliganism', 'inner city riots', fascist and anti-fascist demonstrations and mass pickets are all to be distinguished by their degree of emotional arousal rather than other more salient criteria. As Touraine notes, 'social movements are always defined by a social conflict, that is, by clearly defined opponents ... A social movement cannot be defined by its intensity, its emotions or its "volcanic" force'.\textsuperscript{39}
Touraine believes that the concept of the social movement is most useful when it helps to rediscover social actors long lost by structural Marxists and structural functionalists although he rather lionises social movements as agents or catalysts for social change. There are problems with Touraine's analysis, not least in some of the arcane and obscurantist phraseology (occasionally in the style of Ernesto Laclau who also terms himself a post-Marxist\(^4\)). He falls prey to a functional positivism in that while he rightly notes that 'it is still the logic of contradiction, and particularly the law of profit, which governs historical situations; no actor can escape from the position in which he is placed',\(^4\) but in denying the role of human agency goes on to note fatalistically that, 'no social movement can transform society. Only history, i.e. progress, can explode the social order.'\(^4\)

His arguments about the new forms of organisation and new ideologies for anti-nuclear and women's movements are a reflection of the post-Marxism of Touraine which ally him with the Eurocommunist current of political thought which asserts that 'male' and 'labourist' forms of political organisation are not universally applicable and that new methods have to be elicited to combat various 'forms' of oppression. In this respect he implicitly denies the centrality of the working class as the agency for social change or indeed the role of a revolutionary party.

Touraine admits as much when he argues that the idea of social movement is 'clearly anti-Leninist'. It is not clear why this should be so - although the Leninist conception of the revolutionary party supporting and generalising from class struggle and building a
revolutionary movement is not one which surrenders the primacy of the working class. The fact is that those parties claiming some genealogy from Lenin (and Trotsky's United Front) have involved themselves in social movements with the expressed intent of restating the primacy of the working class as agents of social change (usually countered against the perceived failings of 'reformism'). Indeed the anti-racist movement was motivated by the actions of revolutionaries within the ANL which saw the social movement as a spur to self-activity and away from what they saw as the abstentionism of conventional political activity.

The title of Foss and Larkin's work, Beyond Revolution, should alert the reader as to the nature of the thesis, and its conflict-pluralist based 'post-Marxist' stance. For them a social movement 'is a developing collective action of a significant portion of the members of a major social category, involving at some point the use of physical force or violence against members of other social categories...'. By social categories they refer to one or more of the lines of cleavage they perceive as being of equal value in society—socialists, capitalists, castes, ethnic groups, sexualities etc.

Wary of charges that this should sound somewhat akin to old-fashioned pluralism, Foss and Larkin do submit that:

There is no doubt that class relations, that is, relations of exploitation, underlie or heavily influence the course of all social movements and countermovements. However it is quite rare that the "appearances" of society, as embedded in the everyday relations of social reality, correspond with any precision to class relations.
However, despite the fundamental, albeit hidden, nature of class relations and class exploitation, the writers consider that it is best if the expression 'class struggle' is 'avoided here because it lends itself so readily to confusion and does not help us understand, historically, the reproduction of social reality.' Thus all history should not be seen as the history of class struggle lest this confuses the scrutiny of the plurality of social movements.

As Foss and Larkin journey selectively through the social movements of the 1960s so they see a trend away from class politics to the movements of 'dissident social categories' which 'although they may or may not permanently alter social relations, they are one of the prime mechanisms for doing so.' In other words their starting point is the primacy of the autonomy of these various social movements. This is a long way from the way Marxists seek to generalise from class relations to explain the role of women's oppression through the family as the basic unit for reproduction of labour, the use of racism to justify slavery and colonialism and to further divide the working class, the nature of imperialism especially in relation to Vietnam, Korea etc and the anti-nuclear movements.

Foss and Larkin see the new social movements as being decidedly subversive for capitalism. They note, in some respects echoing Lenin's claim that strikes were 'schools for socialism',

each social movement at its most radical phase rendered the whole of bourgeois social relations questionable, including the sacrifice of the human subject to the discipline of reality principle. That is, the necessity of performing labor under the conditions of the capital/labor nexus was called into question....
The question at issue avoided by both Foss and Larkin and Touraine is what actually takes the movement onwards. Despite reference to class politics and the capital/labour nexus, they do not see the revolutionary party as the way for the resolution, not only of the 'economic', but also of the other forms of oppression under capitalism. Rather the failings and failures of revolutionary parties are shown to be signs of their inherent datedness (i.e. revolution was suitable for early capitalism but late capitalism needs a post-Marxist movementism).

The interest they show in social movements is based on an assumption of a plurality of movements and causes exists, each of which has a right to make similar demands upon the state. Because they do not posit the working class as the prime force in bringing about the fundamental change in society and the demise of capitalism, their roots are in reformism. If there are difficulties with the approaches of these writers, in the orthodox texts of Marxism there are not necessarily straightforward answers to the questions raised by social movements but there is a method with which to consider them.

2.8 Marxism and social movements

The literature developed towards an explicitly Marxist explanation of the sociology of social movements is conspicuous by its absence. It appears that for much of the time social movements have been the realm of those who seek insight through the orientation of the joiner as much as the nature of the joined. As has been discussed above, the field is accordingly weighted with neo-psychological and social psychological explanations which have as their driving force the
free individual. This contrasts starkly with the Marxist conception of political change and, if there be one, of the nature of social movements as mediated by class society. In one respect Marxism (and especially Leninism) is all about the development of the workers' movement as the social movement - a movement with revolutionary aims.

It would be wrong to impose too distinct a class character on every social movement in terms of seeing it as pro-labour or pro-capital but a Marxist argument would hold that because capitalist relations have a distorting effect upon all forms of human activity, then the aims, composition and likelihood of success of social movements are inextricably linked with the forms of political expression falsely separated from 'the economic' under capitalism. This especially holds true when one considers the revolutionary, reactionary or reformist aspirations of the movement, the balance of class forces at the time, the strength of the state etc. The key points are that the social movement may assume a reformist or a revolutionary manner although it is usually likely that it will be the former. The movement is generally expressed towards the state over a particular issue (albeit a broad one, perhaps) which the traditional reformist parties are seen as having failed to deal with. At the same time, when the movement does not have a predominant input by revolutionaries, the tendency will be to seek and work round reformist demands and eventual concessions to reformist political parties and groups.

For a Marxist analysis one must begin with the materialist conception of history in which the key to change in society is to be found in the way people produce their life in common. As Marx wrote in *The Holy Family*, 'History is nothing but the activity of men in pursuit
of their ends.\textsuperscript{49} And yet men and women are not constituted (or to borrow Laclau's phrase 'interpellated'\textsuperscript{50}) as free individuals but as members of economic classes with class struggle being the agent for change. That is the argument put crudely. As Marx wrote in Capital, offering the 'free' individual little primacy in human relations:

individuals are dealt with here only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, the bearers of particular class relations and interests. My standpoint from which the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations, whose creature he remains, socially speaking however much he may subjectively raise himself above them.\textsuperscript{61}

Marx took a hard line against the economic liberals who would argue for the importance of the sovereign individual and the classical historians who would press the import of the individual sovereign. In terms of individual actors collectively developing into social movements, Marx concerned himself with political movements which he felt had a degree of historical inevitability (or immediacy). The movements of historical necessity were those which furthered the development of class-consciousness. Other demands and aspirations which were not revolutionary at some point either had to challenge the power of the state or succumb to it thus being accommodated.

2.9 A Marxist revolutionary social movement - The Russian Revolution

Lenin and Trotsky were both participants in a social, indeed revolutionary, movement which underwent many of the previous stages of
development outlined by Lofland above - from study group in exile to mass meetings (congregated parishioners) to party caucuses (sects and sectarians) and at one stage operating in cells to avoid the Tsarist secret police (cells and conspirators). They were then part of the leadership of a revolutionary movement that seized power within Russia with a mass movement of Russian workers.

The Leninist argument would note that any social movement aimed at a qualitative transformation of society cannot develop spontaneously - it needs outside organisation. Organisation, as an embodiment of beliefs (which Lofland and others of his ilk tend to ignore), plays a crucial role in channeling the potential responses into the correct line for advance. This degree of organisation is an important divider between the collective behaviour of riots and the stratified and more stable social movements. As Manuel Castells, a Marxist urban sociologist puts it, describing an urban social movement, 'Where there is no organisation, urban contradictions are expressed in either a refracted or in a wild way devoid of any structural horizon.'

Trotsky, in his writings on the Russian Revolution, was to contrast the spontaneity of the February Revolution in 1917 with the October rising of the same year, which involved more planning and delay for the appropriate moment. He also wrestled with the problem of the personal elements as against the social coming to the conclusion that, 'The great moving forces of history are supra-personal in character but they operate through people.' This again almost turns the individual participant into a cipher for class forces but Trotsky is quick to point out that in capitalist class society 'free individuals' are in
position to act freely and, pre-empting the social psychologists' arguments, he wrote:

We do not pretend to deny the significance of the personal in the mechanics of the historical process. We only demand that a historical personality with all its peculiarities should not be taken as a bare list of psychological traits but as a living reality grown out of definite social conditions and reacting upon them.\textsuperscript{64}

2.10 Contemporary Marxist writers and social movements

One writer who tried more than most to marry Marxism and individualism was Jean-Paul Sartre, in attempting to re-assert humanism within a Marxist framework. 'The dialectic', he wrote, 'which moves through history is not merely deterministic: at every stage - individual, serial, group - the free individual intervenes. If he cannot control, he can at least be aware of the events that are operating.'\textsuperscript{65} With more specific reference to the concern of this thesis with social movements, in A Critique of Dialectical Reason, Sartre advanced the notion of the series, as a collection of individuals which is defined by its passive, inert quality, which can develop into a fused group. Fused groups arise when social actors spontaneously recognise their common goals and arrive at a position of mutual recognition and reciprocity. Sartre gives the example of the storming of the Bastille which ties in with what Lofland sought to explain, i.e. 'How does the impotent individual decide by himself to become power.'\textsuperscript{66}

Sartre argues that each individual's objective becomes the
common objective and that there is a process of unification through a common exigency - the notion of 'his/her danger is my danger'. The change from the individual as a passive, inert member of a series and an outsider who turns the series into an organised totality lies in action. Sartre argued that those involved in the storming of the Bastille,

had performed as actors and had recognised this action with surprise as a moment of its own passive activity; it had been a group - and this group defined itself by a revolutionary action which made the process irreversible.\(^\text{57}\)

But a groupe en fusion cannot carry the whole weight of comprehending the new form of social existence that it may bring into being. For this, Sartre claimed, what was needed was an organised group practice. Here again he is re-iterating the Leninist notion of the centrality of informed organisation - external to the spontaneous but active within it.

Sartre did and does have his critics, such as Levi-Strauss. The latter argued that whatever meaning and movement history displays, these are not given by the historical actors but by the prevailing rule systems. Levi-Strauss contended that 'Cultural systems with which historical action is performed are prior to and independent of the projects of the individual acts whose very subjectivity they constitute.'\(^\text{68}\) This is the structuralist anti-humanism echoed by Stephen Lukes who contends that 'Structural constructs limit the agent's freedom or power to act otherwise by precluding (rather than putting a price tag on) such a possibility.'\(^\text{59}\)
E.P. Thompson sought to break the Althusserian stranglehold on much Marxist theory and the structuralist perspective which reduced human agents to the status of supporters of social structures (Trager). In the Poverty of Theory he launches a polemical sideswipe against the rampant structuralism of the likes of Hindess and Hirst, yet remains careful not to fall into a 'great men or women of history' trap, as historians are wont to do. Thompson argues that 'The actors of historical acts are subject to shaping and directing pressures: human agents are both the makers of history and are made by it: they are the ever-baffled and ever-resurgent agents of un-mastered history.'

He then goes on to make a point which leads back into the centrality of social movements. Essentially Thompson argues that as individuals share common conditions of existence, then the inference may be drawn that individuals will submit to a collective response to those conditions. The collective agents clash to produce historical outcomes. To a Marxist that most commonly leads to classes as the collective agents above all. To which the sociologists of social movements may counter, 'What about the other forms of association possible, apart from class relations?'. Ted Benton counters this argument, much as Thompson would, when he writes,

Unions, parties, firms and so on certainly operate as historical forces – they may be said to make decisions, act or not act upon them, form alliances (and social movements – MC) and so on. But the decisions and actions of these bodies are not the actions or decisions of their individual members, and are not generally reducible to such decisions. The eventual course of action may be one neither willed nor foreseen by any individual member. In many cases, actions and decisions of collective agents are ones which could not
be made by individuals ... but only by a collective actor, politically or legally constituted.\textsuperscript{61}

One other major writer in the Marxist tradition has written on social movements, albeit early ones - Eric Hobsbawm. In one of his earlier studies, 'Primitive Rebels'\textsuperscript{62} he examines the development of early religious and workers' movements in Britain during the rise of capitalism. Although much of the work is concerned with historical documentation, he does make some general points. One is that it is not always possible to read off the likely path or character of a social movement from its inception. Hobsbawm writes, 'In practice, every man in not a Dr. Pangloss and every social movement undergoes the pull of both reformism and revolutionism.'\textsuperscript{63}

In that respect the internal workings of a social movement include a battle for the dominant ideas, which in turn are reflective of the dominant ideas outside the movement and the strategy and tactics adopted by the movement. To take two examples, the ANL was dominated by the Marxist left and the strategy and tactics went beyond those which would have been followed by the reformist left in opposing the National Front. Conversely, despite the direct action of the Greenham Women, the thrust of the mass of the anti-nuclear movement in the early 1980s was directed towards the changing of 'public opinion' and ensuring that the movement could effectively bring the Conservative Government to adopt an anti-nuclear stance or more realistically to keep the issue alive whilst awaiting the election of a unilateralist Labour government.

Hobsbawm is also quick to acknowledge the importance of identifying the reformist or revolutionary character of a social
movement for 'reformist and revolutionary movements will behave differently and to develop different organisation, strategy, tactics etc.' For Hobsbawm the basis of the social movement lies in its class position rather than epiphenomenal features which are reified by social psychologists - ritual and symbolism - which he describes as the 'emotional furniture' of the movement although he realises the use of such factors is an important method of binding people to the movement.

What has been briefly considered above is the relationship between the individual and history which is in a sense a reply to the psychologists and individualist writers on social movements. At another level it is a reply to those quasi-Marxist writers who see themselves and indeed society as having gone beyond class struggle. For it is from the notion of the essentially free individual which is the starting point of these views, for only then can the individual be oppressed by a variety of categories each of which can throw up its own movement. This process of autonomisation does not lead to a new form of society but rather the old form of reformism. The counterpoint to the women's movement, the anti-racist movement, the gay liberation movement has been in the adoption by the Labour left of each cause as its own and its representation through the policies of municipal socialism.

The consideration of the accomplishment of local state anti-racism ventures will occupy the second half of this thesis and the more pressing problem of the appropriate model for the ANL remains unascertained. Those provided by the sociologists of social movements have proven too vague and ambiguous for adequately encapsulating the specificity of the movement. Those writers operating under the Marxist influence and writing on social movements have, in their desire to find
a new location for social movements, written in a way which emphasises detail and form rather than essence and content. There remains one model which is that proposed by those who were most instrumental in the launch of the ANL, the Socialist Workers Party. They believed that the movement was launched along the lines of the United Front as proposed by Trotsky in the 1930s. The model may lack the universality of the social movement categories provided by the social psychologists discussed above or the abnegation of the primacy of class politics inferred by the post-Marxists but it does provide the most appropriate yardstick against which the ANL and its wider strategic importance as a potential anti-racist force can be evaluated.

2.11 The United Front: Concept and Practice

Within the proletariat several parties are active at the same time. Therefore, for the greater part of the historical journey, it remains split politically. The problem of the united front - which arises during periods most sharply - originates therein. "

Trotsky started from the uneven class consciousness of the working class at any time. His arguments that both revolutionary and reformist workers and their leaders could join together in a movement against fascism stemmed from the way that the United Front was meant to be a defence of immediate class interests. For fascism to succeed and assume the mantle of state power, he suggested it needed to physically smash the organisations of the working class both reformist and revolutionary. In that respect even the leaders of the parties of social democracy had actual interests in uniting with the communists.
Trotsky wrote, 'The programme of action must be strictly practical, strictly objective, to the point ... so that every Social Democratic worker can say to himself: what the Communists propose is completely indispensable for the struggle against fascism. On this basis, we must pull the SocialDemocratic workers along with us by example and criticise their leaders who will inevitably serve as a check and a brake.'

For Trotsky, the United Front had to be practical, not merely theoretical and it have strict objectives. The United Front was to be united around its most active members. It acts not to save face with its most reactionary members but to continually push through propaganda and other tactics at the line of strongest resistance. At times this would involve physical confrontation with the fascists, a factor which is often missing from Trotsky's writings purely because he assumed it to be implicit. The United Front also had to be prepared to disseminate propaganda about the fascist movement and the threat it brings about just as it must be prepared to stop the fascists with force if necessary. In part this is fashioned by the tactics of the fascists themselves and the way they operate outside usual reformist channels of political discourse.

One danger for revolutionaries, Trotsky feared, was that they would be swamped within the mass of the United Front and lose the clarity of their politics and what Trotsky saw as their duty to criticise the mistakes of the reformists. Much of what happened in Spain in the 1930s, for example, is an exercise in the abandonment of the independence of revolutionary organisation in order to make a compromise for the sake of what became known as a 'broad democratic
'alliance' - the Popular Front. The United Front, he argued, because of
its precise focus could only be one area of work for the revolutionary
party and should only be sustained for as long as it reaps concrete
results against its target, one problem which beset the ANL.

As will hopefully be clear from the above brief outline of
Trotsky's model of the United Front, many of the operational
difficulties of reformists and revolutionaries working together in a
mass movement could only be ironed out in practice, practice being the
essence of the United Front, rather than lengthy ideological
discussions before (see the discussion of the tactics of the ANL vis à
vis the Joint Campaign Against Racism in Chapter 4 below). It is the
specificity of the movement which is its strength, the clarity of its
vision and aims which can be fulfilled in the short-term rather
than the long-term. As a social movement it has a specific character.
It a vehicle for the overthrow of capitalism, rather it has a single,
potentially realisable objective. It is a necessary alliance between
those who wish to overthrow society and those who wish to reform the
major problems within society.

Its necessity is decided by the objective conditions of the
nation-state and the size of the fascist movement, not the
psychological make-up of those who are active in it (as social movement
writers such as Zurcher and Snow might have it). It may have certain
degrees of organisation but this does not define whether it is a United
Front or not (as Lofland might suggest). Finally, it is very clearly
based on class politics, not post-Marxist, as Touraine or Gorz might
have us believe all movements are, but is very clearly a strategy still
applicable today, based on the works of Trotsky who himself was
inspired by the United Fronts thrown up in the course of the Russian Revolution.

This has only been a brief theoretical outline but should be enough to cast some light in the next Chapter on the discussions below on the actions of the British Communist Party against the BUF in the 1930s and of the ANL in the 1970s. It is therefore, a tactic to be used against a growing fascist movement, in the Italian model, or in that of the Germans, and the British NF in which racism played a major indeed critical part. For the British example, it was a tactic used to stop what was a movement based around racism and very little else taking on a mass fascist character. The last words have to be with Trotsky, for a further simple elucidation of the politics of the United Front:

Without hiding or mitigating our opinion of Social Democratic leaders in the slightest, we may and we must say to the Social Democratic workers, 'Since ... you are willing to fight together with us and ... you are still unwilling to break with your leaders ... force your leaders to join us in a common struggle for such and such aims, in such and such manner; as for us, we Communists are ready.' Can anything be more plain, more palpable, more convincing.67

2.12 Summary

The problem faced by some of the writers discussed above in defining social movements is symptomatic of their conceptions of the society around them. By taking the social movement out of the class society which is the basis for it, by severing the main arteries, social movements are almost bound to appear disparate, diffuse and
lacking in a definable 'essence'. The answers cannot be located in individual or mob psychology, however sophisticated.

The studies of social movements provided by writers such as Lofland and Zurcher & Snow do not concern themselves, as they admit, with the wider social circumstances in which movements are spawned. Their concerns, they claim, are with the joiners and the types of organisation thrown up. But the joiners are not equally constituted social actors (or freaks or misfits). They are members of classes, they have political allegiances, organisational links etc. exists within a set of circumstances not of their own making. Even writers such as Smelser and Banks, who work from assumptions of social rather than mental causes for social movements are often indeterminate in accounting for the appearance of movements and examples of collective behaviour within society. They do not locate what exactly it is within the social system which explains why social movements should arise or how their aims and objectives are to be measured.

As Raymond Williams has pointed out, the degree of incongruence between the Marxist conceptualisations of social change and those of the new movementists of such as Touraine, Gorz etc. has to be seen in the way the class interests of those involved in social movements have not always been brought out. Williams notes,

All significant social movements of the last thirty years have started outside the organised class interests and institutions. The peace movement, the ecology movement, the women's movement...all have this character, that they sprang from needs and perceptions which the interest-based organisations had no room or time for, which they had simply failed to notice.
This may lead the reader to assume that Williams was on the side of those who proclaim 'Farewell to the Working Class' and class struggle. However, he is quick to argue that 'there is not one of these issues which, followed through, fails to lead us into the central systems of the industrial-capitalist mode of production and among others into its system of classes.'

Although Williams does not really take on the questions of the state and how social movements relate to it he is clear on the need for such movements, containing reformist and revolutionary elements within them, to come to the position of asserting the centrality of the working class at the expense of their reformist representatives, as in the United Front. Should the members of the movements fail to recognise or not wish to consider the primary orientation of the working class, they are likely to be marginalised or forced to subsume their interests of those of the most appropriate reformist party. As Williams notes, the issues which the social movements address themselves to are those which have been raised by the workers' movement - sexual liberation, anti-racism, anti-imperialism etc. He notes that it is, quite absurd to dismiss or underplay these movements as 'middle-class' issues. It is a consequence of the social order itself that these issues are qualified and refracted in these ways. It is similarly absurd to push the issues away as not relevant to the central interests of the working class... It is workers who are most exposed to dangerous industrial processes and environmental damage. It is working-class women who have most need of new women's rights ... Whatever movement there may be ... there is no possibility of it becoming fully effective unless there are serious and detailed alternatives at these everyday points where a central consciousness is generated.
For racist and anti-racist social movements, the concern of this part of the thesis suggests that racist movements, along with the ideology of racism are not set up by ruling class diktat or the psychological failings of their adherents but because the ideology of racism 'makes sense' in the process of its reproduction.

Before moving on to a detailed account of the anti-racist movement of the late 1970s in Britain it is worth once more reiterating the centrality and reciprocity of class society and class struggle to the study of social movements. As Ellen Wood proclaims,

If working class movements still have much to learn about the full dimensions of human emancipation, and if they have yet to create forms of organisation adequate to their task, there has been no historically identifiable social force that has even come close to their record of emancipatory struggles, either in the breadth of their visions, the comprehensiveness of the liberation they have sought or in the degree of their success.71

Ellen Wood may overreach herself with her desire to redress the balance against what she sees as atheoretical or unsystematic lionising of the 'new social movements'. Her merit is in her attempt to reconsider the movements in a Marxist light which does not ignore the relationships between these movements and the production relations in capitalist society.
CHAPTER 3

The British anti-fascist movement of the late 1970s and anti-racism

3.1 Introduction

There are many possible scenarios in which a movement can seek to win concessions from, put pressure upon or challenge the dominance of the state just as there are those where the momentum of the movements have been defused precisely by those concessions. The movement investigated below, the anti-fascist movement in Britain in the late 1970s, was launched in somewhat different circumstances, in that it was not aimed at state fascism or indeed state racism, but at stopping the rise of a fascist movement based around the National Front (NF). The movement became focused around one particular organisation, the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), which mobilised many thousands of people in marches, carnivals and counter-demonstrations against the NF, a feat which no other anti-racist or anti-fascist grouping was able to do at the time.

What the ANL specifically did was to challenge the NF on its own terms and sought not only to win the propaganda battle about the nature of the NF’s politics but also to physically stop it marching, a step which many anti-racist groups were not prepared to take. To use the words of the ANL itself, it did not seek merely to warn or disabuse people of their notion of the NF as a respectable political party, it wished to ‘smash’ it. The fact that it was the largest anti-fascist
body at the time, that it grew rapidly to involve many young people previously uncommitted to political activity and that, according to which interpretation is read, it had either an important or a definitive bearing on the subsequent demise of the NF, all make it central to this thesis, to be studied as a social movement against racism in British society. The reason behind putting the ANL at the centre is not only those mentioned above but also because its strategy and tactics were qualitatively different from those applied by other bodies. These tactics not only were the point of differentiation of the movement, they were the expressions of the wider political ideologies which motivated the leadership of the ANL.

The first area needing clarification is the focus of the movement. It was anti- something but the vexed question is whether it was primarily anti-racist or anti-fascist. The movement was specifically aimed against a party which was fascist in nature but which built on popular racism for its support. If the NF had not played 'the race card', there is no evidence of it gaining anywhere near the following it did, nor could the ANL ignore the racism which motivated the choice of areas in which the NF marched, whom the NF blamed the capitalist crisis on, or who the NF members attacked. That the ANL was opposing a fascist group leads to the criticism, made by Gilroy, that the ANL was only anti-fascist and did nothing to confront racism in the state or the more amorphous working class racism beyond the bounds of the organised fascists. As will be discussed below, one of the severe limitations of the ANL was that it could only confront racism within an organised racist movement.

The consideration could be extended to question why the
energies of those anti-racists in the ANL that were marshalled against an extreme racist body could so easily dissipate into a more amorphous anti-racist lobby in the 1980s. On the question of the ANL and the degree to which it was prepared to confront working class racism, the key must lie in the expressed aims of the movement. Undoubtedly there were over-optimistic expectations within this movement as to its potential for combating racism on the wider level and the greatest care should be taken in the theoretical extension of the ANL model as an anti-racist force.

Taking the Anti-Nazi League as the basis for the movement, the complexity is compounded. It was not formed purely as a response to the NF without any conception of how the movement was to function. There were two main sources of inspiration to the strategy and tactics of the ANL, the Trotskyist notion of the United Front discussed above and the experience of the struggle against fascism in Britain in the 1930s. The United Front was intended by Trotsky as a way of uniting the forces of the revolutionary and reformist left against the growing fascist threat, without either group compromising their political principles. It was aimed as a tactic to be used in particular circumstances and was to be based on activity - be it through the dissemination of propaganda or physical opposition. Some of these tactics were applied by the Communist Party (GB) and sections of the Labour Left in opposing the British Union of Fascists (BUF) in Britain in the 1930s, when the Labour Party nationally urged that the fascists should be ignored in the hope they would go away. What the CP and its cohorts did was not only to offer alternative views as to the cause of the economic crisis but also to give practical support for workers in
getting unionised, dealing with landlords etc. whilst fighting pitched battles with the BUF when they attempted to rally or march (such as in the famous 'Battle of Cable St').

The ANL sought to build both a popular pole of attraction for people disaffected with the traditional political parties, particularly youth, who were seen as being prime recruitment fodder for the NF. At the same time, as was seen at Lewisham, Leicester and Southall and in many other smaller clashes, the ANL attempted to harass and drive the NF off the streets so that it could no longer march unmolested and unprotected. Six months prior to the formation of the ANL, the NF had polled 120,000 votes in the GLC Elections, however, following the disastrous results in the 1979 General Election the NF collapsed into factions, tendencies and new smaller parties from which it is yet to recover. The amount to which this is due to the actions of the ANL remains an area for much debate, as will be seen below. The starting point for an analysis of the ANL as an anti-fascist social movement with a dominant anti-racist component has to be in a brief discussion of the relationship between racism and fascism and anti-fascism in Britain in the 1930s. before going on to the object of the study, the anti-fascist movement, in essence the ANL, in the 1970s.

3.2 The relationship between racism and fascism

In an era in which there is a gradual proliferation of Holocaust denials⁴, it is an act of historical record to remind all of the reality of the death camps and the slaughter of 6 million Jews, and millions of others, by the Nazis in Germany in the 1940s. The argument
then has to be taken on as to how much an integral, or crucial, component of the general ideology of fascism the ideology of racism is and how the specific fascist movement employs the prevailing notions of 'race' and 'nation' to effect. Whilst fascist ideology not only makes use of, but finds congruence and coherence in racism and nationalism which do not themselves determine the fundamental character of fascism. For that we must turn to the development of social relations and capitalist crises which provide the fascist movement with its class base.

As Trotsky and others have argued, the basis for fascism is the petty bourgeoisie, built in a period of defeats for the working class and under the overall conditions of extensive social crises. Crises alone cannot act as a sole explanation, for fascism implies a further change in the internal social relations in the particular nation-state, hence the description that is often given of fascism as being 'counter-revolutionary'. Nationalism and racism can be very important factors in mobilising the petty bourgeoisie and winning backing for fascism from less class-conscious sections of the working class. Whilst anti-semitism per se did not play a large part in fascist ideology in Spain or Italy, the usage of nationalist themes was prevalent.

Miles locates the two in concert inasmuch as, 'the historical coincidence of the generation of the ideas of "nation" and "race" as means of political mobilization in the nineteenth century means that nationalism contains within it the potential of becoming expressed by means of an explicit racism.' Trotsky similarly considered the temps perdu elements of nationalism in fascism. He
wrote, 'Hitler's nation is the mythological shadow of the petty bourgeoisie itself, a pathetic delirium of a thousand-year Reich. In order to raise it above history, the nation is given the support of the race. History is viewed as the emanation of race ... Rejecting "economic thought" as base, National Socialism descends a stage lower: from economic materialism it appeals to zoologic materialism.'

With anti-semitism to the fore in the Nazi movement, it was applied cross-class, towards 'Jewish' elements in all classes. They were portrayed as alien competitors with the 'Aryan' German petty bourgeoisie, controlling not only national but international finance capital and being influential in the Communist movement. More so than Marx inverting Hegel, the Nazis inverted the dialectic to argue that both Jewish capitalism and Jewish communism were heads of the same beast. The fascists who were involved in the National Front in England in the 1960s and 1970s were generally more or less overtly Nazi in relation to their standing in national popularity, which again was a reflection of the dominant factions prevailing in the NF at any one time.

When one turns to the NF and its views on 'race', much of the age-old Jewish conspiracy theory was adopted fairly intact. As Stan Taylor, probably the best chronicler of the NF, notes,

The most remarkable feature of the NF's ideology was the extent to which it corresponded with the ideas presented in Hitler's Mein Kampf, written in the 1920s before Hitler, or the movement which he led, came to power in Germany ... Their analytical components had (1) a common base in the 'scientific racism' of nineteenth century thinkers such as De Gobineau and Chamberlain, (2) a shared perception of a Jewish (in the case of the NF, Zionist Jewish) conspiracy to destroy the dominant European nation-races through (3) their
control of finance capital and associated ability to manipulate both capitalism and Communism...

In other words the anti-semitic tenor borrowed from National Socialism remained as an integral, if more hidden, part of the fascist ideology of the NF but it was not 'the Jewish question' which could be raised in 1960s and 1970s Britain as the the prima facie issue for racist mobilisation and movement building. For that the NF sought to exploit the failings of successive Labour and Conservative Governments to attack racism with any of the zeal with which they introduced immigration controls and the groundswell of popular racism which certain incidents such as Powell's speeches or the expulsions of the Malawi and Ugandan Asians aroused. At the same time, their persistent electoral and respectable groundwork was seeking to establish the NF as a voice for those who saw British capitalism as being increasingly unable to improve bad housing, stem rising unemployment or undermine the 'competition' element which came about whenever black migrants were offered jobs or services.

As David Edgar, playwright and one of the leading members of the ANL, has argued, much of the NF's viewpoint on black people has been one as seeing them not as social actors but as essentially objectified in negative terms - the mugger, the rapist etc. - such that 'modern British fascists, unlike the Nazis, cast their most public victims in an ideologically symptomatic rather than a causative role.'\(^7\) The NF demanded that black people should be forcibly repatriated to their 'country of origin', thereby removing not only depleters of the Aryan stock but also removing unwitting dupes of the
'Zionist conspiracy'. Taylor explains how the plan would have been carried out.

The NF would compulsorily repatriate coloured immigrants and their offspring; with those of mixed race the decision as to whether they could stay would be decided in each case on its merits; where there was a mixed marriage, the white partner would be expected to accompany his or her spouse to another country."

The question for the NF and for those groups opposing it was how latent popular racism can be transformed into an active fascist mass movement. It is, of course, the issue which has transfixed those on the far-Right of British politics for many years. Its significant failure has been to get sections of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie to make a break with the reformism of the major political parties and indulge in street politics, as well as electoral forays within an authoritarian fascist movement. Even though the NF has sought to exploit any national incidents which have swelled racist sentiments, only really in the period 1975-78 has it given the appearance of being in a period of sustained growth. Each time as it has sought to generalise its politics to assert itself as a national political party rather than a single issue protest group, so its fascist roots have been exposed and potential recruits frightened away.

To leave the argument at that would be only to tell part of the story. For the NF's exploitation of popular racism, setting aside whatever support hardline fascists might expect to get, has not been carried out in an ideological vacuum across the rest of the political spectrum. Miles and Phizacklea point out that, 'One of the most
important reasons... [for the failure of the NF to build massively] in the 1970s was the role of the state in both practising and legitimising racism. As long as the state can retain the initiative in this matter, the opportunities for the neo-fascists will be limited.\[12\] Both Conservative and Labour governments have sought to halt black immigration, have promoted the 'law and order' issues which have resulted in more oppressive policing of black people and have supported palliative Race Relations Acts. In these respects the state has given the lead such that it has undermined any possible right-wing pressure of any force which could drive people into the arms of the fascists.

In the period mid-1950s to mid-1970s the ideology of racism was refracted through the state through various forms of legislation, especially over immigration, such that popular racism was ebbing and flowing within boundaries manageable by the state and that the major political parties were none too excessively concerned by the possibility of a mass racist party in British politics. What began to change in the mid-1970s was the immediate failure of the 1974 Labour Government to offer solutions for dealing with the sustained crisis in British capitalism, save for attacks on the wages and conditions of its own voters allied to spending cuts. At the same time cases of racial attacks were on the increase, which were to give the NF greater confidence backed by, for them, some promising electoral results. For those seeking to stop what they saw as an emergent fascist threat building upon the recurrent themes of 'race' and 'immigration' the historical precedent of the struggle against fascism in Britain in the 1930s was noteworthy. As will be seen with the fuller discussion of the
ANL below, there were a number of parallels with both movements in the 1930s and 1970s, played down by the major commentators on the period.

3.3 The struggle against fascism in Britain in the 1930s

If there is one pivotal historical precedent which relates both the model of the United Front as espoused by Trotsky in the 1930s discussed in Chapter 2 and the strategy and tactics of the ANL, it is the anti-fascist movement of that era which stopped Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists (BUF) from growing into a mass fascist movement in pre-war Britain. It is central to this thesis that the application of United Front politics by the ANL, giving the pre-war anti-fascist movement a specific political character, was a repetition of the actions of the anti-fascist movement centering around sections of the Communist party, ILP and Jewish militants of that time. It is important to briefly restate the events and the actions of the time by the participants, not least because the Communist Party in the 1970s was to adopt a radically different line re mass opposition to fascism and racism than it had in the earlier period.

Just as the fascist movements came to power in Germany in 1933 and Austria in 1934 and in the same year a fascist coup in France was attempted so the British equivalent, the British Union of Fascists, was tried to build such a movement in Britain. Under the leadership of Sir Oswald Mosley, a political tourist, who had been a Labour and Conservative MP at different times (as well as leader of the 'New Party') the BUF grew into the largest fascist political force ever seen in Britain. The BUF gathered together much of the diaspora of minor
fascist groups that had existed in the 1920s and was launched on October 1st 1932 with the explicit tactic of mass rallies, marches and meetings while at the same time Mosley kept up his links with the British establishment. At the BUF HQ in Chelsea, the Black House, Mosley housed a full-time paid defence force armed with truncheons and replete with transport. The BUF grew to 40,000 in 1934 with a headquarters staff of 140. Lord Rothermere swung the might of his publishing empire behind the BUF and, according to Baroness Ravendale, many leading Tories considered joining the fascists so much so that the Conservative leader Baldwin had to appeal to them not to break away. For a brief period a section of the British ruling class were offering some limited backing to the BUF.

However, as Robert Skidelsky (who may be more accurately described as Mosley's hagiographer rather than biographer), has suggested, the actual membership of the party was of a different class composition. He wrote 'With the exception of the young of all classes, the early BUF was heavily middle class. Its following in the industrial areas was middle class ... the Morning Post dubbed the blackshirts "Boiled shirts". This is not what Mosley wanted, but it was what he got.'

The membership of the party therefore followed the classic pattern of early fascist development, with a substantially lower middle class leadership and a socially marginal membership. As Rosenberg notes, 'Taxi drivers and clerical workers also registered support, as well as small businessmen, whose trade journals were generally favourable to the BUF, reflecting the small man against the big trusts and monopolies.'

As a galvanising event for the BUF held a great number of
public meetings. After Lord Rothermere's 'Hurrah for the Blackshirts' headline in the Daily Mail, membership peaked. In Birmingham the BUF's numbers rocketed from 200 in 1933 to 2000 in 1934, out of a total party membership of over 40,000. The high point for Mosley was planned for three London rallies in 1934, one of which was at Olympia in June. The composition of Mosley's audience was strikingly different to previous ones and Skidelsky regards it as the big chance missed in which, 'For the first and only time in the BUF's history, Mosley was able to get into one of his halls a substantial percentage of Britain's establishment.' Thousands of anti-fascists, mainly Jews and Communists, clashed with the police outside. The violence and brutality of the fascist stewards not only frightened many of Mosley's potential supporters away but also brought him into the same fold as the fascists of Italy and Germany. No longer could any observers fail to see where the movement was heading. The opposition to Mosley began to coalesce just as his support dwindled.

The factors of objective conditions and economic recovery only partly explain how the BUF was stopped as a growing fascist movement. Brewer, who has written on the activities of the BUF in the Midlands, sums up the period as one in which, 'The interests of capital were guarded by the Conservatives, those of Labour by the unions. Neither did well but neither caused sufficient distress for a recourse to drastic measures.' After mid-1934 Mosley chose to build a hard core of followers in the East End of London. By now the party was openly anti-semitic. As Piratin, a leading Communist party member and Communist MP for Mile End after 1945, recalls 'Jews were attacked every time they were outnumbered or in no position to defend themselves...
Strife and tension characterised the atmosphere in East London in those year. Mosley's campaign was intensive, so much so that 300 police reinforcements were drafted into the East End to deal with the street disturbances. The major source of opposition to the BUF came from sections of the Labour Left, the ILP, the CP, and Jewish groups such as the Jewish People's Council and Jewish Ex-Serviceman's Association. The official leaderships of the TUC/Labour Party and the Board of Deputies of British Jews took a non-oppositional line arguing that fascists would be beaten by promotion of the good deeds of Jews and calling on what it saw as the British sense of fair play and tolerance. The major confrontation which broke Mosley's attempts to control the streets in Britain was what has gone down in labour movement history as the 'Battle of Cable Street'.

3.4 The Battle of Cable Street

Mosley announced his wish to march into the East End of London via the Jewish area in Stepney on 4th October 1936 as a prelude to the aforementioned 1937 London County Council elections. The Communist Party was torn between the leadership's attempts to minimise discord with the Labour/TUC leaders who argued for 'stay away' tactics and the demands of members in the East End who wished to build physical opposition to the fascists. On 31st September the CP issued a call for workers to avoid the fascists and rally at Trafalgar Square and march to the East End but by 2nd October the line had changed to one of a mass mobilisation in the East End to stop the fascists marching.
By contrast the Labour Party, the TUC, the Board of Deputies and the Daily Herald, the largest Left newspaper, all appealed to people to stay away. Despite police protection of over 6000, Mosley and his marchers were met by a crowd of over 150,000 anti-fascists and he was unable to march as barricades had been set up in Cable St and Jamaica St which were defended. After several hours of fighting the police could still not force through a wedge for Mosley. Mosley's attempted power-base of street domination was eroded not only by his loss of this battle but also by the actions of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party then went into the East End to campaign around housing, unemployment and unionisation of workers thereby filling much of the political vacuum that the BUF had hoped to exploit. As Chanie Rosenberg notes:

It became difficult for the fascists to operate as they had not been able to build a sufficient base ... particularly since every time they did appear, anti-fascists were in force ... The fascists' activity and support thus dwindled, until they were formally disbanded in 1940. This was not thanks to the Labour Party and trade union leaderships. It was due to the hundreds of thousands of workers, led by the Communist Party and Independent Labour Party, who fought.265

The demise of the BUF was further aided by the objective conditions in the British economy and the recovery made by British capital during the period, compared with Germany, for example. At the same time it is impossible to predict how large the fascist movement in Britain would have grown had not the active opposition been led by the Communist Party. The history of the NF and its demise is further evidence on the effects of human agency on objective social and
economic conditions, as well as the attempted application of the model of the Trotskyist United Front in Britain. One of the important questions to be addressed is the amount to which one movement can stop another movement and how much it is reliant on other factors, such as the media, the actions of government and the role of the state in general.

3.5 The growth and roots of the National Front (NF) in the 1960s

The migration of workers into Britain to alleviate labour shortages is not merely a post-war phenomenon but in that period the majority of people who have arrived have been established as members of different 'races' and immigration control became established as a method of improving 'race relations'. Miles and Phizacklea catalogue the growing political campaigns against immigrants in the 1950s from within the Conservative Party and in late 1958, following attacks on West Indians, ever-louder calls were made in Parliament for a ban on black immigration. The 1959 General Election returned many more Conservative MPs who lobbied for greater immigration controls and in 1960 the Birmingham Immigration Control Association was formed to provide a regional impetus to the campaign. The pressures led to the Commonwealth Immigration Act (1962) which set physical characteristics as an entry criteria for migrants to Britain (there were no actual restrictions on migrants from the predominantly white Ireland).

The roots of the NF lay deep within the various splinter organisations of the British fascist cadre in the early 1960s. In 1962 the National Socialist Movement (NSM) had been created by John Tyndall,
Martin Webster and Colin Jordan and was officially launched on 20th
April 1963 (Hitler's birthday). When such small organisations as these
are unable to build, the introversion which inevitably occurs seems to
drive them to self-destruction and so it was with the NSM. By August
1964 Tyndall and Webster formed the Greater Britain Movement (an
organisation of never more than 140 members). At this time Tyndall
courted A.K. Chesterton who was involved with the League of Empire
Loyalists (LEL) and had been a prominent member of the BUF.

At this time electoral forays brought limited though
significant results. The General Election of 1964 was the first when
issues of racism and immigration control became major electoral
factors, and John Bean, leader of the British National Party and
candidate in Southall, polled 9.1% of the vote in the area. The larger
scenario was played out in Smethwick which pushed the Parliamentary
Labour Party into setting up the Race Relations Board and dropping its
earlier qualms on immigration control. The small groupings around the
GBM and the BNP continued to mill about without any apparent growth.
The 1966 General Election, where 'race' was much less of an issue, saw
various parties of the far-right poll between 4 and 7% in selected
target areas but for those who had hopes of building a mass movement of
racist feeling there was little comfort. The resurgence of support for
the Labour Party, despite Rhodesia's declaration of UDI, led Chesterton
to conclude on the need for unity of the groups on the far-Right.

Towards the end of 1966 negotiations between the leaderships
of the LEL and BNP drew the two parties closer together as a merger
beckoned. Walker and Taylor, both biographers of the NF albeit in
different styles, note that the respective memberships had little to
say in the talks. The combined membership, despite a claim of 2500, was nearer 1500. It further had to be decided whether or not to allow John Tyndall, given his unashamed Nazism, and the rest of the GBM to join. Finally, misgivings about the traits of National Socialism were put down to the high spirits of youth and the prospects of extra members, funds and a unity on the far-Right were an important spur. In October 1967 the GBM dissolved itself into the ranks of what had been launched on 7th February 1967 as the National Front (NF).

A.K. Chesterton was named as the Chairman of the NF though his air of disaffection with the more open street politics of Tyndall and Webster soon saw him out of step with the activities of the membership. In 1968 with the expulsion of the Kenyan Asians and Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech and subsequent expulsion from the Shadow Cabinet, the question of immigration and 'race' was once again newsworthy. The Wilson Government was in crisis with wage freezes and a major balance of payments deficit and there was a rapid loss of support for the Labour Party in key local authorities such as Glasgow and Sheffield. The Powellite movement came to the fore after the Labour Government's 1968 Immigration Act and it may be that pandering to racism, as the Immigration Act did, gave confidence to the racist supporters of Powell rather than assuage their thirst for a tougher line on immigration.

The NF became a haven for disaffected Conservative elements and for those whose support for Powell, after his sacking by Edward Heath, took them outside the established political parties although others chose the Monday Club. Through the holding of meetings and rallies, membership drives and recruitment policies, there seemed to be
a solid growth in the party's fortunes, percentage improvements in the local authority elections of 1969 amplified the encouraging signs, so much so that in the 1970 General Election, the NF targeted 16 seats in which to stand candidates. Once again, optimism pre-empted a debacle. The highest percentage gained was 5.6% in Islington North where the fairly respectable NF candidate the Rev. Brian Green had hardly fared better than the openly fascist British Movement (a subaltern of the NSM). Tomorrow was still a long way from belonging to them.

The strategy around the late 1960s and early 1970s for the NF was to win a following on a simple racist ticket. This may explain why they were unsuccessful in the 1970 General Election when the Conservative leadership, despite the sidelining of Powell, had promised further immigration controls. These were duly introduced in the 1971 Immigration Act. The period was not one in which the NF could grow, especially with the upturn in class struggle tending to ally workers to the ideas of the Left. As Taylor accurately describes,

In early 1972, the NF leadership cannot have been sanguine about the prospects of 'breaking out' from the 'fringes' of British politics. Although there was some evidence that the loyalties of the electorate to the major parties were, for various reasons, under strain, there was no reason to suppose that support would accrue to the NF.34

The major issue which brought the NF some political strength was the expulsion of the Ugandan Asians in 1972 (the first year the Police compiled 'mugging' statistics) by General Idi Amin. The NF was able to capitalise on the expulsions on three fronts, that of backing their claims for black 'unfitness' to rule in the African state; the
opposition to black immigration into Britain - with the media initially estimating up to 75,000 expelees coming to Britain; and the exploitation of what it saw as the weakness of the Heath Government.\textsuperscript{36} The apparent \textit{volte face} by the Government dispirited both Conservative Party members and supporters and Nugent has estimated that the membership of the NF exploded from around 2,000 to 13,000 in the following six months.\textsuperscript{36} Walker suggests that 'Nor was it simply a matter of numbers; the calibre of the new recruits was markedly higher than in the past. Monday Clubbers with experience of political organisation were beginning to join.'\textsuperscript{37}

On a speech to 43 party organisers John Tyndall stressed the importance building a cadre within the organisation from which newer recruits could learn street politics. Tyndall began to set out the strategy the NF was to take. He asked 'What is it that touches off a chord in the instincts of the people to whom we seek to appeal?' and answered it thus:

\begin{quote}
\begin{itemize}
\item it may be a marching column; it may be the sound of a drum; it may be a banner or it may just be the impression of the crowd. None of these things contain in themselves one single argument ... This is why at certain intervals of the year we concentrate our forces together by transporting members hundreds of miles by coach. We have got to show our strength to the public and to our own people.\textsuperscript{38}
\end{itemize}
\end{quote}

In February 1974, the 'Who Governs Britain' General Election saw Edward Heath defeated in the face of industrial action on a variety of fronts. At the election the NF fielded 54 candidates, 4 over the qualifying target for a Party Political Broadcast. As a whole the party won on average 3.1% of the vote in the 54 seats contested, down on the
the level of support in 1973. Despite considerable efforts the NF had failed to extend its appeal. The row generated over the Ugandan Asians had died down and a power struggle was developing within the NF as new members who adopted a more electoralist, populist stance tried to wrest power from the more hard-line (ex-)Nazis such as Tyndall and Webster, though the latter showed himself remarkably adept at drifting with whatever was the main current in the party.\footnote{99}

It was at this time that sections of the Left, particularly the revolutionary Left began to take more cognisance of the activities of the NF. Taylor notes:

The emergence of the NF did not initially alarm the leaders of established political parties and social institutions such as the unions or the churches, probably because in some way they considered it trivial compared to the major conflicts over industrial relations legislation and pay policy which were shaping in late 1973 and early 1974.\footnote{100}

The two main parties of the revolutionary Left at the time, the International Socialists (IS) (membership c.2500) which was relaunched as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the International Marxist Group (IMG) (membership c.1000) made organisational moves against the NF and sought to institute mass mobilisations in direct opposition to the NF. The IS issued a pamphlet by Roger Rosewell\footnote{101} which argued for 'physical action against the fascists' whereas the IMG which had a periphery with influence in the student movement won a motion at the April 1974 NUS Conference for the policy of 'No platform for fascists' in student unions.

In 1974, small local groups were beginning to protest
against the growing NF activities in terms of marches and assemblies. For example, Tower Hamlets Movement against Racism and Fascism was formed as a broad-based organisation to combat racist and fascist influence in the area." Local demonstrations were held including a picket of the Railway Arms in Bow which operated a colour bar and meetings were held on the 40th anniversary of Cable St. It was in June of that year that the initial major confrontation between the NF and the anti-fascists first hit the headlines - the first major street confrontation against fascists in Britain for nearly 40 years.

3.6 The March on Red Lion Square

On Sunday June 13th, the NF called a march through the West End of London under the slogan 'Send them back'. Their march was to culminate at Conway Hall in Red Lion Square. The London Area Council of Liberation called a counter-demonstration which was to end with an outdoor meeting at Red Lion Square. The two marches were kept apart by the police and trade union and church leaders on the anti-fascist march attempted to stop the rest of the march confronting the National Front and the police protecting them. As the IS and IMG contingents attempted to win round sections of the march into conflict with the NF so fighting with the police ensued in which a student from Bristol University, Kevin Gateley, was fatally injured. The events led to a public inquiry chaired by Lord Scarman and further set the tone for the next five years of oppositions and confrontations between the NF and anti-NF groups.

The NF marched and met in Conway Hall. To clear the streets
for the NF the police charged the anti-NF demonstration using SPG reinforcements and mounted officers to force them into the Square. The Scarman Inquiry heard from 'witnesses who were reporters from the national daily newspapers. One after another they declared that the police had over-reacted. They said that the majority of the marchers were peaceful. They saw many examples of police brutality.' Tony Gilbert, the author of 'Only one died', an investigation into the behaviour of the police that day, argued that the confrontational strategy of the anti-fascists was 'manna from heaven' for the police, in that the attitude of the Left was used to justify the behaviour of the police. 

Alex Callinicos, author of an article entitled 'In Defence of Violence' and an IS/SWP member, countered by arguing that physical opposition rather than turning the other cheek was part of the strategy to stop the NF. He argued:

By marching unhindered ... the NF leaders hope to create a sense of aggressive self-confidence among their supporters and fear and intimidation among black people. In this atmosphere, attacks on black people will be multiplied, and new members attracted to the National Front and turned into hardened Nazis ... To stop the Nazis, therefore, we must stop their marches. No more than in the 1930s will the willingness to take a lead in the physical struggle necessarily isolate the anti-fascists ...

These were rehearsals of the arguments that were to be made for and against the actions of the ANL and repeats of those which the Communist Party had come up against when its members had fought with Mosley's Blackshirts in the 1930s.

By October 1974 the minority Labour Government was forced to
go to the country for the second General Election in the same year. Labour’s victory brought them a working majority. The NF’s membership had trebled in the preceding three years and the party was able to field 90 candidates. The results were none too exceptional (only a 0.3% increase in support, in total 113,625 votes) with 90 lost deposits. The key region where the NF’s position was strengthening was in Greater London. Out of 36 candidates, six won more than 7% of the vote and a further three won more than 5%. Taylor sees the success, such as it is, was coming about largely because it was able to mobilise an existing potential among white voters for support related to the size of the coloured populations and additionally capitalise upon a political tradition of support for parties of the extreme right in the East End of London and in parts of the East and North of London where ex-Eastenders had settled.46

Once again, as has often happened after a major incursion into electoralism, the NF fell into disarray with factional infighting and disputes on ideological and political practice. The Populist wing rose to the head of the NF’s Directorate, with people like Roy Painter and Kingsley Read coming to the fore, attempting to move away from too openly a Nazi-type organisation. They successfully organised a leadership coup against John Tyndall and had him demoted to the post of Deputy Chairman, with Read taking over as Chairman. The Populist faction hoped that by increasing their free hand from just the ‘race’ card and embracing a wider number of social and political issues, they could also gain more currency with the electorate. Walker sums up the period as one in which, 'The misfortunes of the party had begun to
assume the pace and scale of a Greek tragedy. Membership and
recruitment had begun to stagnate.  

3.7 The growth of the NF in 1976 and the start of a movement

Two events coalesced in early 1975 to give the NF the spur
it required to lift itself out of the doldrums. One cannot really be
described as an 'event' for it was the period of crisis of British
capitalism assuming the specific form of a massive balance of payments
crisis. In 1976 the International Monetary Fund intervened to save the
Pound from collapsing. The terms of the settlement with the Labour
Government were such that wholesale cuts in Government expenditure were
demanded by the IMF. Funds to both the NHS and the education services
were cut, as were the levels of support for local government.
Unemployment rose from 600,000, through the symbolic 1,000,000 barrier
to 1,600,000 by 1977 while wages fell and for the first time since the
Second World War there was a decline in the real standard of living.
There was a growing sense of working class disillusionment with the
Labour Government which had replaced the unpopular Heath Government in
1974. Although this was not a massive trend, there were numbers of
people beginning to seek an alternative solution to the drift into
 crisis which both the Conservatives and Labour had failed to reverse.

In April and early May 1976, Malawi Asians were expelled by
the country's President Banda and came to Britain. Once more the press
hysteria mounted again. When the West Sussex Council temporarily housed
some of the new arrivals in a racketeering hotel, The Sun of May 4th
raged 'Scandal of £600 a week immigrants', the Daily Mirror warned of
'A new flood of Asians into Britain', the Daily Telegraph noted of an 'Invasion of Asians forces borough to call for help' and even the Guardian claimed that 'Asians riled neighbours'. The message was clearly put that large numbers of Asians were coming into the country and being put up in four-star hotels on their arrival. The results were soon to be seen within the local elections occurring at that time. Leicester was one of the growing power bases of the NF in the Midlands.

In one ward in Leicester the NF gained over 20% of the vote and fought all sixteen wards contested taking an average 16.6% of the vote, eliciting the response of the Labour Leader in Leicester, the Rev. Kenneth Middleton, that he was surprised at the extent to which the NF had taken votes from them. He hoped it would be a 'passing phase' and that whilst some members of the Labour Party thought that the NF should be given a firm response, he didn't think that such actions would have much effect on an apathetic electorate. Searchlight journal responded at the time, 'With all due respect to the Reverend, if that's the sort of leadership the Labour party of Leicester is offering in the face of a fascist advance - no wonder they are not interested in their brand of politics.'

The growing confidence of the NF was buoyed further by the result of the Deptford By-Election in June 1976 in which the NF and the National Party got a combined vote of 44%. The successful Labour candidate gained 1% less to win the seat. Taylor tends to be wary of implying from these results that the NF was on the move and building a substantial base and cadre from which to rapidly expand. Rightly he points to the regional aspects of the NF's vote, especially in the West Midlands and the way in which the Malawi Asians scare shored up the NF
vote but the results cannot be ignored, nor more importantly can the increased number of rallies, marches and general increase in confidence of the members themselves. They may not have grown massively in mobilising existing electoral support but the results which he admits made the NF 'jubilant' were only part of the party's tactics.

Enoch Powell returned to the immigration theme on 24th May in which he compared the possible 'racial carnage' on the streets of mainland Britain with the situation in Belfast. In the same year the Government's Race Relations Bill was working its way through Parliament which, though not a draconian piece of legislation, made incitement to racial hatred a criminal offence. The NF and other groups organised around the Bill, claiming it restricted their freedom. The cause célèbre of the extreme-right was Robert Relf who shot to fame as a 'race rebel' when, as a member of the British Movement he put a notice outside his Leamington Spa home advertising it for sale to an English family only, or more precisely a white English family. He was prosecuted under the 1968 Race Relations Act, was sent to prison for contempt of court and drew publicity to his case by going on hunger strike. After seven weeks in prison with a welter of court appearances Relf was released. Walker notes, 'He had been allowed to justify the Race Relations Act and the court and he and his supporters were jubilant'.

In early June (the same week as the Communist Party called for a non-racist, humane immigration policy and the Labour Party committed itself to a campaign against racism and fascism) the NF had attempted to hold a rally in Birmingham in support of Relf, at which
they were outnumbered 8 to 1 by counter-demonstrators. As Sheila McGregor, present on that demonstration remembers,

At that demonstration we had a broad section of people there - from the Trades Council, various black groups, different groups on the left but there was a network of people who could be called on to help build for events like this, that was taken on into the ANL. On the day there were only a couple of hundred NF and the main problem of the day was the attacks by the police on our side.  

Three weeks later, however, the NF was able to mobilise 1500 supporters in Stafford. The march was attended by the Mayor of Stafford, Cllr. Tongue, who congratulated the marchers for their peaceful behaviour and even took an NF membership card which he promised to think about completing. This was followed by a handshake ceremony in which the Chief Constable of Staffordshire thanked Martin Webster, the NF's National Activities Organiser, for ensuring a peaceful day. This little example shows the growing respectability of the NF as a political force. Not only could it win nearly 50% (with the National Party) in a by-election, it could receive favourable press for people such as Robert Relf as a 'race martyr' and it could gain the backing of a Mayor and a Chief Constable for its marches.

3.8 The summer of 1976 and the growth of opposition to the NF

Apart from the work the NF was able to do around the May local elections and the case of Robert Relf, racist violence was on the increase. On May 21st 1976 two overseas students from Queen Mary College in London, living in Mile End in the East End, were murdered.
The police admitted it was a racially-motivated crime. From this attack the IWA called a national organising conference against racist and fascist attacks. It was set for Southall on 6th June. Two days before the conference, Gurdip Singh Chaggar from Southall was stabbed to death outside a public house, prompting Kingsley Read of the National Party to make his infamous 'One down - a million to go' comment at a meeting in Newham two nights later.\textsuperscript{52} The IWA meeting was addressed by Darcus Howe, Trevor Huddleston and Dan Jones (Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council), amongst others.

At this point, a large section of Asian youth, particularly in Southall, were becoming increasingly militant and held a meeting that evening to show their disaffection with the IWA which they argued had shied away from the notion of self-defence and put too much faith in the police. The call for 'multiracial', disciplined self-defence groups was rejected both by the Labour Party and by the Communist Party. This meeting laid the basis for the foundation of the Southall Youth Movement. A march was held through Southall on the Saturday after Gurdip Singh Chaggar's death which attracted over 7000 Asian protestors supported by hundreds of black and white trade unionists and others.

In the years 1976 and 1977 several \textit{ad hoc} Committees Against Racism and Fascism were formed in most English towns with a substantial black population of any size.\textsuperscript{53} The Labour Party leadership, however, pre-empted any calls for tolerance and opposition to racism with a reminder to all concerned of its unwavering support of immigration controls. Bob Mellish, Labour Chief Whip, reminded MPs of the position on 18 May 1976 when he argued that:
This nation has done all that it should have done. Its record is one of great humour and integrity, but I say "enough is enough."  

At the same time of these calls for tight control of immigration the Labour Party launched a nationwide anti-racist campaign which, as Miles and Phizacklea commented, 'followed an internal report on the [NF's] growing electoral success in local elections'\(^{55}\), especially in Labour party strongholds. In the same month the TUC's General Council issued a statement of its support for racial equality and condemning the extreme right, with further action at the 1976 Congress aimed at further organising a national campaign against racism and fascism. Miles and Phizacklea seemed quite optimistic about this, in that the question of racism was brought to the fore and that the threat of fascism stirred even the TUC into calls for some form of action.\(^{56}\)  

It is important, therefore, to see exactly what form of action was being proposed. The Labour Party Conference in 1976 adopted a resolution which appeared impressive but as has been seen before, Labour Governments can well ignore the decisions of their party conference. The resolution called for the repeal of the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts (which it chose not to do), called for a conference on racialism, support for the black community in defending itself (as long as it didn't break the law) and organising of meetings and leaflettings. The summation of this campaign is given by Taylor who writes 'The campaign itself did not amount to a great deal. Leaflets were produced and a march was held ...'\(^{57}\)  

With the proliferation of groups organising against racism and fascism, the picture was one of activists and non-activists coming
together with a sense of being anti-racist and anti-National Front but
not wholly sure as to how to combat the NF. The leaderships of the
Labour Party and the TUC both saw the National Front as a force that
could be beaten by greater information and campaigning to expose its
true nature, whilst groups such the IS/SP and the IMG argued that the
fascist movement actually had to be stopped, or more to use the
phraseology of the times, 'strangled at birth'. So it was that Colin
Sparks of the IS noted acerbically:

The country is dotted with jolly class-collaborationist
anti-racist committees stuffed full of reformist trade
union bureaucrats, jolly liberal clergymen and other riff-
raff. We should not ignore these bodies but have to
recognise very clearly that they cannot and will not lead
the physical struggle against fascism.56

There is a tendency amongst chroniclers of the period to focus purely
on the electoral ups and downs of the NF as a guage of its wider
support. Given the emphasis on marches and rallies it is worth noting
the strength of the marches. At the end of 1975 the NF mobilised 1200
people into an 'anti-mugging' march in Hackney. In Bradford in March
1976 over 1000 NF members marched.

In the lead up to 1977, the Labour Party (with the CP in
support), and the TUC were beginning to express an organised opposition
to racism by campaigning and leafleting, with the occasional symbolic
march. At the same time the smaller groups of the far-left were taking
it upon themselves to attempt to stop the NF marching whilst at the
same time contributing to the bigger but more passive Labour/TUC
campaigns, with some success. On the part of the NF it entered 1977
with a good set of local election results behind it, the issue of 'race' getting constant media attention (1976 also saw major clashes of black people and police at the Notting Hill Carnival) and a higher than ever political profile for an organisation that had survived a damaging internal split. The NF could not be described as a party on the threshold of building a mass movement but it was in a position of gaining a greater support and indeed the hostility it generated from the Left was both a reaction to, and a reflection of, the apparent upturn in the NF's popularity.

3.9 The NF arrives as an electoral force - 1977 and the GLC elections

The first major event, following a mid-winter lull in the marching season was the NF's annual march on St George's Day, April 23rd, in Wood Green in North London. An alliance of Left and black groups agreed to march in protest against the NF demonstration. Within that group, however, there were disputes as to how the NF should be opposed. The leaderships of the local Labour Party and Communist Party branches as well as some of the black organisations wanted the march banned with a protest rally to be held away from the NF march. The SWP, by contrast, argued that direct action should be undertaken. Andy Strouthous, at that point the President of North London Polytechnic and now a leading member of the SWP, recalls the day:

We had the line of direct opposition to the Front and we stuck to it. The problem was to win enough people over to it from the groups and individuals who were prepared to demonstrate against the NF. Fortunately enough people ignored the bureaucracy and followed our lead to make a
difference. I'd argue that it goes back to leading by example.  

The result was to be a common one when the officialdom of the anti-fascist march sought to organise a peaceful demonstration while at the same time there was a group of people who wished to directly confront the NF. As David Widgery, a leading organiser of Rock Against Racism, wrote of the revolutionary Left's opinion of the demonstration:

So while the local worthies addressed a rather small audience in a local park, the Front and their police protectors were faced with much more numerous, better organised and determined opposition ... Not only were the NF marchers reduced to an ill-organised and bedraggled queue but there was extensive evidence of local dislike for the unwanted march and the trouble it brought.  

The next immediate challenge for the NF was the local elections in London in May 1977. The NF chose to contest 9 of the 92 seats being fought (the only exception being Croydon NE). The result was a major success for the NF, proving to be the highpoint of their electoral forays. They were able to capture 120,000 votes, which was over double the total gained by the party in the whole of Britain in 1974. By psephological analysis, Taylor comes to the conclusion that the result can be put down to demographic, turnout and 'protest' factors rather than to any absolute growth in organised racism or in NF support in the city. It is noteworthy that Taylor does not really explain why the NF got a higher vote than 1974, when in 1977 more people were presumably more aware of its racist and Nazi connotations.
Nor does he adequately consider the effects of having 120,000 people voting for the National Front in Britain's capital city, allied to the NF's bases in the West and East Midlands and in industrial Lancashire and Yorkshire. He does not really assess the rising extent of racial attacks, the growing confidence of the NF in planning more and more marches and it must be noted, the increasing fascination of academics such as himself in the phenomenon.

Certainly the NF leadership drew succour from the results as the Left became keener to oppose it now that it was an established political force in London. 'At that point' recalls Tariq Ali, in 1977 a leading member of the IMG, 'a shiver ran through the black community and the Left. If the fascists could call on an admittedly passive support of over 100,000 people in London, then they were beginning to be a twin threat - they could start claiming electoral credibility while continuing racial attacks. Nationally the Labour Government was floundering, the movement had to come from the bottom.' The events of early 1977 thus gave the parties concerned reasons for believing the NF was undergoing a metamorphosis from a mobiliser of racist opinion to a fascist movement. Paul Holborrow, one of the three founders of the ANL also argued,

The figures speak for themselves. Over 119,000 votes in the GLC elections. In 33 out of 85 wards the Liberals were knocked into fourth place. If proportional representation had existed and a general election had been held we would have been talking about 25 NF MPs. All of this by a group consisting of leaders with a Nazi past covered in the veneer of electoral respectability. The Labour Government was attacking the conditions of the working class which was likely to drive more people into the arms of the NF. That was why they had to be stopped.
The last large scale confrontation in 1976 and the one in which battle lines were drawn between the state (particularly the police), the fascists and the various groups opposed to them, was in Lewisham.

3.10 The Lewisham Demonstration

The National Front entered the immediate period after the GLC elections with the assumption not only that it had a reasonable base of support in London but that marches and rallies were important in attracting public attention. The first of the NF's programme of marches was at Lewisham on Saturday, 13 August. The march was planned under the banner of a campaign against 'muggers', to go from New Cross to Lewisham Town Hall. A counter-demonstration was organised by the All-London Campaign Against Racism and Fascism (ALCARF) - comprising the local Labour Party hierarchy, the Communist Party and trade union bureaucracies and church leaders. Despite calls for the march to be banned, the Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police, David McNee allowed the march to go ahead and ALCARF's counter-demonstration headed, as Paul Holborrow bemoaned, 'five miles in the opposite direction to the National Front march', under the leadership of the three main political parties and Mayor Godsiff of Lewisham and the Bishop of Southwark, Mervyn Stockwood. David Widgery recalls, what were by now familiar arguments,

The opponents of confrontation (such as the Communist Party) possessed only one argument: organised action by the committed was no substitute for understanding by the multitude. Our reply was that popular support had to be won,
 somehow wrenched away ... by the direct action of an initially small nucleus of organised individuals.56

By mid-day, following the end of the formal march, over 5000 opponents to the NF had gathered in the centre of Lewisham, failing to adhere to the requests of their leaders. The demonstrators (including a local proportion of local black residents) attacked the NF march with missiles and the police attacked back, with the police lines being twice broken. Following the eventual end of the NF march, battles raged between anti-fascists and the police for some time, with total arrests numbering 214.

The Communist Party leadership was not in favour of direct action. The day before the march the Morning Star accused the SWP of preparing itself 'for the definitive game of cowboys and indians'. The day after the demonstration the SWP was accused by the Morning Star of 'staging ritual confrontations and street fights'. This was in marked contrast to the thinly disguised relish which Piratin shows in his stories of how the Communist Party fought the BUF in London in the 1930s. The reaction of Sid Bidwell, MP for Southall, was condemnatory.

I have no time for hooligans [the NF] ... and for those crackpot adventurers who have yet to take their part in responsibility in the real Labour movement. We cannot counter them by a strategy of trying to out-thug the thugs of the National Front, because we have the strength to do it otherwise.57

The SWP was quick to defend its tactics. Socialist Worker (20 August 1977) argued:
What would have happened if the confrontation had not taken place if the Socialist Workers Party had not organised people to fight the Front? The Nazis would have been free to swagger through Lewisham, lording it over the local population. A peaceful march two miles away would not have worried them, or their friends in the local police.

The SWP was also quick to condemn the Communist Party for its 'stay-away' attitude and inability to distance itself as a Communist Party from Bishops and supportive Conservatives. Despite the fact that the SWP regarded the Lewisham demonstration as a success, it drew two conclusions from it. One, that the running battles between SWP members and NF members were ineffectual in bringing in wider anti-racist opinion and that a larger but equally active movement was needed to oppose the NF. Secondly, the number of non-aligned people, particularly young black people, who had been prepared to fight the NF and the police at Lewisham gradually convinced the leadership of the SWP that such a movement could be built.

3.11 The Birth of the Anti-Nazi League (ANL)

The ANL was a direct result of the clashes at Lewisham. It was felt among leading figures in the SWP that the lack of coordination of the forces against the National Front was hampering the anti-NF campaign. As Paul Holborow, Organising Secretary of the ANL put it,

They (the NF) were well on their way to emerging as a "respectable" political force... The BBC covered the NF conference and portrayed Nazi thugs such as Webster and
Tyndall as "respectable politicians" ... the argument against the Front was going by default at a mass level."

Two weeks prior to that demonstration the National Secretary of the SWP, Jim Nichol, had mooted the idea and informal soundings were taken from non-SWP members as to the likelihood of groups joining in something which may well be seen as a 'front' for the revolutionary Left. Doug Quilby, a Quaker Labour Party member and magistrate, was broadly supportive, as was Tassaduq Ahmed, a Bangaldeshi with many contacts in the East End Bengali community. Michael Seifert, a lawyer and Communist Party member was quizzed because of his links with left-union leaders such as Ken Gill (TASS) and Alan Sapper (ACTT). The disagreements with the CP over the tactics of Lewisham were reflected in Seifert's response, as Jim Nichol recalls, 'I said, "Mike, this is only really going to work if it gets the support of the CP and the left TU leaders. What do you think?" Mike said, "I think it's a bloody great idea. But I'm sorry, the CP won't, they'll crucify you. So I'll not mention it to anyone.""

The attitude of some members of the National Committee of the SWP was equally unconvinced as to the merit of the task. The possibility of the launch of a United Front against fascism was greatly increased when Jim Nichol enlisted the help of Paul Holborow. Holborow, a leading member of the SWP, had worked extensively in the East End in organising anti-NF demonstrations and general opposition to the NF took over the main organisational tasks of canvassing support. He also saw Lewisham as central to the possibility of building a movement, rather
than the limited forces of the revolutionary Left having to mobilise at every occasion. He recalls,

Many people had physically attacked the Nazis but Lewisham put an alternative way of fighting the Nazis on the map. No longer was it a handful of anti-fascists seeking to stop the NF but there was a mass vein of support to be tapped. The real question was how to drive home the advantage. The ANL came out of that. It was intended as a United Front but you don’t keep referring back to Trotsky to see if you’ve got the line right. You go by experience."

The SWP members most active in the launch of the ANL also recognised that it was the anti-characteristic which was going to be both a unifier and a mobiliser. As Dave Widgery explains, 'The title Anti-Nazi League was deliberately chosen to be as broad as possible. It should be open to people who were pro-immigration control but were prepared to demonstrate against the Nazis. It was to be an anti-movement because a pro-movement would waste too much time arguing about rival utopias.' Holborow did follow the 'blueprint' for the United Front in approaching key influentials on the Labour Left and in the trade union movement. He contacted Peter Hain, who already had an established anti-racist record with his organisation against the South African Rugby tours and was a vocal figure on the Labour Left, and Ernie Roberts, Labour MP for Hackney, a veteran of the AUEW who was a bridge to the Left trade union leadership.

Ernie Roberts was enthusiastic about the possibilities of the ANL and at the 1977 Labour Party Conference was able to amass the signatures of over 40 MPs in backing the initial founding statement of the ANL (See - Appendix 1). When it was clear that there was enough
momentum to guarantee some success to the movement, it was officially
launched on 9th November 1977 at the House of Commons. At the launch
meeting Ernie Roberts stated:

We are especially looking to the trade union and political
organisation of the labour movement. Where anti-racist and
anti-fascist committees already exist, we would want to work
alongside them ... Where such committees do not yet exist,
we would like to assist in bringing people together who want
to be involved in the campaign against the Nazis. Whatever
organisational form, our most important task is to convince
local people to work with us against the Nazis.\(^5\)

The founding document stressed two points to the campaign, the need to
expose the Nazi nature of the NF and the need for mobilisation of mass
opposition to it, once again echoing the twin themes, action and
propaganda, of the United Front. The standing Committee of the ANL
reflected the importance with which the left viewed the rise of the NF.
The Committee consisted of Holborow, Hain and Roberts, Labour Tribune
Group MPs Martin Flannery, Audrey Wise, Arthur Latham and Neil
Kinnock\(^6\), Maurice Ludmer (editor of Searchlight), Bill Dunce (CP
member and trade unionist), actress Miriam Karlin, playwright David
Edgar\(^7\), Simon Hebditch (like Hain an ex-Liberal) and Nigel Harris
(economist and member of the SWP).\(^8\)

3.12 The organisation and running of the ANL

The style of the ANL was modelled upon, to a certain extent,
CND, which Ernie Roberts had played a major role in, and the 'Stop the
Seventies' Tour' against the Springbok Rugby Tourists which Peter Hain
supervised. One part of the propaganda arm was the co-option of 'personalities' from the arts, sport, academia etc. who could add to the high profile of the movement. Thus by December 1977 the ANL had the support of Brian Clough and Jack Charlton from football, Arnold Wesker and Ted Willis from the theatre and a host of musicians via 'Rock Against Racism'\textsuperscript{79}. In part the intention was to give credibility to the ANL as an organisation which could attract 'opinion leaders' or 'positive reference groups' but the high profile placed on music and football was also a reflection of the successes the NF was having in its recruitment drives and leaflettings around concerts, football matches and even in schools. In other words, one of the prime targets was youth.

The network of groups and organisations which had an input to the ANL were complex and in different areas were mirror-images of the local political structures, although the activist nature of the ANL brought to the fore those prepared to lead by example. More than one ANL branch shared a great many of its initial activists with the local Trades Council and Left milieu. At the national level, despite the presence of a variety of shades of left opinion on the National Steering Committee, Taylor accurately sums up the position when he notes 'The day-to-day running of the movement was the responsibility of the one man on the Steering Committee who could commit his organisation to the ANL's cause, Paul Holborow, who later became a full-time paid official of the ANL. Thus, although the IS/SWP was in a small minority on the Steering Committee, it supplied most of the activists and organisation at national and local level for the ANL.'\textsuperscript{80}

There was a powerful organisational factor which increased
the role of the SWP which lay in the nature of the organisation itself. The activities of the ANL such as leafleting, flyposting, organising meetings, and the larger confrontations against the National Front - be they NF paper sellers, meetings, marches or rallies - all demanded people prepared to devote time and energy. This had always been more of a realm of the Labour left and the revolutionary left than the right of the Labour Party. So it was with the ANL. The SWP (and the IMG) had been mobilising against the NF since the beginning of its period of growth in the early 1970s and in that respect, knew the ropes, whereas the Labour Party nationally was more concerned with affairs of government. The party had therefore developed the strategic and organisational links with local black organisations and through the local Trades Councils, shop stewards committees etc. Although the same could be said of the local Labour Parties, indeed on a larger scale, it was the activism and number of local branches of the SWP with weekly meetings which pushed its smaller membership to the fore. Simon Ogden, Sheffield Organiser for the ANL, explained how the local group worked:

We had two SWP branches in the city which meant immediately there were 70 or so SWP/ANL members to organise activities. Through fighting deportation campaigns and others around police harassment and so on we had some links with Sheffield's black communities. Sheffield's got a strong labour history which can be bit of a drawback because its so traditional but it also meant that the Trades Council did have some clout in the city and by raising the ANL there we could get some support, often only token, but everybody wants to appear to be anti-fascist.

Finally I ran a disco which helped in that we could get schoolkids along and often they were of more use than the people who had all the right politics but none of the energy or imagination. So we leafleted, flyposted, demonstrated, marched, pulled off stunts when we could, as well as enjoyed ourselves, anything to keep the momentum going. And all the time, to those kids and to a wider audience we were getting the message across locally that even though the fascists
have never been big in Sheffield they couldn't try to build here without a fight.\textsuperscript{81}

The local branches were given considerable local autonomy from the ANL nationally with separate collections made from members for local and national subscriptions. Any money made from local events was kept by the branches. Recruitment was a fairly casual process with the accent on getting individuals and groups involved in activities rather than going through a period of political instruction.

By late November 1977 the ANL had built up a list of over 150 sponsors and was undergoing a period of sustained growth. The Labour Party nationally began to show greater concern over the apparent rise of the NF and took the unprecedented step of devoting a party political broadcast on 8th December 1977 to the NF and was aimed directly at showing the NF as an outlet for street violence which had sinister Nazi roots. In many respects the Labour Party was seeking to provide the same public information approach that it had against the Blackshirts in the 1930s. The broadcast and the Labour/TUC campaigns were aimed at showing up the Nazi past of the NF leadership and cautioning against blaming Britain's black population for the country's economic and social ills.

In late December 1977, the Joint Campaign Against Racism (JCAR) was announced by Labour rightwinger Joan Lestor who wished to form a broad-based organisation which could marshal broader anti-racist feelings than those expressed by the ANL and bodies which were wary of being lined up with the revolutionary Left. These included the National Union of Students, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the British
Council of Churches, The Indian Workers' Association, the West Indian Standing Conference and the Supreme Council of Sikhs. This grouping included those who who disliked the activist, street politics, which were to be the major part of the ANL's activities (and of course had pre-empted the ANL with the Lewisham demonstration). The JCAR acted in contrast to the activism of the ANL and took over 6 months to get its first leaflet out. As Taylor notes, the JCAR had the problem that it was difficult to find an appropriate form of words upon which the various constituent organisations could agree. This was to be rather symptomatic of its adopted strategy which was a spur to inactivity.

3.13 1978 and the initial confrontations between the NF and ANL

In 1977 the NF established the Young National Front (YNF) and the ANL sought to utilise music as a focus for political organisation of young people whereas the NF was able to focus on the football terraces to some effect. The YNF launched a leaflet How to spot a Red Teacher (250,000) and a pamphlet How to Combat a Red Teacher both of which were aimed at schoolchildren. As a response to this the ANL initiated a sub-campaign of School Kids Against the Nazis (SKAN) and its own fanzine also entitled SKAN. One of the leading members was Steve Marsh (SWP), who with Hardy Desai (IMG) were also the leadership of the National Union of School Students. He recounted the way the movement organised amongst schoolchildren.

Punk rock was going on at the time and we had discos in the city centres run by the ANL or RAR. At those we didn't go on too much about the politics apart from to get kids into leafleting or putting posters up or painting graffiti out.
You could get 200-300 to a disco on Friday night and about 20 to leaflet a football ground the day after when the Front might turn up. But gradually we got more kids involved through getting the paper SKAN into the schools and if the NF were going to march or if a carnival was organised with a coach going from the ANL, we could get a few people along. The other side was that we isolated the kids who were around the NF. They couldn't get their stuff into the schools without us fighting back and we'd stop NF leafleting at school gates.\(^2\)

Taylor reports that SKAN was the prime reason for many of the 'personalities' resigning from the ANL, because of the language and the politics of the publication. The ANL was unable to keep all of its sponsors when the confrontations with the NF began in earnest and the movement had developed a momentum of its own, through the local activities and branches, which could generate its own publicity and activities. Most importantly for the ANL, it was beginning to win over sections of black organisations, and building an anti-fascist hegemony.

In early 1978, it was Margaret Thatcher, leader of the Conservative opposition, rather than any members of the NF or the ANL who brought the immigration debate to the fore again. When asked her views, for a World in Action programme broadcast on 30 January 1978, she replied:

If we went on as we are, then by the end of the century there would be four million people of the New Commonwealth or Pakistan here. Now that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really rather afraid that this country might be swamped by people with a different culture. And ... if there is a fear that it might be swamped, people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in.\(^4\)
On the rise of the NF she noted that, whilst not agreeing with the objectives of the NF 'at least they are talking about some of the problems'. The interview implied that not only that the Conservative Party would take on board some of the concerns of NF supporters but in some respects that these fears were real. It is this interview and the reaction fuelled by the press which contributed to the decline of the NF vote, in that those people worried about 'race' or 'immigration' could feel confident in the intentions of Mrs Thatcher. The response of the ANL was given by Steering Committee member Martin Flannery MP who commented 'There is now an unholy alliance between Mr Powell, Mrs Thatcher and the National Front which is catering for the lowest elements in our society.'

The importance of the Thatcher speech has to be seen not only in the possibility of the Conservatives apparently winning over waverers to the NF but also that the comments could add to the veneer of respectability of the politics of the NF and shift the political debate around 'race' to the Right. Taylor rightly points out that it did not require a great political volte face by Margaret Thatcher to take a tough line on immigration control. He then goes on to note that it is quite another matter to assume that the comments were deliberately directed at undermining NF support because the Conservative leadership saw it as an electoral threat. It is more likely that with an election still a possible 18 months away, she was setting down a marker for potential NF supporters from either Labour or Conservative voters. It is only with the benefit of hindsight that we know how the NF was decimated in the 1979 General Election. In 1978 the situation was still unclear as to how big a movement the NF could build
and what the opposition could muster.

The first opportunity for the ANL to confront the NF in a major way was the Ilford S. by-election, which was held on 3 March 1978. Following on from the incidents at Lewisham the Metropolitan Police Commissioner David McNee imposed a blanket ban on demonstrations in the capital for two months, thereby covering the potential disturbances in the up-coming by-election in Lambeth Central (taking in part of Brixton). The ban was partially circumvented by the ANL which held a rally, and the NF which held a mass canvass but a large police presence ensured there was little in the way of clashes. The NF's share of the vote improved by nearly 50% from 3.2% in the same area for the GLC elections in 1977 to 4.7%. The NF itself was not displeased with the result and hoped for better things at Lambeth. There the ANL mounted a counter-demonstration to a Front meeting on 15th April in which 35 people were arrested. The NF polled only 1% more than in the GLC elections and realised it had failed to make a significant leap. On the same date as the Lambeth poll, by-elections in Wycombe and Epsom both saw the vote stabilising.

3.14 The first ANL Carnival

The anti-fascist movement, based around the ANL, was not only concerned with opposition to the NF when it marched and met. As a United Front it had a propaganda side. It also sought to mobilise people, particularly young people, around positive aspects of the movement. So it was, that in conjunction with Rock Against Racism, the ANL organised a Carnival Against the Nazis to be held in Victoria Park
in the East End of London on April 30th 1978. The timing was such that it occurred just before the May local authority elections and after the London-wide ban on marches was lifted. Tens of thousands marched from Trafalgar Square to the Park, thereby combining opening political speeches with music later in the day.

The attendance at the Carnival far exceeded the expectations of even the organisers with some 100,000 people attending. As Taylor concurs, 'the ANL was given the credit for organising one of the largest demonstrations of the post-war period in which many thousands of the supposedly apathetic young had participated peacefully ... The apparent drawing power of the ANL led to a mushrooming of groups affiliating to it ...'90. Paul Holborow, along with other speakers, toured the country addressing ANL meetings to help in the organisation for the Carnival. Local ANL organisers had little trouble in filling coaches, such was the enthusiasm for the event. Forty-two coaches went from Glasgow, fifteen from Sheffield and a train was chartered from Manchester. As Paul Holborow recounts 'The involvement of Rock Against Racism meant that the Carnival had a quality dimension. But during the day 75-80,000 people marched all the way from Trafalgar Square to Victoria Park. It wasn't just a case of people going along for the music.'

The Carnival was used not only as a propaganda tool in the battle of the ANL against the NF, it also sought to unify and build the confidence of a movement. The event provided the final spur for the Communist Party, which had come closer to supporting the line of the ANL, to approach the SWP to join the ANL and a member of the CP was later appointed to the Steering Committee. By the end of the summer an
estimated half a million people had rocked against racism in various carnivals in different parts of the country."

The success of the Carnival for the ANL was in marked contrast with the string of worsening local election results which greeted the NF on 5th May 1978. Whilst the results are not easily directly comparable with the 1977 election results, they did show a fall in NF support in the provinces and a reduction in the party's fortunes in London. Not only did the general averages of the NF's share of the vote fall but the party was also having difficulties in finding candidates for many boroughs.\textsuperscript{92} The bad results further extended the ill-feeling between National Activities Organiser Martin Webster and Leader John Tyndall such that the internal feuding was set to tear apart the NF unless it could bring about some electoral successes. The East End of London was the only part of the country in which the NF's vote had held up and as in the days of Mosley's BUF some forty years previously (described above in this chapter) it was to the East End that the NF turned its attention.

The ANL held its first working conference on 8th July 1978 in London. A total of 820 delegates attended from ANL branches which by this time were nearing 300. The meetings were addressed by people such as Arthur Scargill (President - Yorkshire Miners), David Edgar (ANL Steering Committee) and Alok Biswas of the Hackney Asian Association. The conference, which probably had a majority of SWP members amongst the delegates, voted overwhelmingly against immigration controls but in the interest of unity and because of the specificity of the anti-Nazi campaign it was decided not to make agreement on this point binding on ANL members. Paul Holborow summed up the view of the League, arguing
for 'Unity in action. Don't avoid debating what divides us, but fight around what unites us.'

The local structure of the ANL was left organisationally loose, with a large degree of local autonomy for the local groups to initiate their own campaigns, call their own demonstrations etc. albeit with liaison with the ANL National Office in Little Newport St, London. The fears over the appearance of the ANL appearing to be the SWP's campaign were in part allayed by the formation of a 'Working Council of ANL Activists' to be elected by members regionally, which would work under the direction of the original Steering Committee. A suggestion that the ANL's branches should have more of a role to play in the directing of the movement, rather than the Steering Committee was rejected amidst fears that this would give the SWP too much local control.

As well as the pressures on the SWP not to be seen as running the ANL, so the party's members were aware of the continual pressures from the Labour Party MPs and trade union leaders. To put it in the terms of the United Front discussed above, the revolutionaries felt pressed by the Labour Party to move towards a Popular Front. As Trotsky wrote on the United Front, 'an agreement can be concluded even with the devil himself ... On one condition, not to bind ones hands.' The organisers were continually divided between those seeking to build the movement from the local bases and those still seeking 'celebrities' to add to the list of sponsors. As Paul Holborow recalls:

The ANL was an organisation of activity. Its power and growth was determined by the work of the most active and the most keenly involved. Whilst we wanted prominent people to sign up, the intention was that you could use this to
help mobilise at the rank and file level. There always had to be a refusal on our part to liquidate our politics. Neil Kinnock would continually come in and say something like 'Great news. Malcolm Rifkind,' or some other wet Tory, 'has signed up.' And I'd have to say, 'Thanks Neil' and lose the name in my back pocket for several months.  

The tensions between parts of the ANL were to assume greater prominence in 1978 and in the 1979 General Election campaign.

3.15 The NF and grass roots opposition in the East End in 1978

A near state of siege was an everyday occurrence for many black families in the East End. Widgery describes the position in 1978 as being particularly serious. He writes:

It had become impossible for anyone living or working in the E1 area not to have witnessed the provocations ... and the threatening atmosphere around certain estates and tube stations which produced a de facto curfew. One cannot accurately judge the degree to which these attacks were organised and co-ordinated. Some clearly were ... 

On 20 April, Kenneth Singh, a ten-year-old boy was found murdered by multiple stab wounds in Tower Hamlets. Two weeks later, on the night of the local elections Altab Ali was stabbed to death on his way home from work in Whitechapel. In the elections the NF was challenging Labour in 43 of the 50 possible seats when they would normally have fought only 8 or 9. The concentration of effort in the East End was unmissable, although the votes polled were poor returns for the Front. Despite the weak vote for the NF, the number of candidates they put up and the noise of fascist loudspeaker vans touring the streets added to the
tension of the occasion. The three teenagers eventually found guilty of
the murder of Altab Ali admitted they had no other reason to kill him
except that he was 'a Paki'. This was the turning point for many
Asian people in the East End and saw the rapid rise of militant, co-
ordinated black action against the racial violence in the East End.

The first group to form was an Action Committee Against
Racist Attacks which joined up with Tower Hamlets CARF and the local
Trades Council ANL. Ten days after Altab Ali's death 7000 people
marched from the spot where he died to Hyde Park both to mourn and to
protest. The attacks continued. On 27th June, Ishaque Ali was choked to
death in Lower Clapton, Hackney after three white men attacked him and
his brother, strangling Ishaque with a bootlace. A group of Asian
brewery workers in Bow were attacked on 6th July by 30 white men who
threw bricks and bottles at them. Eight were hospitalised although the
police insisted that the attack was not racist in nature. One of the
key areas for fascist attention was around Brick Lane in Hackney.

The area was a regular sales point for NF paper-sellers. On
11th June, after a local NF meeting, 150 white youths charged through
the area smashing shop windows, car windcreens and attacking
individual Bengalis with bricks, bottles and sticks. One witness of the
scene, Rahmin Ali, noted that it was only the rapid gathering of Asian
youths to defend the area that the racists were faced down. 'The racist
thugs were taken by surprise. They thought that the Asians were cowed
... They were wrong. Asian youths knew well how to defend
themselves.' The importance of events like this and others in the
East End is that Asian youths had begun to organise for self-defence.
The self-organisation of black people was an integral part in bringing
them together in joint activity with the ANL.

The following week the Asian groups joined with the ANL to ensure that it had a large presence in Brick Lane as did the NF. The large police cordon around the NF did little to assuage the feeling of the Asian community that the police were happy to protect fascist but did little about racist attacks. Furthermore, the attempts at self-defence were viewed by the police as unnecessary and indeed illegal, if it meant carrying weapons etc. As Taylor concludes, 'In this atmosphere, calls from politicians of the major parties for more police in the East End to combat racial violence were regarded as, at best, irrelevant, at worst, inflammatory.'

On 15th July, faced with what appeared to be a worsening situation, the leadership of the three largest Asian organisations, the Indian Workers' Association, the Standing Conference of Pakistani Organizations and the Federation of Bangladeshi Associations called both for the formation of self-defence groups because of their lack of faith in the police and that members of these associations should become active in the Anti-Nazi League. This represented a qualitative shift by groups which had initially sided with the more restrained JCAR. Part of the statement read:

We now believe that the time has come when we must urge our people to look to their own defence. The leading ethnic minority groups in Britain should be supporting each other in a practical and effective sense, in the mounting of such measures as are needed for the physical defence of various peoples.

In addition we are urging all Asians to join the Anti Nazi League, which we regard as the best anti Nazi movement in Britain so far.

Just as the National Front is being privately supported by what we believe to be a large section of so-called respectable commercial interests, we think that our own
businessmen should support financially the Anti Nazi League and young Asians to enable them to form self-defence groups.

So it was that the anti-fascist movement took on a more comprehensive character, formalised in a private meeting between the above organisations, the ANL and Board of Deputies of British Jews on 29th July. Meanwhile in Brick Lane, the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee called for a Black Solidarity day on Monday 17th July. The stay-at-home strike involved more than 8000 people which closed shops, businesses and schools throughout East London. As Taylor reports, 'At one point, Bengali youths took control of Brick Lane, and refused to allow anyone apart from IS/SWP and ANL representatives in the area. Rapprochement was sealed with the decision of the Asian organisations and the ANL to organize a joint march through Brick Lane on 20 August.'

Somewhat belatedly Brick Lane was visited by Len Murray, the TUC's General Secretary, and Bill Keys, leader of SOGAT and on 11th October the unions initiated a campaign in the East End for the recruitment of black workers to fight racism at the workplace. The ANL, by mid-April, had the affiliation of 30 AUEW branches, 25 trades councils, 11 NUM areas and lodges, and between six and ten branches of the TGWU, CPSA, TASS, NUJ, NUT, and NUPE. The ANL also took its campaign into workplaces such as Longbridge, where 200 assembly line workers refused to work with a NF supporter. A school NUT sent an NF member to Coventry, forcing his resignation, and CPSA members won a fight to wear ANL badges and have a racist disciplined by trade union action. In the International Harvesters factory a National Front member
was strung upside down. The movement was thus beginning to have an
effect in the organisations of the working class, at their workplaces,
as well as winning over the support of black groups. There were,
however, internal contradictions and factions within the ANL which
tested the unity of the movement.

3.16 The struggles within the ANL

Towards the end of 1978 three major rows broke out within
the ANL. One involved a particular tactic, one was a dispute with one
of the constituent organisations and the final one related to the most
commonly recurring question, the role of the SWP in the movement. The
first concerned the amount of publicity the NF should be afforded
within the broadcast media. By mid-1978 the interest in this was
heightened by speculation that a general election call was imminent.
Although Taylor locates the start of this section of the campaign in
the launch of a 'No Plugs for Nazi Thugs' public meeting attended by
Alan Sapper (TASS) and addressed by Johnathan Dimbleby on 12 September,
the idea was originally mooted at the July ANL conference. At that
event David Edgar, the author and playwright noted:

The BBC union ABS has given its support to members who won't
work on programmes with the Front. The ACTT Freelance branch
has told its members not to touch NF material. The ANL
should call on the two TV unions to stop their members
working on NF broadcasts and should support all media
workers who refuse to work on NF broadcasts.
Those in favour? Passed unanimously!
The September meeting called upon the BBC and IBA to ban all NF broadcasts on the ground that the party went beyond the bounds of legitimate political and parliamentary activity. The SWP's line, and by inference the line of the 'banners' was to attempt to get the unions to refuse to handle the NF broadcasts because of the effect they believed that the broadcasting of NF propaganda could bring about. In Socialist Worker 29/4/78 it was argued:

We don't want people to shut up because we disagree with them ... But no one believes in free speech in every case ... the murder of Gurdip Singh Chagger in the autumn of 1976 was a direct consequence of Enoch Powell's rantings about more repatriation of black people ... Should people be free to attack black people and fire-bomb their homes? No, they should not. Free speech which leads to fire-bombs should not be free either.'

The campaign was unsuccessful and alienated some supporters of the ANL who were fearful of calls for bans on 'free speech'. One of the groups who felt most uneasy about this was the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BoD).

The BoD, formed in 1760, has emerged over the centuries as the formal representative of Anglo-Jewry although, as David Rosenberg suggests, 'Its representation of the community has been limited, for it has always been predominantly synagogue-based and has therefore represented Jews almost exclusively as a religious minority.' It may best be seen as the governing body of the Jewish establishment. The BoD was caught in the position of watching the ANL as a growing movement which was gathering opposition to the NF whilst having fundamental differences with the socialist activists involved. The Board objected
to what it saw as undue SWP influence and refused to meet with Peter Hain of the ANL because of his support for the PLO and the Palestinian cause. The violence of the confrontations with the NF was a further cause of distress to the BoD. Dr Sokolic of the BoD noted,

There was a danger that the forces of anti-fascism would be dragged down to the level of the fascists. If the result is street fighting, you get the chaos caused that the fascists want. There was no evidence that any great number of people wanted to join the NF. What we needed to do was to inform the public about the Nazi nature of the NF. In that respect we agreed with the aims of the ANL but too much of their behaviour was directed into attacks upon the police, which we couldn't countenance. Lawlessness helps the fascists.

As David Rosenberg has shown in his study of the actions of the BoD and other Jewish groups in the 1930s, it is clear that the role played by the BoD then was comparable with that which it and other 'representative' bodies for the targets of the fascists had in the late 1970s. The initial views expressed by the communal leaders was that calls to ban or stop the fascists marching would be anathema to and possibly alienating to, the British public. It was pressure from the rank and file of the communities which forced the leaderships into a position of taking a more active lead against the fascists.

In the 1930s the Jewish People's Council was formed to lead the opposition to the fascists in alliance with the Communist Party. In the late 1970s it was the Jewish Socialists' Group which was criticised by the BoD on the grounds that it should not work with other groups because of their stance on the Middle East. As Michael Heiser of the JSG noted, 'The Jewish Socialists' Group was proud as an organisation and through individuals to play its part in the Anti-Nazi League along
with other left groups. Labour Party people, unaffiliated people, women
and gay people... We said that we disagreed with their position on the
Middle-East, and would argue with them on it, but the most important
thing was that we were all there to fight racism here and now.'

The key area of disagreement which alienated some of the
supporters of the ANL, especially some of the celebrities was the
degree of dominance of the SWP in the movement. The BoD claimed it had
in its possession documents which showed that the ANL was little more
than an SWP recruitment exercise. Dr Sokolic of the BoD has claimed,
'No-one should doubt, after the last War, our total abhorrence of
fascism. But that does not mean the the Board should subsume its
principles to people whose general political positions we do not agree
with. An anti-fascist alliance is one thing. It is quite another to be
seen as supporters of the Socialist Workers Party.' The Federation
of Conservative Students withdrew its support as did popular figures
such as Brian Clough and Jack Charlton, Michael Parkinson and Dave
Allen, partly because of the content of SKAN. Pete Alexander, for some
time ANL organiser, put the role of the celebrities or 'notables' into
context. 'These "notables" (none of them Tories) were never allowed to
determine the policies of the ANL, and some of them subsequently
withdrew, but they did boost the ANL's credibility and made it possible
to mobilise tens of thousands of young people and trade unionists.'

The actual degree to which the ANL could be seen as an SWP
front will be discussed below. The organisational dominance of the SWP
was to some degree governed not only by the nature of the organisation
but also the tactics it sought to employ to combat the NF. It is also
rather unsophisticated of any political/religious groups within a
movement to assume that other groups will not try to win others over to their political standpoint as it is to ignore the specific aims of the movement and its temporary nature. That was why more vaguely defined anti-racist bodies such as JCAR had to make such slow progress because of their primary concern with reaching agreement with all concerned parties and thereby keeping policy at the level of the least radical component. The specificity of the aim of the ANL was part of its success. One of the points of failure, which continually raised by critics of the ANL is the problems which came about during the second ANL London carnival on 24th September 1978.

3.17 Carnival 2 and the build-up to the 1979 General Election

Carnival 2 was held in Brockwell Park in Brixton, only five months after Carnival 1, but was much more professionally organised, at least musically. Again the Carnival started with a march from Hyde Park and attracted an equal number of people, at some estimates nearer 150,000. Carnival itself was a success for both RAR and the ANL, which by this time had an individual membership of over 30,000. The Guardian which on Friday 22nd had commented at length of the problems in the ANL's ranks and by Monday 25th begged the forgiveness of the ANL claiming 'such misgivings seem beside the point'.

What was more problematic was the response of the ANL to the actions of the NF on the day. With two weeks notice the NF called a march in Brick Lane for the same day as the Carnival. As Paul Holborow recalls:
We couldn't cancel the Carnival because that would have meant giving in to the fascists, never mind all the effort that people had put into what was going to be a massive event. At the same time we had a plan which didn't work out. It was our intention to divert a large section of the march to Brick Lane and we had a comrade positioned near to the Dorchester to direct people off. In the end we collectively bumbled. It shows how incredibly inexperienced we were at the time. But we admitted that in the following week's Socialist Worker. We didn't shy away from the blame.  

The result was that a police presence of some 8000 officers enabled 250 NF members to march through Brick Lane, a contested area for many months previously. The 1500 anti-fascists who were joined too late by 3000 ANL supporters had no effect on the march. This led to allegations by other left groups and some Bengali organisations that the ANL had let them down for the Carnival's greater publicity purposes. The response of the SWP was that to have broken the unity of the Carnival march could have been exactly what the NF had wanted and would not necessarily have stopped the NF march, given the large police presence.  

The NF's AGM for 1978 was held over until 1979 because of the possibility of a late General Election in October 1978. At the meeting the principal aim was to plan the NF's campaign for the General Election. The party was in the position of having prospective candidates for 270 seats, just short of the 300 seat target set by the NF itself. The other main area for the the NF to organise around in early 1979 was the return to the headlines of 'race rebel' Robert Relf. Having been sentenced to fifteen months in prison after publishing material likely to incite racial hatred, Relf went on hunger strike in Winchester Prison. The already-waning strength of the NF to pull large
crowds was evident in their brief campaign over Relf. On Saturday 10th
March 800 NF members marched in support of him although 2000 ANL
members and supporters stopped the march near the prison. After a
smaller march the following week Relf gave his hunger strike up and
returned to relative anonymity. On 28th March the Callaghan Government,
following the demise of the Lib-Lab pact, could hold on no longer and
lost a vote of no confidence in Parliament. The General Election date
was set for May 3rd.

3.18 The General Election Campaign of 1979

As was the nature of the movement, the ANL and groups around
it responded to the tactics followed by the NF to its electioneering.
The NF was finally able to field 303 candidates, in part by using
relatives of senior members of the party.'" The focus of the NF's
attention was directed towards mass rallies and meetings'"², this being
in part due to the weak forces on the ground that the Front had (by
this time its membership did not number over 10,000) and a reflection
of the tactics of confrontation which Martin Webster still preferred.
The first large-scale rally held to launch the NF's campaign was held
in Leicester on April 21st. Leicester had been the the city where the
NF had first grown as a political force and at the peak of the NF's
popularity had a branch membership of over three hundred.

Calls to ban the NF's march were made by both the major
political parties and black groups to no avail. Leicester's Chief
Constable Goodson allowed the march to go ahead arguing 'We fought two
wars to preserve the right to free speech.''"³ The police also invoked
an 1848 by-law which made it an offence to pursue any activity which
might lead to a blockage of the City's sewage system to stop the
ANL's mass leafletting. The NF marchers (350 [Socialist Worker] or 800
[Taylor]) were met by some 5000 counter-demonstrators who attacked the
march after it had progressed only 100 yards. The march was only able
to continue along its planned route for 8 minutes before the ANL
supporters forced the police into hurrying the march along a shorter
route into an area where the NF marchers could be better protected.

There were several arrests and the police pursued ANL
supporters and local black youths across the campus of Leicester
University. Press condemnation on the following day, Sunday 22nd, was
quick to criticise the policies of the NF and the actions of the ANL in
equal parts. What the leader writers did not realise was that the
clashes at Leicester were only to be a rehearsal for the major
confrontation of the 1979 General Election campaign, on April 23rd, in
Southall.

3.19 The Confrontation in Southall

At Southall the propagandist part of the armoury of the
the ANL was not so much in evidence as the other part of the movement's
strategy, that of direct physical opposition to the NF. Southall had a
long-standing Asian community, with a well-organised Indian Workers'
Association (Southall) independent of either section of the IWA
nationally. The unofficial enquiry into the events of April 23rd,
produced by the NCCL, argued that, 'Southall has an excellent record
for race relations ... This is not to say that members of the ethnic
minorities living in Southall inhabit a haven on which racial prejudice never impinges.\textsuperscript{116} The NF had no established base or branch in the area and the election meeting it planned to hold in Southall Town Hall on April 23rd was clearly provocative. The date of the meeting was St George's Day and the local Conservative-controlled council, Ealing, flew the Union Jack, the banner adopted by the NF, from the top of the Town Hall. As Martin Webster, the NF's National Activities Organiser, told Thames Television News on April 24th, 'The National Front is facing councils banning the National Front from having halls. And so when the council at Ealing said we could have that hall we jumped at the chance.'\textsuperscript{116}

The Council did not inform the local black organisations of the planned meeting and it was only by chance that Vishnu Sharma, Communist Party member and President of the IWA (Southall), discovered of the meeting on 7th April at a chance meeting with Chief Inspector Gosse, the local Police Liaison Officer. The IWA (Southall) Executive decided to initially petition the Council for the meeting to be banned and failing that, to demonstrate on the day before the march, to close all businesses restaurants and shops etc on the afternoon of the meeting itself and ignore the NF meeting.

When the various anti-racist, community and religious organisations met on 11th April it was clear that the support for the local IWA position, of ignoring the NF, was minimal. Both the ANL and the Southall Asian Youth Movement, the latter having boycotted this meeting, let it be known that they intended to oppose the NF meeting by whatever means necessary. In deference to the unanimous feeling that the NF should not be allowed to hold its meeting in Southall, the IWA
(Southall) agreed to a sit-down protest as a gesture of non-violent civil disobedience. The March for Unity and Peace went ahead on Sunday April 22nd, led by Vishnu Sharma, Sid Bidwell MP (Southall) and Rev. Jim Parkinson with little incident, indeed the *Morning Star* was the only national newspaper to see fit to report the march.

The ANL presence started early on the day of the NF meeting, delivering placards, badges etc. to 6 Park View Rd, a premises occupied by a local community group *Peoples Unite*. At the same time the Special Patrol Group (SPG) had gathered to keep an eye on crowd developments in the area. The Southall Youth Movement picketed the Town Hall from 1pm onwards, by which time nearly all the shops and businesses in the surrounding area had closed, swelling the number of protestors. The Metropolitan Police sought to ensure that no more than a token presence of pickets was allowed near the Town Hall and the NCCL Report contains numerous allegations of racism and brutality by the police. The Report is a litany of serious and minor acts against members of the public by the police in general and more particularly the SPG, concluding that, on a number of occasions, the evidence shows that police officers used their truncheons, not for self-protection but as instruments of arbitrary, violent and unlawful punishment. Blair Peach, an ANL member, was killed by a blow from a police officer of the Special Patrol Group, dying from head injuries.

Only 50 NF members attended the meeting, all from outside the area (as was the Parliamentary Candidate) and the clashes involved approximately equal numbers of police and anti-fascists (5000 of each). The NCCL Report gives a full account of the events of the day and it would be needlessly expansive to repeat it here. The day was peppered
with clashes between demonstrators and the police and numerous, apparently random, police charges in which there many arrests and injuries sustained. The arrests totalled 345, with 97 police officers injured and 64 members of the public receiving injuries for which they wished hospital treatment.

The Daily Mail (24th April) described the ANL as 'a clandestine anti-police league ... whose main aim now is to sabotage the peace of our cities and to savage policemen struggling to do their duty.' The implication was that 'ordinary' locals of Southall would have no interest in violently opposing a National Front meeting on their neighbourhood. As Southall Rights, a local rights and advice group, noted in their report of the events of the day, 'It is as stupid as it is condescending to think that Southall's population needed to be provoked by malevolent outsiders before they would show their outrage at the Front meeting and the police protection of it.'

The conclusion reached by the NCCL Enquiry was that the police tactics of the day, in constantly separating and moving on the demonstrators, effectively blocked the ability of any group to control any large section of demonstrators.

The ANL was not contrite about its actions on the day and argued 'We will go on fighting'. It also sought to point out that the people of Southall who had demonstrated were happy for non-locals to attend the demonstration. Balwinder Singh and Peter Alexander, who had been Chief and Acting-Chief Stewards on the day wrote 'They [the police] want to suggest that it is wrong for people living outside Southall to come and support us ... They attack "outsiders" because they want us to be divided from our brothers and sisters in Leicester.
and Lewisham. The issue of the violence and policing at Southall, and the apparent cover-up as to the identity of the killer of Blair Peach continued until polling day. The ANL held a march on 28th April which passed off without incident and the NF finally showed its electoral broadcast on Monday April 30th. The results of polling day, May 3rd, were to show the decimation of the National Front as an electoral force.

From winning 3.1% of the electorate's vote in the previous General Election of October 1974, the NF was only able to win 1.3%. The party failed to poll an average vote above 2% in any of the regions except London and was only able to gain over 2% in West Bromwich, Leicester and Wolverhampton. Its only large area of support was in the East and North-East of London where vestigial fascist backing remained. The effects on the NF were typical of those on a political party in the wake of a disastrous result, its anger was internalised. Whereas with the major reformist parties the result may have been a new leader, or a new party, the question that was fiercely debated within the NF was that of the whole strategy of electoralism and 'respectability'.

The alliance between Webster and Tyndall broke with the latter leaving to form first the New National Front and then resurrecting the name British National Party. In a further internal coup in 1983 Webster was ousted from the party. The group which removed Webster in 1983 was itself forced out in 1984 by a faction with terming itself 'political soldiers', which sought to build on two fronts, infiltration of community organisations and clandestine paramilitary and survivalist training. The NF has never fought shy of political violence but the influence of particularly Italian fascists, added to
the electoral failures and non-activity of the 1980s make the drift towards more sensational incidents - armed struggle in effect - more likely. By early 1988 the NF's membership totalled approximately 2000, the BNP's 1000 and the National Front Support Group's 2000. More tellingly, in the June 1987 General Election the NF decided to stand no candidates and to concentrate on the community aspects of their politics and intervening in local disputes such as the Dewsbury Schools campaign.  

From the debacle of the 1979 General Election is that the NF has split continually in that period thereby making any sustained growth or major intervention unlikely. The political dominance of the Thatcher Government on the Right of politics, added to the lack of any major immigration 'issues' has ensured that the NF could not even capitalise noticeably on either the riots of 1981/1985 or the Falklands War. The lack of overt political activity, particularly electioneering, does not, however, mean that the NF and other groups of the far-Right are inactive. The number of convictions for racial attacks, arms offences etc by NF members is a testament to their continued threat on a day to day basis for many black people, especially in areas where the NF has some strength (See Newham case study in Chapter 5 below).

3.20 The achievements, impact and decline of the ANL

The Anti Nazi League was a short lived phenomenon, its most active period being only 21 months, culminating in the General Election of May 1979. It was specifically aimed at the perceived growth of organised fascism in the shape of the NF not at more generalised racism.
in society. It faced criticism from a number of groups - for its
domination by the revolutionary left; for its emphasis on the NF to the
detriment of state racism (as in the row over the ANL's policy on
immigration controls); for its willingness to avoid the rule of law and
launch assaults on the police and for its implied intolerance to anti-
racist opinion not in accord with that of the far-left. Against those
admonitions have to be counterposed the achievements and impact of the
ANL and its effect on the NF's ability to establish itself as a
credible political force.

One of the achievements of the ANL was that it was able to
briefly act as an umbrella for such disparate organisations as the
Board of Deputies of British Jews, the International Marxist Group and
the Federation of Conservative Students. The Sartrean notion of the
fused group, where social actors through reason of their common goals
arrive at a position of reciprocity, seems partially appropriate. The
fusion of organisations and individuals within the ANL was
qualitatively different to that of the JCAR in that it was based on the
self-activity rather than the passivity of its constituent members.
Sartre suggested that it was action that turned isolated individuals
into an organised totality and the variety of exploits which the ANL
undertook cemented this process.

Apart from the organisational form and type of movement
which the ANL represented (discussed below), the emphasis on music and
other aspects of youth culture - with the symbiotic relationship with
RAR - enabled the ANL to get conventional anti-racist messages over to
a wider pop audience, to organise two massive anti-racist carnivals and
a myriad of smaller events. Assessments of the impact of these events
and the brief establishment of what may be termed an anti-racist counter-culture have to be tempered with realism. Despite the optimism of Holborow (above) and of Widgery (in his study of RAR), just as there were those whose extent of political involvement was to visit a concert or wear a badge, so those more active within the movement did not necessarily continue their anti-racist efforts following the demise of the ANL. That, in part, is the nature of incandescent social movements.

As Zurcher and Snow noted in Chapter 2 above, the key to understanding recruitment, conversion and commitment lies in the interaction between the participant and the movement. The use of personalities and music were crucial to winning over recruits, many of whom were flirting with the NF at the same time. The propaganda side of the ANL - its leaflettings, flypostings, concerts, stunts and events - may appear mundane but were an important cohesive factor for maintaining the momentum of the movement. As Simon Ogden, Sheffield Organiser noted,

You had to keep people busy to keep them interested. A lot of the people involved were kids on the dole or on holiday from school. So we organised things like the painting out of NF slogans, the designing and printing of leaflets and posters etc. At the weekends we'd do mass leaflettings, football grounds, held pickets and gigs and discos. We kept everyone continually agitating against, fighting against or rocking against racism.122

Another factor which was to separate the ANL from other groups expressing concern about racism was the strategy of direct confrontation with the NF on the streets. The achievement of the ANL was in substantially reducing the numbers of people who had the
confidence to openly meet and march with the NF. In the months following the inception of the ANL, the NF no longer felt able to march relatively unhindered through the streets of Britain. The price paid for such actions was the loss of support from sections of the movement who could not countenance the inevitable violence. Conversely, Bengali groups, round Brick Lane, for example, felt better able to support the ANL when it had been shown to be an organisation that was prepared to use 'any means necessary' to stop the NF. The impact of the direct action approach was to gain publicity for the ANL, an adverse reaction to both sets of 'extremists' and a driving underground of sections of the NF's support. The death of Blair Peach only served to reinforce the seriousness of the clashes.

Some of the post-Marxist sociologists' analyses of the demise of class politics seem inappropriate when considering the ANL. If the 'new movements' are to lead to a new form of non-class political discourse as has been claimed by Touraine and Foss & Larkin, then they must explain how it was the networks of the organisations of the working class that provided the bases for the organisation of the ANL branches. Even more striking is that the movement was to a greater extent led not by a new social grouping or formation, but a group which openly espoused Marxist class politics and saw itself in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky. It is because of the lack of fit with the picture of social movements proposed by these writers that the United Front remains the best model for understanding the ANL, as an anti-movement movement.

For Trotsky the United Front had to be built around its most active members and disseminate propaganda whilst offering physical
resistance to the fascists. As stated above, it was the activism which held the attention of the overwhelmingly young membership of the ANL. It was the achievement of the ANL that its propaganda successfully linked the NF with its leaders' Nazi past. The very act of physical confrontation raised questions as to the real nature of the NF in the media leading up to the 1979 General Election. Trotsky was keen to stress the tactical specificity of the United Front and argued that the threat of fascism was what could bring about the fragile transitory unity of reformist and revolutionary groups opposed to it. As David Widgery notes of the ANL, 'The alliance between the SWP, a Marxist party of a few thousand members and the Labour Party, a reformist party with 8 million voters, was less incongruous than it sounded because a clear cut goal had been set.'

Other questions remain. Was the ANL simply a cover for greater publicity for the SWP? Holborow claims it was not:

The United Front is not an attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the Labour Party or anybody else. It was clearly launched to deal with a perceived and a real problem. I would argue that rather than the SWP using the movement to recruit it was sign of the weakness of the SWP that we confused ANL principles with SWP principles. We weren't clear that it was a tiny percentage that was possible to recruit and thought we could pull thousands over to us. That just didn't happen.

If it was the intention of the SWP to woo people to the party, then others equally thought there were gains to made from the movement. As Neil Kinnock stated, 'As far as I'm concerned the ANL performs a very important function for the Labour Party.' In effect the question of who dominated the movement has to be put in the context of
remaining issues about the impact of the movement and the reasons for its decline.

Stan Taylor concludes that there are several demographic factors which can account for the defeat of the NF at the 1979 polls without recourse to the ANL. He notes the degree of local support which the NF could get which was not translated into national votes, the lack of 'race' issues, the Thatcher comments on immigration and the drift away from minor parties as a whole in the General Election. The changing polling patterns have to be taken into consideration but the Thatcher effect is more noteworthy. It is difficult to make comparisons but recent events in France have shown that a viable racist electoral alternative can result in a haemorrhaging of votes from the reformist Right, for example of Raymond Barre, to the fascist Right of Jean-Marie Le Pen. In what is an otherwise excellent analysis, Taylor tends to put too much weight on the numbers of votes cast for the NF without noting the number of active members or indeed their actions. Parties such as the NF, who do not simply operate within the bounds of electoralism, can appear to be a political force which belies their small size. The rise in racial attacks in the mid-1970s, the 'long hot summer' of 1976, the increased confidence of the NF on the streets of Britain, were then all apparently backed up by the GLC results in 1977. It was to put a brake on that momentum that the ANL was formed.

The decline of the ANL was not as clear-cut an affair as some of the leadership would suggest. The inner tensions which were coming more and more to the fore as the General Election approached, threatened to split the movement, has not the NF vote collapsed so dramatically. For a whole layer of activists within the ANL, the NF was
seen as beaten and thus the ANL lacked a reason to a watching brief on
the far-right. As late as 1982-3 the network of activists within
individual ANL branches was still being utilised to mobilise numbers of
people for events with an anti-racist/anti-fascist tenor. In terms of
the organised political groupings within the ANL, for whom anti-racism
was only a part of their overall political strategy, the temptation to
move on to other issues was powerful. Not only had the 1979 General
Election see the loss of the NF's electoral status but the Labour
Government had been replaced by the Conservatives. So it was that the
SWP shifted its attention back to workplace and industrial issues (such
as the legislation relating to trade unions) and the Labour and
Communist Parties planned their responses to the Thatcher Government.
For the Labour Party the rise of a revitalised left around Tony Benn
was mirrored in the CP by the shift towards Eurocommunism and the
splits in the party.

Whilst the anti-racist activists within these parties saw
this as a natural progression, there were groups in the anti-racist
movement, such as the Asian Youth Movements, who saw this as evidence
of the opportunism of the left. Elaine Mein, secretary of Sheffield ANL
believes that:

The left was quick to try and get black people involved in
their battles against the fascists but when the NF was
beaten they said join us and fight Thatcher because that's
the only way you'll get rid of racism. Effectively that
meant dumping racism as an issue in favour of trade union
and strike activity. That attitude was too much for some
people and they tended to drop out of politics altogether or
devote themselves to campaigns rather than organised
political activity within the confines of a party.\textsuperscript{126}
Despite the specificity of the ANL the criticisms remain that those groups most centrally involved in it threw all their energies into the ANL and then withdrew all their efforts after 1979. What provided a powerful pole of attraction for those who wanted to continue fighting racism but were disillusioned with the revolutionary left was the resurgent Labour left. Not only did the Labour left raise anti-racism as an issue of paramount importance, beyond the boundaries of street battles with fascists, but also offered a strategy by which some of the effects of racism could be countered and its causes attacked. This was by utilising the power-base of local authorities to combat racism in both employment and public services where evidence of the depth of racism was gradually amassing. It is to the phenomena, which can be gathered together under the title of 'municipal anti-racism' that the second half of the thesis addresses itself. Before looking at that in some depth it is worth finally summarising the key factors which shaped the ANL and which limit its use as an anti-racist strategy.

3.21 Summary

It was Malcolm X, railing against what he saw as the Uncle Tom-ism of sections of the civil rights movement, who argued that 'We need a movement that the man downtown don't like'. The anti-fascist movement, when following the action proposed by the Anti-Nazi League was in much the same position. The policy of confrontation, of ignoring warnings to stay away from NF meetings, the regular clashes with the police and National Front members, in effect the whole ANL policy of
seeking to sweep the NF off the streets were the results of the
autonomy of the movement and the lack of incorporation of the movement
in the state and reflected the hostility to the capitalist state of
some of its constituent organisations.

The ANL took upon itself not only the mass opposition
towards the NF but also the dissemination of large amounts of
propaganda about the Nazi-following past of the NF leadership and the
fascist links of a party which at the time was attempting to mix
electoralism with the building of a mass racist movement. It is worth
repeating words of Martin Webster, the NF's National Activities
Organiser, on the effect of the National Front, as Peter Hain recalls,

The picture he [Webster] gave, and he clearly believed it, was that prior to 1977, the NF was unstoppable and he was
well on the way to becoming prime minister. Then suddenly
the ANL was everywhere and knocked hell out of them. It
obviously still hurt. He said that the sheer presence of the
ANL had made it impossible to get NF members onto the
streets, had dashed recruitment and cut away at their vote.
It wasn't just the physical opposition to the marches, they
had lost the propaganda war too.¹²⁷

Paul Holborow was similarly in no doubt as to the effectiveness of the
ANL.

We drove a cart and horses through the carefully worked out
strategy of the NF. For the first time a revolutionary
organisation, having instigated a United Front, had changed
the mood of national politics. In the summer of 1977 the SWP
was put to a very severe test and rose magnificently to the
occasion. The ANL was a testament to the politics of Leon
Trotzky.¹²⁸
The quote from Ellen Wood at the end of Chapter 2 above talks of working class movements having to create new forms of organisation adequate to the tasks in hand. The ANL was the application of a form of organisation, the United Front, which had a very specific use. As a strategy against racism it had strict, self-imposed limits. The movement was launched to stop the apparent rise of a neo-fascist party which both sought electoral responsibility and street dominance. The amount to which the NF could transform everyday racists into active fascists had much to do with the prevailing material conditions at any time. It also had a lot to do with the degree and form of opposition in which the ANL was able to present a counter-culture which could attract young potential recruits away from the NF.

The ANL was an anti-racist movement inasmuch as it was opposed to growing fascist movement which used racism as its predominant recruitment factor and prevailing ideology. The tactics and indeed the model of the United Front were developed by the left to combat a fascist movement not to eradicate racism. As a strategy against racism, therefore, it has an extremely restricted and partial application. As the limitations of such an approach were shown up, so the Labour left's inroads into local politics and 'municipal socialism' in the early 1980s became a more attractive strategy for those seeking to undermine racism in a wider sense, not the actions of a racist, fascist movement but of racism in housing, education, employment and other fields. To deal with the engrained, institutional racism which lay embedded in such areas the local authority seemed to some to be a natural base for action. It is to investigate the strategy of municipal anti-racism that the second half of the thesis is concerned.
CHAPTER 4

The local state and the development of 'race relations' policies

4.1 Introduction

The early 1980s saw the renaissance of the concept of municipal socialism as one which could be applied to local authorities in the major cities in Britain. The emergence of Left Labour Councils has once again acted as a magnet for Labour Party activists and as some have argued, as forums for developing new forms of socialist alliance and organisation. For many of those involved, the use of the local authority as a legitimate sector for socialist advance is theorised through the conception of the 'local state', whereby the local arm of the capitalist state is held to be in some way relatively autonomous from the national state and all its capitalist mores. The local government realm, because of this qualified separation from the nation state, has thus been seen by some writers as a contested terrain over which socialists should fight for control. For some the local state was a new terrain for changing society in a new way - post-revolutionary and post-labourist. For others it was the natural home for a reborn Labour Left.

One facet of the municipal socialist venture has been to embrace the promotion of 'equal opportunities' and anti-racism as a natural part of the ideology of local statism. Those seeking to fight racism within and though their own local councils have implicitly taken
to heart the view of the CRE which, in its 1983 Annual Report stressed the importance of local authorities in combating racism thus:

Not only are they generally the largest employers and major suppliers of services in any area, they also provide the framework for political activity, can strongly influence public opinion and are the main financiers of the voluntary sector. In addition, they have particular duties placed upon them by Section 71 of the Race Relations Act.¹

Section 71 of the Race Relations Act (1976), despite the optimism expressed by the CRE, is not that specific and has effectively meant that local authorities can do as much or as little as they wish in developing 'race relations' policies in their own areas. The actual wording of the section makes it,

... the duty of every local authority to make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that their various functions are carried out with due regard to the need - (a) to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, and (b) to promote equality of opportunity and good relations, between persons of different racial groups.²

For some local authorities the review of their employment procedures and services provision in the light of Section 71 has been minimal but some Labour-led local councils in the 1980s have attempted to seriously address the widespread levels of discrimination and racism suffered by black people in their own localities. The two parts to Section 71 - the elimination of unlawful discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity - may well appear to be unproblematic but it is in the attempts of local authorities to alter policies and procedures in the area of 'race relations' that much of
the 'loony left' image has come about. As will be seen in the six case studies below in the fields of housing (Chapter 5), education (Chapter 6) and employment (Chapter 7), there are a great number of problems in the development and implementation of anti-racist policies by councils. These difficulties are not merely ones which are reflective of the teething troubles of new policy making but further bring into question the appropriateness of local councils as vehicles for both anti-racist and socialist advance.

Questions as to the nature and role of local government within a state in an advanced capitalist nation such as Britain inevitably throw up further questions as to the nature of the capitalist state and the degree, or not, of autonomy which the local sectors have. The political initiative of municipal socialism has attracted the attention of much of the Left precisely because it is assumed that the Marxist/Leninist notion of the necessity of smashing the capitalist state is no longer credible. Paul Corrigan, writing in *Marxism Today* before its glossy relaunch, argued that the local state 'provides the opportunity for organising pressure and change in a local area of struggle, at all times recognising the influence of central government and the power of the multinationals in the struggle but underlining that the consciousness of the great mass of working people is around local issues.'

The general thrust of Corrigan's piece, more of an apologia for the municipal socialists than the work of Cynthia Cockburn for example, is that the class politics of state structures need a response from the Left and the workers' movement which takes account of and works within local politics. In this way, Corrigan argues,
socialists could extend and strengthen 'local possibilities', whatever they may be. Following lengthy tenancy of several major councils in the 1980s, there is not overwhelming evidence of either extended or strengthened democratic possibilities and it is a better description of their position to say that much of it is in crisis.

What follows in this Chapter and the three following Chapters is an exploration and a critique of the conception of the local state as a theoretical and an analytical tool and thus municipal socialism as a channel for socialist advance. More specifically, in the interests of the thesis, it is an examination of the particular strategies followed by local councils against racism within their own spheres of influence, attempting to gradually hone down the rough racist edges of the local state until it can act not only in an anti-racist way but can aid in the creation a local ethos of anti-racism. The case studies show up particular concrete examples of the inherent contradictions of municipal anti-racism and are thus specific examples of, and reflections upon, the prime area of anti-racist policy-making in Britain in the 1980s. This chapter, whilst informed by the results of consulting primary sources is based on secondary sources. The Case Studies which follow draw more heavily on primary data from participants in the 'race relations' network of each locale under scrutiny.

Before moving on to those particular case studies in the next chapters, the whole concept of the local state and its relative autonomy, providing the political basis for socialist intervention, must be more closely examined. It is this conceptualisation which informed and was altered by, the political moves by the Labour Left in
local government and is vital in an attempt to assess the general potential of the venture and in particular, the use of municipal socialism in the 1980s as a carrier of a strategy against racism. There may be no one authority which represents the heterogeneity of influences which can be termed 'municipal socialism' or even 'municipal anti-racism'. What they all have in common is some stated aim by the proponents of using a local authority as a vehicle for social change, however faulty and it is the continual draw to the machinations of electoralism and controlling the bureaucracy which typify it.

4.2 The theory of the Local State

In the late 1970s, at the same time as there was developing a downturn in working class struggle, there began a resurgence in the interest of both theorists and activists in the nature of local government. Certainly writers such as Castells and Lefebvre7 have written on urban politics and urban alienation as grounds for conflict prior to the most recent moves of the Labour Left into local government but that current has brought about a wealth of works on municipal socialism by writers including Dunleavy, Saunders, Boddy & Fudge and Gyford.® The temporal point of congruence between the actual Labour domination of key local authorities and the writings of theorists of local socialism provides a good test of the applicability of the model.

What is worth stressing at the outset is the position of the writers on the reform/revolution question in relation to socialist theory and practice. With the possible exception of Cockburn (whose The Local State has suffered some misrepresentation) the writers on the
local state are looking upon it as an acceptable vehicle for socialist reform. This includes writers such as Corrigan who takes great liberties with the work of Lenin in an attempt use him to back the local state argument. The theorisations then have to take account of a capitalist state which they readily admit is not neutral in class terms but can be contrasted with a local state which can not only be fought over but won in the struggle for socialism. Nigel Harris, a critic of the viability of municipal socialism, suggests that the local state strategy involves 'no confrontation, but slow subversion through fragments, communities, a tide of "advancing social control". After all, the tiger is to be skinned claw by claw.'

Although writings such as Ralph Milliband's *The State in Capitalist Society* and those of Poulantzas and Wright opened up new discussions on the Left as to the role of the capitalist state, it was Cynthia Cockburn's *The Local State* which sought to address the nature of local government as part of the modern capitalist state. Cockburn started from Marxist premises on the nature of the state - the specificity of the state to the dominant mode of production; the state as an instrument of class domination by the bourgeoisie; and the repression function of the state through the judiciary, army and police force added to the less coercive functions which it fulfills. Although she takes on board some of the arguments raised in support of the relative autonomy of the state she does not argue for a relative autonomy of the local state from the national. As she writes, of her case study in London, 'When I refer to Lambeth Borough Council as "local state" it is to say neither that it is something distinct from "national state", nor that it alone represents the state locally. It is
to indicate that it is part of a whole. \[12\]

The local state is represented by Cockburn as the localised sector of the capitalist state which serves to reproduce the conditions in which capitalist accumulation can take place, through the running of housing, education, local health etc. The services by which the working class is reproduced are also, though, services which the working class has fought for. The fact that the working class needs these services does not nullify the fact that capitalism needs a reproduction of its labour force just as the financial need for people to work does not invalidate the fact that labour power is exploited under capitalism. Hence an apparently democratic, responsive and concerned local authority is at the same time an arm of the state and therefore, at one remove of the interests of the ruling class. Cockburn's work is to a large part aimed at demythologising the ideas of local democracy and the assumptions that a local authority is simply a reflection of the wishes of the local people. In this respect it is her conclusions which bear closest examination.

Cockburn argues that the chosen terrain of the revolutionary parties of the Left, the industrial struggle, is unnecessarily narrowly focused in its viewpoint and does not give due attention to the possibility of collective activity around service delivery by the state (echoes of Castells 'urban social movements'). Such groups as housing action groups, claimants' unions, PTAs, health groups are all approved of inasmuch as they relate not only to people who may not actually be workers but that they help in the building of links between state 'workers' and state 'clients'. Cockburn seeks to extend the class struggle beyond the point of production but is wary of the development
of such strategies as 'corporate management' and 'community development' which she sees as a necessary concomitant to the development of increasingly more sophisticated managerial practices rather than an enhancement of working class demands.

What is most interesting for the subject of this thesis is Cockburn's views on the role of elected members within the local state. She argues that there is often a false dichotomy presented between council officers and council bureaucrats noting, "it is far from evident that all elected members are politically distinct from senior officers in the bureaucracy." The increased application of corporate management to local government, it is argued, further alienates the ordinary, backbench councillor and ties the higher levels of local elected representatives to the professionals within the organisation. The political conclusions reached are that any militant Left-wing councillors should not be expected to attain high office or having attained it, that they cannot hold on to office unless they modify their former political stance. Cockburn warns against people putting their trust in Labour councillors, for this 'increases the tendency to believe that someone else, specifically someone in authority, alone can solve the problems of a situation that in reality is a reflection of an entire mode of production and balance of class power.'

It is worth remembering these arguments made by Cockburn are cited as one of the forerunners of the municipal socialist venture although her book precisely points out the contradictions and problems in such a project. Whilst she did suggest that there were new possibilities in socialist advance in organisations outside the workplace, she did not assume that the local state could be won over.
and guided in a socialist direction by the election of the appropriate Left Labour councillors and was clear on the function and nature of the capitalist state, of which local government was a part. As Cochrane remarks,

However flawed Cockburn's analysis finally was, some of the key issues it identified seem to have been forgotten in the left's gadarene rush to become cheerleaders for the new "municipal socialism" ... She highlights the extent to which local government can appear to offer new openings while effectively closing them down. Her warnings are now discounted.\textsuperscript{16}

Another recent writer on the local state has been Peter Saunders\textsuperscript{17} who has used some of the American community power studies, such those by Clark and Laumann and Pappi\textsuperscript{18}, in alliance with an analysis of local power elites and urban managerialism to develop a form of dual state thesis to be applied to central/local state relations in Britain. Although Boddy and Dunleavy\textsuperscript{19} both flatter him by suggesting he starts from an initially Marxist framework, which is then integrated with a neo-Weberian perspective, it is better to put Saunders, as does Gottdeiner,\textsuperscript{20} clearly in the camp of Weber. What Saunders has attempted to do is to construct a typology of local state functions which show a more pluralist, open and democratic structure which can be contrasted with the central state which is more corporatist, reflective of class society and closed to democratic advance. He writes, 'local government in Britain cannot be seen simply as an inconsequential appendage of a monolithic capitalist state. Local political processes have their own specific character ... Local politics are essentially consumption politics ... and cannot be treated
as part of a much grander class struggle for socialism.

Whilst it may be that in his work Saunders points out some of the limits of local government, certainly in contrast to those who take the view that the takeover of Town Halls by socialists necessarily acts as a spur to the class struggle, there are problems with his analysis. His Weberian outlook and acknowledged pluralism drew him to the conclusion that there is much room for pressure group and community organisation activity in and around the local state precisely because he denies the centrality of class struggle as the prime mode of liberal democratic advance. He argues that ‘people’s material interests as consumers are no less “fundamental” than their interests as workers and employers and cannot simply be “transcended”’. What we have here is a reification of the ‘consumer’, a traditional cipher for middle-class interests, counterposed as a third force between capital and labour.

The division between forms of state expenditure made by Saunders, between the centrally organised social investment which has a direct input into the capitalist accumulation process and social consumption which is geared at the provision of services, locally is set up as an ideal type and therefore is not always too applicable empirically. Education spending, for example, can be looked upon both as a social investment in human capital and a type of collective consumption. In contemporary Britain it is more proper to note that the integration of local government functions spread across the expenditure on social investment and consumption and that the political domination of an area such as education by Government spending limits, as well as policy initiatives, wholly limit the partial autonomy of local government which Saunders argues for. While representatives of
organised Labour and Capital meet at a national level and pressure groups can have an influence on local politics, as Cochrane notes, 'none of this justifies a more universal division of the sort Saunders proposes and which is eagerly taken up by many on the academic left to justify an uncritical adherence to the local democracy bandwagon.'

It would be repetitive to list quote after quote of the municipal socialists/local statists but it is worth briefly considering some of the excessively optimistic views on the prospects for municipal socialism not only as a bulwark against 'Thatcherism' but as a new arena for radical advance. Stuart Hall, for example, writing in New Socialist (September 1984) suggested that the GLC was in the process of 'the building of a new historic bloc in the politics of socialism' (until its was abolished two years later). Bassett, at the time a Labour Councillor in Bristol and Geography lecturer, commenting on how the capitalist state could be transformed to a socialist end noted in 1980, 'It seems evident from history that such a transformation cannot be carried out successfully by relying upon a reforming elite of state managers but must involve democratic control, active involvement and self-management from below. Control at a local scale would seem to be a vital element in this.'

Some writers have sought to identify a new social force of sections of society entering into politics from which they had been previously excluded. Gyford, in introducing the notion of the New Urban Left, seeks to show how a new layer of activists have been drawn into local politics motivated in part by the desire to increase local democracy and accountability. Boddy and Fudge also took up the theme arguing that, 'Women's committees, race relations committees and to
some extent new-style employment committees have been created, to bring forward previously suppressed interests into the formal political arena ... Decentralisation and the co-option on to council committees of non-elected members, and greater commitment to a more consultative style of policy debate ... have opened up new forms of communication between the town hall and groups, individuals and activists outside.' As In this way a variety of people including the 'victims' of sexism and racism, as well as councillors, local authority managers and members of the 'traditional working class' can work together for the good of 'the community'. The municipal socialists, it appears, can run the local system better and more efficiently than others, if only because of their greater democracy.

As Harris argues, much of this vision of socialism rests upon an assumption that the slow subversion of the local state via fragments, communities and oppressed groups will bring about the supremacy of local authorities as the zenith of 'advancing social control'. As with the local pluralism presented by Saunders above, the municipal socialists venture is seen as 'a virtue in its own right - Small (and Local) is beautiful ... a new conception of socialist activity where "doing your own thing", linked to local power, can result in steady advance. Unfortunately, "doing your own thing" permits, in conditions of defeat (acknowledged or not), a steady shift to the right.' In such a situation and faced with a world economic system this section of the Left has retreated into the small local environment, where questions of ownership and control can be evaded in the pursuance of the interests of 'the community'.

The interest in theoretical musings about the nature of the
local state did not occur in an ideological vacuum and it was in part because of the political rebirth of the Labour Left especially around the figure of Tony Benn that there was a practical base for the local state thesis to be built upon. The highpoint of the municipal socialist venture was the period 1979–85 when optimism in the possibilities for socialist advance through the takeover of the local authority was greatest. At the start of the period the local Labour Left was growing rapidly and by the end the efforts of Conservative Government legislation (especially ratecapping) had effectively blocked the material changes that the councils had hoped to make. The only real hope left for many was the election of a Labour Government in 1987, to bail out what was left of municipal socialism. This did not come about and since then the debate has shifted away from the gains that could be made by Labour domination of local authorities and on to what form the cuts will take and the number of job losses and services to disappear.

One of the major points to be stressed in the Introduction to this thesis was the material factor in the reproduction of the ideology of racism. For a municipal strategy aimed at fighting racism, it must be able to have some effect on the conditions of the people living in its locality if has any hope in reducing some of the spurs to racism. What has happened in the 1980s is that local government has been continually starved of funds by central government through the general measures catalogued below. The links between municipal anti-racism and local authority spending problems are not always too clearly drawn. Before investigating the way in which anti-racism has been presented as an appropriate strategy for local authorities to follow it
is worth briefly considering the nature of municipal socialism as a whole and the politics of the local state.

4.3 The politics of the local state

As Gyford has shown, the Labour Party has at many points in its history touched on municipal socialism as a form of democratic organisation which could aid local control and accountability. As a party wedded to the capitalist state and the electoral process as a method of bringing about socialism it would be surprising if it were not. As with the intervention of the Labour Party in national politics, the fundamental assumption made was that the state was not an unref ormable capitalist tool and that the work done by socialists inside it could bring substantial benefits for the working class. The Fabians encouraged the ILP in the late nineteenth century to capture 'municipal government' and run it in a socialist manner and were active themselves as early as 1896. In the 1920s the Webbs' 'Constitution for a Socialist Commonwealth' argued that the majority of industry would be dealt administered and controlled not at a national but at a local level. It was also in the 1920s that the Left Labour Council in Poplar in the East End of London refused to cut payments to the unemployed or fund them by raising the rates, coming into direct conflict with the Government. As a result, 30 Councillors, five of them women, were jailed, with crowds of thousands of local workers supporting them. After 6 weeks in prison they were released having refused to make any concessions, having broken the law and having got away with it.
It is interesting to note the view of Herbert Morrison, one of the founding fathers of municipal socialism, who saw Poplar as a dangerous precedent, in that it might frighten off voters who would see Labour as 'irresponsible' and not as a natural party of government. Morrison viewed the efficient Labour authority as one which should be run as 'an efficient machine for a high moral purpose', acting constitutionally and dedicated to progressive reform through incremental municipal control. This again was part of the basic Labour Party premise that the state could be looked upon relatively uncritically. There were also further echoes of Morrison in the attitude of Neil Kinnock, not only to the actions of Militant in Liverpool, but also in boroughs such as Brent, Lambeth and Haringey.

Following World War 2 and the Attlee government, Labour took control over localised state functions in an expanding national economy, a period characterised by Gyford as municipal labourism. Edmund Dell, writing in 1960, argued that the Labour Party was rather lacking in a coherent philosophy towards local government and only supported it inasmuch as it enacted the plans of the central administration. The local state sector assumed greater responsibilities through house building, increased social services, the running of local health authorities, education etc. The obverse of this was a gradual exposure of some of the cosy relationships which had grown up between local Labour council leaders and contractors for council services. The events in Newcastle in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in which John Poulson (an architect and consultant to Bovis) paid T. Dan Smith (leader of Newcastle Council 1966-74) £155,000 over a period of eight years for lucrative building contracts, were only the
tip of an iceberg which resulted in the conviction of numerous local Labour Town Hall bosses on corruption-related offences.\textsuperscript{22}

One lone element of rebellion in that period was in Clay Cross in Derbyshire where the local Labour council, led by David Skinner, the brother of Dennis Skinner MP, opposed the Conservative Government's 1972 Housing Finance Act. The Labour Party leadership refused to give any backing for opponents of the Act acting outside the law and the TUC similarly offered only paper support. Thirty-two local authorities delayed implementation of the Act in 1972 but only thirteen continued into 1973 with the number of rebel councils finally reaching three. Of these, Bedwas, Machen, and Clay Cross (all Labour), the latter became the cause célébre, although all were removed as local authorities in the 1970s local government reorganisation. In 1975 the Labour Government passed the Housing Finance (Special Provisions) Act which was intended to indemnify councillors fined for failing to put up Council rents as required by the 1972 Act but a rebellion of the Labour Right in the Commons ensured that the legislation did not protect the Clay Cross Councillors. As Bassett notes, 'The surcharging and bankruptcy of the Clay Cross councillors has served as an awful warning to Labour councils ever since of the dangers of being left high and dry by a divided labour movement.'\textsuperscript{33}

4.4 The rise and fall of municipal socialism (1979-85)

Between the defeat at the May 1979 General Election and the 1981 Annual Conference, the Labour Party underwent the biggest swing to the Left it had experienced for at least a generation, certainly since
the Bevanites of the 1950s. The basis for this move to the Left was the record of the Wilson/Callaghan Government from 1974-9 and in particular the cuts packages in public services which Jim Callaghan and his Chancellor Denis Healey had put through in the last two years of the Labour Government. In 1979 the Labour Left was unanimously of the belief that the next Labour Government must not be a re-run of the Wilson and Callaghan years. To ensure that this did not happen, the Labour Left sought to win through a number of changes in the party constitution which would give local constituencies more control of their MPs and that an electoral college of representatives of all the party would choose the Leader and the Deputy Leader. The one figure around whom the Labour Left coalesced at the time was Tony Benn.

As an apparent supporter for extraparliamentary activity, an open critic of the lack of democracy and neutrality in the British State and apparently moving to the Left, Benn was a major pole of attraction. At the 1979 May Day Rally at Birmingham he argued that 'The time has come for the whole labour movement to face the harsh realities, take up the challenge and reorganise its own role, party structure and organisation'. His rallies and meetings pulled large and enthusiastic audiences to Labour Party gatherings for the first time in 20 years. After a continual decline in membership since the 1950s the Labour Party finally experienced a brief period of increasing individual membership in the period following the 1979 General Election debacle.

The layer of new recruits to the Labour Party included a large number of activists, some of whom had been active around the revolutionary left and others who had worked in campaigns such as the
ANL. Not only did they contribute numbers and enthusiasm but they also added greatly to the Left-wing tenor of the party wards and General Management Committees. New members were typically students or white-collar and professional workers, working in the state sector, who saw themselves as radicals in a way separate to the traditional Labour left. They were committed to some forms of extraparliamentary action as a method of building the Left and were active in the various 'movements' of the time. As Sue Cockerill notes 'These politics, combined with the relative ease with which activists came to dominate many local parties, made a crack at taking over the Town Hall, a natural development for the newly-emerging Labour Left.'

The disaffection with which many of the radical community activists had felt with the established local Labour Party machine in the late 1960s and early 1970s was also being gradually eroded with the renaissance of the Labour Left in the late 1970s. So much so that by September 1980 Community Action journal recommended that activists should move 'from focusing on tenants and community groups to the range of organisations in the labour movement ... Building strength and unity in the labour movement has to be the basis of the fightback.' More converts were thus provided for the local Labour wards, awoken from their moribund state by the input of New Left blood. Groups such as the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, of which Peter Hain, a founder of the ANL, was a leading figure and journals and newspapers such as London Labour Briefing provided outlets for the New Left and were effective mouthpieces in the party for leading municipal socialists such as Ken Livingstone of the GLC, David Blunkett of Sheffield Council and Ted Knight of Lambeth. As Ken Livingstone claimed in the November 1981
issue of Marxism Today, 'The influx of people that have given the GLC this great reputation in the gutter press for being the end of civilisation as we know it, is in fact the post-1968 generation in politics.'

It was the election of the Labour majority on the GLC in 1981 and the choice of Ken Livingstone as Leader that was the first major fillip to the municipal socialists. The optimism on the Left at the time was notable, not only in the pages of Time Out which compared the GLC's budget favourably with the GNP of small countries. By 1982, allowing for the different timings of elections, the Left was in a dominant position in the GLC, ILEA, metropolitan counties such as Merseyside and South Yorkshire (christened the 'Socialist Republic') major cities such as Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield and several boroughs in London. The first major test for any unity of the Left Labour Councils came in their opposition to the Conservative Government's 1980 Local Government, Planning and Land Act. (For a summary of the local government expenditure legislation enacted by the Conservatives since 1979 see Appendix 2)

Despite calls from many Left Labour Council leaders the Labour Party NEC was quick to distance itself from any actions contemplated by the Councils which might involve them acting illegally or unconstitutionally. Roy Hattersley, at the time the Labour Party's front bench Environment spokesman, argued that no policy of opposition to the Act should be imposed upon the Labour Councils and that 'The policy of this party is for freedom and autonomy in local government. Local councils acting honourably as Socialist councillors can make their own decisions about what is right for the area they represent.'
Some of the Council leaders, such as Ted Knight of Lambeth, saw this as a 'sell-out' and pressed for the need for unity of the Parliamentary and local government sections of the Labour Party against what they saw as politically motivated attacks on council spending. However, Neil Kinnock, another NEC member at the time was to stress the 'autonomy' of Labour Councils, an autonomy which was none too evident when he launched an investigation into the activities of Militant in Liverpool in 1985, backed by his deputy, Roy Hattersley.37 The Local Government, Planning and Land Act (1980) was carried through without serious opposition.

In May 1981 over 900,000 Londoners had voted for the Labour Party in the GLC elections (the NF vote by comparison fell to 2.1% from its high point in 1977 of 5.3%) and the new Left GLC set about to implement its election promises. By far and away the one policy which would have the effect on the greatest number of Londoners was its Fares Fair policy to cut London Transport's fares by 25% and fund the deficit by setting a supplementary rate. The result was an immediate rise in demand for bus and tube services and the appointment of 600 extra staff. An apparent but fleeting success for municipal socialism. Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine was less supportive and imposed a £111 million penalty on the GLC Block Grant for overspending and threatened to cut the subsidy to British Rail if it accepted the GLC's offer of £20 million to reduce its London fares.

The Conservative-run Bromley Council then took legal action against the GLC in an attempt to have the Fares Fair policy declared illegal on the grounds that it broke the 1969 Transport Act's demands that a transport service had to be efficient, integrated and economic.
The case eventually went to the Law Lords who decided by a majority interpretation that London Transport should be run without a subsidy. This was a little too supportive of the Government's line, London Transport having been subsidised for years, and Norman Fowler, Transport Minister announced that despite the Law Lords' ruling, subsidies could continue but not at the Fares Fair level of 45%. The GLC launched a campaign of opposition around the slogan 'Can't Pay: Won't Pay'.

The campaign attempted to build up popular support for the policy in an attempt to win the Government over to changing the law on funding for public transport and despite considerable success was not able to direct the focus of the campaign in any realisable direction, providing an all too stern test for the assumptions of some of the local statist. Transport workers were not called upon as workers to oppose the Law Lords' decision or the eventual takeover of the running of London Transport by a Government appointed body and by 1984 the policy lay in ruins. The autonomy of municipal socialism was shown to be not only relative but very relative in that even popular policies such as Fares Fair were undermined and undone by the Conservative Government and the judiciary. The re-elected 1983 Conservative Government was to go further than halting the GLC's policies and decided instead for its abolition.

The 1983 Conservative General Election manifesto called the GLC and metropolitan counties 'a wasteful and unnecessary tier of government' although Norman Tebbit was more forthright about his Party's reason for seeking their abolition when he argued 'The GLC is typical of this new, modern divisive version of socialism. It must be
defeated. So we shall abolish the GLC. The GLC once again sought to build on the popularity of Ken Livingstone and mounted a formidable and expensive publicity campaign against abolition, mainly arguing that it was an affront to local democracy. The GLC was able to point to the considerable support for its retention and the legislative passage of the Abolition Bill was at times rocky for the Government, especially in the House of Lords where some concessions were forced through, including the retention of ILEA (though this turned out to be only a temporary measure).

The comfortable Parliamentary majority held by the Conservatives and the possibility of removing Ken Livingstone as a political figure from centre stage ensured the final passage of the Bill. On April 1st 1986 the Act was implemented and the GLC and metropolitan councils were history. What was of more consequence was the campaign waged against ratecapping by the Left Labour councils which effectively saw the end of the expansionist phase of municipal socialism and the onset of the financial crises which have dogged the Labour authorities ever since.

4.5 The ratecapping campaign

The Rates Act became law in March 1984. The intention of the Act was straightforward - to allow the government to designate certain local authorities which it deemed to have acted irresponsibly either by high spending or setting high rate levels. These councils would be told by the Government what their levels of spending would be for 1985/6 and the maximum rates that they could set by law. In other words, they
would be ratecapped. The rate level would allow councils to balance their books as long as they spent the amount designated by the Government and no more. As David Blunkett, at that time leader of Sheffield City Council and now Labour MP for Sheffield Brightside, notes, ratecapping did not affect the amount of grants given by central to local government but was intended 'to challenge the political independence of local authorities, based on their right to raise a local tax.' In total 18 local authorities were designated for ratecapping for 1985/6 in the Rates Limitation Report presented to the House of Commons on 24th July 1984, the same month in which the Liverpool Councillors settled with Patrick Jenkin over the 1984/5 Council budget (See Liverpool case study in Chapter 7 below).

At the Labour Party Conference in September 1984, 32 resolutions and 14 amendments were submitted on local government, the largest number on any one subject. A resolution supporting the actions of Liverpool City Council was carried despite the opposition of the NEC. By November the councils facing ratecapping had solidified their united stand against the Government around the plan of not setting a rate, thereby forcing the Government's hand. The problem with this approach was, however, twofold. The strategy of waiting for the money to run out would first hit councils such as Camden and Islington, who had no rate support grant, and would upset the momentum of the movement by waiting for the various councils to go bankrupt at different times. The other difficulty with this tactic was that it needed no movement building behind it. The 'no-rate' plan could be left in the hands of the councillors and would not, for example, need industrial action by council workers. The councillors assumed that their control of the
local state machinery would be enough. On the rare occasion when the workers were called upon to support the actions of the councillors, there was a large response.41

The intention of the ratecapped councils (and Liverpool) was to synchronise their budget meetings on 7th and 8th March 1985 as a united climax at which they could refuse to set a rate. However, as Blunkett recalls, 'As March approached, council leaders could no longer disguise the difficulty they would have in obtaining majorities for alleged illegal action, bringing the threat of surcharge and disqualification.'42 At ILEA's budget meeting on 7th March dissident Labour members joined with the Conservatives and the SDP to force through a legal rate. Ken Livingstone and John McDonnell, Leader and Deputy Leader of the GLC split over the necessity of the no rate strategy and despite Livingstone eventually voting with his deputy for deferral, the Labour group on the GLC voted 24 to 18 to set a rate, after 4 days of debate. Tony Mulhearn, who was to be surcharged as a Liverpool Councillor argued, 'Livingstone typified the "fun revolutionaries" who, when the chips are down, prefer their parliamentary careers to going down the road of illegality in defence of workers rights and conditions ... Ipso facto he adopted the arguments of Neil Kinnock - the policy of the "dented shield".'43

Of the 15 local authorities who originally deferred setting a rate, 12 came through the psychological barrier of April 1st but started to drift one by one into setting rates. In Lewisham a rate was set in the middle of the night on April 3rd when the Labour members were out of the Council chamber. Hackney Council faced a High Court order forcing it to set a rate by 16th April but held out until mid-May
when right-wing Labour Councillors voted left-wingers off key committees as a prelude to putting through a cuts budget. The 'no rates' policy was fraying at the edges rapidly. Sheffield Council set a rate on 7th May when once again the Right of the Labour Group sided with the opposition parties. By the end of May there were six councils still refusing to set a rate, though by 8th June Southwark, Islington, Camden and Greenwich had all capitulated.

Lambeth Council held out longest, until 3rd July when the resignation of a Labour member led to a majority of 32 to 31 in favour of setting a rate. By this time Lambeth was isolated. The District Auditor surcharged and disqualified 31 Lambeth Councillors on 2nd April 1986 for not setting a legal rate on time. Liverpool Council was not ratecapped but part of the campaign and had refused to set a rate until 14th June when a 9% rate increase was passed, in line with inflation, in effect a deficit budget. On September 8th, 49 councillors were surcharged £106,000 for their delay in setting a rate and despite going to the Law Lords in defence of their mandate the Councillors were finally disqualified from office on 12 March 1987.

Some of the prime participants in the municipal socialist venture were beginning to disassociate themselves from what others thought could be achieved in the local state. Two for whom the elected membership of the national state fortuitously beckoned were David Blunkett and Ken Livingstone. The former argued that the ratecapping campaign 'failed to achieve its stated objectives through its chosen method, and the realities of power were demonstrated ... The limits power available to local politics were well and truly exposed'..

For Ken Livingstone, the possibility of controlling
socialist islands in a capitalist sea was no longer a tenable one, although the quest for this had been at the centre of his energies for the previous five years, as leader of the GLC. He notes, 'We did always maintain that we would use the GLC as a shield to protect people from the worst effects of this government and do the best we could to improve conditions, but what can be achieved is always marginal without a shift in the balance of power between central and local government.' As part of the whole process of local statism, many on the Left began to seek to implement policies which would take more account of the black populations of the boroughs in which they resided and who had suffered discrimination for many years in the provision of services that local authorities offered. Although the 1976 Race Relations Act had set vague criteria for local authorities seeking to combat racism in their own areas, the consensus drawn from the writers discussed below is of an ad hoc approach which at times is flattered by the title 'strategy'.

4.6 Anti-racism in local government (1979-85)

The first two local authorities to launch major initiatives around 'race equality' were Haringey and Camden, in 1978, closely followed by ILEA and Lambeth. Soon afterwards the London Boroughs of Brent, Hackney and Newham (all considered in the case studies below) began to develop schemes of their own to lessen the effects of racism within their own spheres of influence. Several reasons have been offered for the particular uptake of 'race relations' policy initiatives and Ouseley suggests four - the increasingly vocal black
electorate; the pressure of local CRCs; the 1980 and 1981 riots and the desire to avoid of the repetition of such occurrences; and last but not least, political expediency. One may also add that municipal managerialist anti-racism fitted in very neatly with the ideological precepts of municipal socialism, by which the socialist councillors could bring about improvements for the black people living in their locality by a mixture of good policy-making and 'consultation'. Ouseley notes, 'Local government in those areas where blacks predominantly reside - the inner, depressed parts of the major conurbations - is largely controlled by the middle classes, who see themselves as running a service for the poor and deprived.'

For most local authorities the implementation of policies on 'race relations' included some or all of the following:

- the adoption of a statement proclaiming the council's commitment to equal opportunities;
- the establishment of a race relations committee for councillor involvement;
- the appointment of specialist officers and advisers for race relations work;
- the production of codes of practice for personnel matters;
- the implementation of racism awareness training courses for staff training procedures;
- the introduction of ethnic monitoring for areas of service delivery and employment opportunities;
- the development of arrangements for consultation with external
agencies and the dissemination of information and publicity to influence local public opinion.

What these practices were aimed at was the gradual bringing about of an anti-racist ethos in the locale through the changing of policies and procedures within the local authority. The assumption was that the appropriate guidelines and commands, backed up by suitable sanctions, would be best way of informing people about the racism that existed and the ways for getting rid of it. If an ideal type of the anti-racist strategy could be provided it would probably run thus.

After full consultation with black community groups and representatives, the duly elected councillors would put forward policy plans which could then be enacted upon by supportive senior officers who would ensure the day to day implementation of the policies. These would make local state employees act in an anti-racist manner by both reducing their opportunities for acting in a racist way and at the same time showing them the evils of racism. One of the first major authorities to put some of the above ideas into practice was the GLC. Some of the efforts of the GLC point out to the problems which were to confront the local authorities considered in the Case Studies below.

4.7 The GLC and anti-racism

The significance with which the Labour Group viewed the development of anti-racism as a core part of the GLC's policy framework is notable by the fact that the first chair of the Ethnic Minorities Committee was Ken Livingstone himself. In 1982/3 the Committee had a
grants budget of £850,000 which by the following year had risen to £2.5 million. The Council declared London 'an anti-racist zone' and the high point of its activity was the declaration of 1984 as 'Anti-Racist Year'.

Much of the GLC's activity around 'Anti-Racist Year' was in the realm of public awareness and propaganda. Gilroy gives a useful discussion and critique of much of the imagery used in the campaign and questions its effectiveness, given the variety of unintended interpretations that could be made of some of it. "Two of the central factors to the anti-racist work of the GLC were to be repeated by the councils studied below. One was the assumption that anti-racism was what the GLC defined it as being, as Gilroy suggests, by allowing the concept of racism 'to ascend to the rarified heights where, like a lost balloon, it becomes impossible to retrieve'." Thus the GLC could claim its way of fighting racism was the relevant one for the people of London. Or as Gilroy further notes, this led to 'the allocation of a pre-eminent if not monopolistic role in the defeat of racism to the council's own agencies and activities.'

Apart from the council's own definition of anti-racism becoming the only one, the very process of doing so becomes a denial of wider self-activity. Within various councils this threw up the situation where racism was seen as what individuals did and anti-racism was what councils, though not other collectives did. Unlike the AMI, for example, which built on the basis of self-activity and involvement, municipal anti-racism, through the operation of schemes such as Racism Awareness Training (RAT) has attempted to individualise out racism and decontextualise the ideology of racism from its material base.
The logical conclusion would be that fighting racism does not call for a collective response but rather individual educative courses backed up by weighty sanctions for miscreants. This was precisely the case in Islington (See Chapter 7) in which committed racists were first admonished by the council and then sent on RAT courses to undermine a lifetime's racism within them. Racism can thus be presented as a block to both efficiency and good management practice and the basis for municipal anti-racism as effective management policies and the improvement of the reconstructed individual. Before considering how this has worked out in practice in the key areas of employment, housing and education it is of some importance that the relationships between the various groups and their key and top influentials acting upon and in the local state are discussed, in relation to the development and implementation of 'race relations' policies.

4.8 Structures and hierarchy

The endemic ideology for much of local government management is one of superficial neutrality and technical rationality. One of the admissions of the New Left Councillors interviewed in the course of this thesis was that many key officers appointed would not claim neutrality in their work but that their supportiveness of council initiatives could give an anti-racist policy an initial impetus which may then be less easily dissipated in other sections of the bureaucracy. The good or bad will of junior officers could be outweighed to a large extent by the agglomeration of power in the
higher echelons of the local authority. As Herman Ouseley argued over the setting up of a Race Relations Unit in Lambeth Council, Management structure, especially those concentrated within such large bureaucracies as in local authorities, ensures that power is invested in the inner circle of chief officers, professional caucuses, supervisory cliques and bands of high-fliers.\

As Ouseley contends, professionalism (allied to such management strategies as corporate management) has ranked high in the structures of the local state in ordering and codifying the services provided, ensuring, to put it in Marxist terms, that dominant class interests as expressed through the bureaucracy appear neutral and classless. Under the development of corporate management, the restrictive practices gathered around the old professions have gradually been diminished. This does not necessarily suggest a permanent loss of the professionalised position but is rather a part of the normal process of the division of labour. Despite the aims of the municipal socialists to open up local government, as Cockburn has noted, 'What in fact are new specialisms (corporate management and community work will most likely become professionalised in coming years) appears first in the guise of generalisms.' The development of Race Relations Units and committee structures within Left Labour Councils has done little to stop the new professionalism of the higher posts in such authorities and indeed the importance of being suitable qualified for a top 'race relations' post can bring serious problems (See Liverpool Case Study in Chapter 7 below).

The permanence of higher officers within the council
structures, in alliance with their positions, enable processes of
political manipulation to become commonplace. Tosh Flynn catalogues
stratagems such as 'tactics of delay, reporting disguised as action,
excuses and all kinds of political sabotage in defence of their
professional judgement against political whim.'\(^{62}\) There is a danger in
applying an elite theory, as Flynn does, to this whole process which
cannot explain the concentration of power or the generation of power.
It must be noted that assertions of the conservative nature of
management can point out the ways resistance by the bureaucracy can
limit political leads from elected members, especially those on the
Left. What they cannot do is show how resistance is possible, is
brought about and how it can be surmounted.

Flynn suggests the use of a more comprehensive and detailed
manifesto to counter the acts of individual officers as a corrective to
the accumulation of power within the bureaucracy of local authority. He
argues that a proposal which has been worked out without reference to
the bureaucracy has at least the merits of thwarting, 'an ambitious
officer [who] has to work closely with the party in control whilst
maintaining links and credibility with the opposition.'\(^{63}\) Flynn is
seeking a corrective to what he sees as the failings of individual
officers who are 'log-jams' to effective policy-making. Whilst looking
upon the local state as a structured body which maintains effective
power over decision-making at the top of the structure, his suggestions
for altering the situation rest in rather vague assumptions about the
transformative power of 'pressure from below' or the replacement of
unsupportive officers with more compliant ones.

Robinson in his study of the development of 'race relations'
structures in Inner London Boroughs\textsuperscript{64} suggests the making of critical decisions were the realm of the elected member but that council officers acted as a considerable counterweight in their day-to-day practices. Policy implementation could be hindered by what one councillor termed 'a negative power of organised inertia' so much so that 'you've got to have available the instrument by which you can bypass them.'\textsuperscript{55} In Lambeth, for example, the Race Relations Unit Officers chose to report directly to relevant Committee Chairs without seeking recourse either to the Chief Executive or the various directorate heads first. The obverse argument to this is that to influence decision-makers, the protective wing of the Chief Executive's Office can give weight to a fledgling Race Relations Unit, as happened in Newham (See Newham Case Study in Chapter 5 below). This latter approach has also been adopted in certain councils outside London where the Left Labour groups and black organisations are less prominent and the external pressure on the bureaucracy is subsequently less co-ordinated.

Ouseley is more in favour of an 'enlightened management' approach which, because of the deep rooting of power in the management team, he sees as the only hope for improvements in the removal of racist policies. As he baldly asserts:

\textit{If you are not part of the Managerial team you are powerless. If you have no decision-making role you are powerless ... You cannot beat it [the system] because those who control it look after and protect themselves first and foremost; they strive ruthlessly to maintain the status quo; they build ... little empires which don't necessarily represent the bureaucracy's search for greater efficiency and further perpetuate the range of effective discriminatory practices.}\textsuperscript{56} (my emphasis)
In general terms, the 'broad alliance' policy is chosen by Flynn and Ouseley as the most effective method of altering racist policies and moving recalcitrant management. They see a process of reform as occurring through the established channels of change, albeit with a wider involvement of the 'community', having previously shown how the prospects for change are minimal despite the best efforts of well-meaning councillors, community groups and supportive officers. What this has led to will become clear from the case studies below.

4.9 The role of elected members

The exponents of local statism, for all their claims to open up local government and bring in oppressed groups, are still immersed in the notion of representation and the abrogation of self-activity to electoral efficacy. Writers such as Flynn recognise the problem but do not find fault in the whole representative form but rather in the failings of individual councillors. He believes that 'the problem is that councillors need to maintain their contact with the working class that they represent, but spend enough time and energy to take that experience to transform the political and bureaucratic machine into something which is actually working for the class.' As shown above, in the collapse of the campaign over ratecapping, there is always the problem of not having enough committed Left-wing councillors to risk breaking the law.

The links with the working class that the councillors are supposed to have are further qualified, not only by their own failings but also by part of the ideology of the New Left which equates the
working class and its organisations with women's groups, gay and lesbian groups and black organisations. The question then has to be put 'What happens if the interests of these various groups conflict?'. In the case of the Islamia Muslim Infant School in Brent, for example, (See the Case Study in Chapter 6 below) the Labour Councillors (19 black, 16 women) had to balance what were presented as the legitimate autonomous interests of black parents against the inherent sexism in the religious schooling and the perceived needs of the majority of working class children in the area. Ann Rogers, a Marxist critic of municipal socialism, may be nearer the truth when she argues that 'However well intentioned a Labour Councillor may be, they do not engage in class politics at the day to day level ... But the nature of capitalism is such that if you are not prepared to fight it tooth and nail, then you will be sucked into it.'

One pointer which may seem to add to the 'autonomy' argument of local statists is the lack of direction given by the political parties nationally and as Robinson has noted 'national political influence on local authority structures generally appears to be slight and guidance by national parties to local authorities on race relations has been almost non-existent.' The Conservative Party has to date offered no specific instructions to their local divisions on the development of 'race relations' policy and the Labour Party, whilst accepting its shortcomings, is still vague.

In a letter written in 1980 to all Labour Party Constituency Secretaries, Ron Hayward, the Party's General secretary noted 'I am concerned that in spite of our commitment to racial equality we are not yet a truly multiracial party' and the Labour
Party NEC in the same year only gave general advice that 'Where in power, race relations units should be set up in local authorities. It is only in these ways that the effects of prejudice will be understood by party members and changes made in the interests of Britain's ethnic minorities.'

This apparent devolution from central party influences has at times brought the actions of local parties into conflict with the Labour Party nationally but by and large local Labour groups have been left to do their own thing. But what exactly is their own thing?

If there is one key area of importance for the elected member it is in the involvement in setting up of 'race relations' structures and in policy development. This does not assume by inference that policy implementation is unproblematic or that the problems of policy-making lie within the domain of the council chamber and the bureaucracy. The work of Robinson, the Joint Government/Local Authority Association Working Group Report, and others come to the conclusion that the success of a 'race relations' policy or unit in establishing itself depends specifically upon the political will of those in power. Robinson and Ouseley suggest that a small group of political heavyweights are better at getting policies through than one key figure. What will be shown in the case studies below is that the position of councillors is qualified by the actions of council officers and external groups but more critically by national factors such as financial constraints and changes in legislation over education, for example.

The split between the leadership and back-benchers is explored by Flynn who notes, in agreement with Cockburn, that 'Many back-benchers feel that in the procedures of committee and council
meetings they are simply there to vote with the party.' The policy-makers may thus be better defined, following Young and Connelly, as 'policy entrepreneurs', those most involved in pushing for and initiating policy. If such people are in key positions then there is the possibility for the control of committees, control of agendas and for patronage in getting the policy through. Such a position is a long way from the aims of the municipal socialists in involving more of the ever amorphous 'black community' in 'race relations' policy making, when the reality of local government is that the limited power available to elected members rests in the hands of a very few and dependant on the response of those people the force of a 'race relations' policy can be heightened or lessened.

Writers such as Flynn and Ouseley fall foul of attempting to draw a distinction between the ward politicians, who are viewed as the 'real' representatives and the distanced, ossified bureaucracy. Flynn's argument is that by decentralisation and the use of oppositional tactics and alternative forums it is possible to bring about socialist transformation at the local level. What is neglected is that many council workers identify with left and trade union traditions themselves, including fighting racism in the workplace and have themselves been involved in what they see as the struggle for socialism.

As Boddy and Fudge note, 'the new urban left and middle-class activists claim to represent the demands of the working class and ordinary people but in terms of class, lifestyle and personal and sexual politics, they are often very different.' So whilst Flynn argues for a move away from the power base of the higher levels of the
public sector, it should be noted that this is the social base that much of the new urban left are indeed drawn from. In the case of anti-racist policy implementation this contradiction becomes clear in the Islington Case Study below (Chapter 7) where the Council trade unions, dismissed by some local statist as reflective of white male opinion, were more keen than their employers the Left Labour Councillors to attack racism within the workplace. The nature of so-called 'alternative forums' for fighting racism is called into question when the leadership of a Left Labour council are shown up by the rather old forum of trade union activity.

In pure terms it is difficult to assess how much power local councillors have locally, given the very limited power that they can exert as a part of the state. At times they seem to be easily circumvented by council officers (a theme running through the whole of Ouseley's book and the Hackney Case Study). In other cases, such as the anti-ratecapping campaign led by Lambeth and Liverpool Councils, a high degree of brinkmanship can be brought about by elected members, although their fates were decided by the unelected District Auditors. Once again, the use of such a term as 'relative autonomy' begs the questions, 'How much autonomy and for how long ?' What has been proposed by some observers as a key to the implementation of more comprehensive and definitive 'race relations' policies, which breaks the councillor/office dichotomy is the development of corporate management structures within the local state bureaucracy.

Cockburn offers a useful political analysis of the effects of corporate management on the local government set-up and Elcock provides a critique of the nature of corporate management. Whereas
previously local authorities have been organised into semi-autonomous departments or services, the corporate approach pushes for greater integration, through the related devices of 'horizontal' co-ordination and 'vertical' hierarchy. The effect has been to reassert strong control from the top in a new form. As Dearlove has argued, one of the aims of introducing corporate management in local authorities is to depoliticize issues in local government by further concealing the true state of affairs that local authorities govern in the interest of some groups in society and against the interests of others.

It is this very development that Robinson saw as the foundation for the effective introduction of 'race relations' structures. Having established a correlation between boroughs with more centralised procedures and apparently with more sophisticated anti-racist strategies, he felt able to conclude:

The evidence is that race structures are more likely to find a home in authorities where corporate decision-making processes are already familiar and where a high status is given to central units for planning and analysis.

Robinson adopts a managerialist perspective for which a properly structured approach is critical. The proceduralisation of appropriate channels through which anti-racist and equal opportunities programmes can be guided becomes central in providing the basis within which individual actors and groups are expected to operate. In such a way anti-racism is depoliticized by coming less under the realm of self-activity and becoming more integrated into the apparatus of the local state.
The 1983 Joint Government/Local Authorities Association Working Group came to a similar conclusion as Robinson when it noted that few local authorities had special arrangements for 'race relations' policy making at elected member level with the main councillor involvement being through the local GRCs and other groups. For the Working Group:

The importance of integrating race relations initiatives within council-wide practices and policies was stressed in the Introduction but the Working Group appreciated the organisational dilemma this poses for authorities which do not have strong co-ordination.\(^3\)

Young and Connelly's study in 1981 conversely pointed out that 'a management structure, however well elaborated, can achieve little in so sensitive an area if the political commitment is not forthcoming.'\(^4\) Connelly similarly noted in her solo study of social services departments with corporate structures 'None of them seemed to have influenced social services department policy and practice.'\(^5\) It may well be that the presentations offered to the Joint Government/Local Authority Association Working Group tended to be over-optimistic.

Ouseley's study still remains the most in-depth report on one council's attempt to set up and run a Race Relations Unit, and has a strong voluntarist element to it rather than the very integrated managerialism favoured above. He sees the impetus behind the setting up of the Unit as being when 'the Labour administration gave race a prime focus, it became a political issue.'\(^6\), utilising the best efforts of 'sympathetic white officers, non-sexist males and susceptible but politically aware black staff.'\(^7\) although, in the final analysis,
'effective changes were very dependent upon the goodwill of management.' Ouseley saw the basic block to effective anti-racist policy-making being the inflexibility of management and the best way of circumventing it through alliances between the Race Relations Unit, trade unions, sympathetic staff and external community agencies. The role of the latter, especially the CRE and local CRCs is less central than that of the officers and councillors but they remain the prime sources for external pressure on local authorities to carry through their 'race relations' policies.

External and 'community' groups influential in the formation of 'race relations' policies

4.10 The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)

One result of the 1976 Race Relations Act was the formation of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) from the Community Relations Commission and the Race Relations Board. Although it has a number of local offices, the CRE is more concerned in co-ordinating work with senior local politicians and chief officers of authorities as a whole. For example, the CRE'S 1983 Annual Report describes the Commission's efforts as attempting 'to work alongside the innovators as partners, and to direct our promotional efforts at those who might be described as learners and waverers.' The CRE's work has thus involved bringing together advisers, directing working groups and attending meetings. In 1984 it was involved in setting up the Local Authorities Race Relations Information Exchange (LARRIE) to provide information on
structures, policies and practices among local authorities to assist others to develop by example.

One of the key roles ascribed to the CRE was that of undertaking investigations into alleged racist behaviour in organisations, companies and local government. One of the CRE's first major investigations in local government was the formal investigation into the allocation of council housing in Hackney (See Hackney Case Study Chapter 5) which took over four years to complete. However, because of court rulings against it, the Commission is now unable to carry out formal investigations unless it already has evidence that discrimination is taking place and its power to conduct such investigations has become so cumbersome that an unco-operative respondent could delay enquiries for years. The evidence from the Hackney Case Study is that the CRE was quite capable itself of taking an inordinate amount of time to complete a formal investigation.

At a local level the CRE is often dismissed because of its quango status, whereby it lacks the power which it could accrue from being more closely wedded to the Home Office, for example, or a more critical edge which it could adopt were it more independent from government, as the Runnymede Trust has. Young and Connelly discovered that 'In a sense then, we were unable to make an appreciation of the potential role of the CRE as in most authorities the Commission's authority was not recognised'. What in effect the CRE is attempting to do is to push certain demands of black people in such a way as to get them settled without the need for any greater change in the structures of society and in tying them into the structures of the local and central state. Its role is not only in seeking to be the mode for the
expression of anti-racist discontent but also in setting up its structures as the body for the promotion of equality amongst 'the races'. In the 1980s the CRE represents one of the last bastions of a liberal discipline wholly wedded to a process of incremental change which can only home in on individual acts of discrimination or certain instances of institutional discrimination with numerous constraints in attendance.

4.11 The Community Relations Councils (CRCs)

At the local level the Community Relations Councils (CRCs) have sought to run a number of educational and welfare schemes involving members of 'ethnic minorities'. The work of the CRCs falls into four main categories, policy development; community development; public education and community service. The CRE often has to help financially with the running of CRCs when there is inadequate funding from the local authority. Robinson sees their most important role as acting as a liaison group between the local authority and the local 'black community' developing somewhat on the line of the local Councils for Voluntary Services. 'The most obvious examples,' Robinson notes, 'of CRCs influence are their structural suggestions which are then implemented by the authorities.' He cites examples such as Lambeth and Lewisham where the CRCs have been instrumental compared with Islington and Hackney where the various political factions and interest groups have brought about the near demise of the CRCs, as was done in the case of Birmingham CRC.

Ben-Tovim, Gabriel et al, who pride themselves on their
political involvement in the research process, state somewhat oddly that "they [CRCs] have created a forum where the politics of race can be the struggle for racial equality rather than a nest of sectarian wrangling and self-interest". Not only does his veer towards the common assumption that all suffers of racism have an overriding interest above such factors as class (the 'race'/class dichotomy), it also paints a false picture of the power struggles that go on in CRCs, as in any other other similar body, over access to funding and control of the organisation. Gabriel and Ben-Tovim have further argued that the division between those who look upon the CRCs as useful means for reform and those who view them as mere Governmental apparatuses, can be transcended. Like other local statists they claim that this is because 'the attack on racial inequality is conducted through the democratisation of the local state apparatus with respect to the black community'.

Other writers have suggested that CRCs are more realistically seen as buffer institutions which are used to head off a direct assault by black groups on the state. It is one of the processes by which anti-racism is converted into ethnicity, thereby blunting the edge of the black working class struggle, as Sivanandan might term it. The argument goes further in claiming that the aspirations of the black middle class can be directed through such bodies whilst at the same time appearing to give credence to community pressures and demands (see Katzenelson and Dummett & Dummett). As Tom Rees notes, it is none too easy to point out concrete successes for the local Community Relations Councils beyond those which could well have come about through other channels. He writes,
The greatest achievement of the local CRC has probably been to educate some of the local social and political elite, both from the majority and the minorities... with rare exceptions their input... appears to have been trivial and their successes may well, like the Urban Programme, have provided the alibi for the absence of any serious effort at the local level to change local government policies and practices.\textsuperscript{24}

4.12 Community Organisations

If the terms 'local state' and 'municipal socialism' cover a variety of political attitudes, then the phrase 'community organisations' is equally if not more amorphous. Shorter\textsuperscript{23} gives a typology of three forms of community group: grass roots, public participation and middle-up. The former are held to be the purer, more radical working class based organisations which bring together some of the elements of the politics of the workplace and a form of socialist consciousness to their actions. Examples in anti-racism might include the local groups campaigning against the 'Sus' laws in the 1970s, campaigns over deportations or as has been happening since the mid-1970s, black self-defence organisations. The Newham Monitoring Project (See the Newham Case Study in Chapter 5) is another example, a community group which monitors the levels of racist attacks and the police and local authority responses in the borough.

The public participation organisations are those which are involved in attempts by the state to incorporate community action to avoid confrontation, minimise political errors and legitimise existing and future action. Sivanandan whilst lapsing into customary rhetoric notes that in the early 1970s there was a proliferation of 'ethnic
Office's Urban Aid Programme. Government monies for pluralist plays - the development of a parallel power structure for black people'.

The middle-up group approach is simply what Short sees as the growth of middle-class initiatives (they have always been there) in and around residency and amenity issues. The factors which Short sees as being central to the development of these groups have been occupational and educational. The rise of the black middle class has been that much more recent and that much smaller, focusing on individual entrepreneurship and some advances in the academic sphere as well as local government. The campaign for Black Sections in the Labour Party is not only a call for greater black influence in the Party but a reflection of the fact that sections of the black middle class are seeking representation denied to them because of the racism within the party. Sivanandan takes his example from the media. 'Look at "Black on Black" and "Eastern Eye" in particular ... we have the idea of letting blacks get places so that they can teach their young that they don't have to take on the system when they can become part of it'.

The input of black community organisations is as complex as any other group of voluntary organisations and it is perhaps most useful to consider their political outlook and relationship to the state and class society rather than attempting to endlessly typologise them. Both Robinson and Connelly found little evidence of much community group input into local authority decision-making although it is difficult to know how much influence a group expects to have on any part of the local state. The Newham Case Study (Chapter 5) shows how a well organised community group has been able to pressurise both police and local authority to take a harder line against the perpetrators of
racial harassment but which still recognises the weaknesses and limitations of its own position and continues to argue for self-activity. At the same time the Liverpool Case Study (Chapter 7) shows how the combination of nearly all of Liverpool's 'ethnic' community organisations could not dislodge the Council's chosen Principal Race Relations Adviser, Sam Bond. Not only did the groups consider him to be wholly unsuited for the job but they even had their own better qualified candidates ready for the post.

Much of the above would be acceptable if society was organised along a plurality of community interests which are balanced by a neutral state. That, however, is not the case in class society. Community action is fought on the terrain chosen by the state and the proliferation of community workers (and community police officers) have extended state influence and control turning the management of protest and discontent into the efforts of the devolved state employee. Community group activity does not offer a class-based critique of the role of the state but aims more as a pressure group for influence and funding within the system. Cockburn quotes Selma James who suggests the position for community workers and community activists is one in which 'we have inherited a distorted and a reformist concept of capital itself as a series of things which we struggle to plan, control or manage, rather than as a social relation which we struggle to destroy.'

Community organisation and action is essentially a populist formation and is defined around a locale or an organisation or an individual, in which an overt class dimension is specifically excluded. This can all too quickly lead to groups with common interests being
forced to compete for the ever-decreasing resources proffered by the local state. For some political parties, the Liberals in the 1970s and Militant in the Labour Party in the late 1970s, their work around 'community' issues aided them in building strong electoral bases. Once again the questions of incorporation for those acting against the state are raised by their close involvement with the reformist political parties. In line with the discussion above of the necessity for a class dimension in fighting racism in a class society it is important to consider the actions of the organisations of the working class at the workplace, namely the trade unions.

4.13 The role of trade unions and workplace organisation in fighting racism

One of the most quoted of Marx's statements is 'The emancipation of the working class is the act of the working class' and this element of self-activity is one which is noticeable by its absence in a number of studies of the development of strategies against racism in local government. What many on the New Left attempting to control the local state's excesses suffer from is a great weakness in assuming that aspects of state behaviour can be detached from the role the state plays in in a capitalist society as a whole. Racist practices and instances of institutionalised racism are thus looked upon as the product of an autonomous self-sustaining development within the state hierarchy and not that it is the state's interests which are wholly tied up with those of capital. The necessity of racism for the capitalist system is not as straightforward as some Marxist writers
would suggest but if the ideology of racism is inextricably linked with both the state and the furthering of divisions within the working class then perhaps it is within the ranks of organised labour that the potential for change lies.

Firstly, it has to be appreciated that racist beliefs are commonly and widely articulated within the working class irrespective of any related political organisation's attempts to build upon those beliefs.\textsuperscript{90} The material reproduction of working class racism has been clearly shown by these studies and should not understated. What is less obvious in the process of the generation of anti-racist ideas and activities generally, and more specifically within the workforces of the local state. Stories such as Ouseley's apocryphal tale are much more in evidence. Here, he describes the arrival of the Principal Race Relations Adviser at a Lambeth Council manual workers shop stewards meeting:

Their instant view of the Race Relations Unit and the Equal Opportunities Policy was encapsulated in a statement made by one of the stewards: 'We know what you're up to. If you think you're going to turn up here with a truck load of niggers on a Monday morning and tell us we have to take them on, you've got another think coming.'\textsuperscript{91}

It was attitudes like this which fitted perfectly with vision of the municipal socialists of trade unions as dominated by white males and therefore fatally flawed. Far better to have the battle against racism led by the more ideologically circumspect Councillors and senior officers. Municipal anti-racism, it must be remembered, for all its consultative guises, is a management strategy and in no
respects a bottom-up force. A corrective to this attitude was provided by the results of the 1984 PSI survey which noted the higher proportion of black workers that were trade union members compared with their white counterparts. Without drawing too much from this result it does seem to suggest that not all black workers are as despondent towards trade unionism as some of those who profess themselves to be municipal socialists. Indeed the Islington Case Study (Chapter 7 below) points out the contradictions of self-professed socialists attempting to run the local state machine and having to attack their own workers for attempting to stop racism within the workplace. Self-activity does not fit too easily with the local statist plan all the time.

The Joint Government/Local Authority Working Group's report, which admittedly would not profess a trade union bias, included only 2 paragraphs dedicated to the discussion of the role of trade unions in the development of 'race relations' policies. At this level the prevailing attitude to trade unions in fighting racism is one of accommodation and gradual education. Any active role of the unions is discounted as a bonus but no more, despite the high concentration of black workers in the unionised sectors of local government. Similarly Robinson hardly makes a mention of trade union activities which may be a reflection of the amount of anti-racist work the unions were doing at the time but does point to the overriding managerialism of the development of anti-racism policies.

If there is a general point to be made at this stage, which will be illuminated by several of the Case Studies below, it is that the way the involvement of trade unions in local authority anti-racist policy-making is minimalised can be seen as a further example of the
separation of the economic and the political struggles in British labour history. In this area the battles for equality are more generally seen as the responsibility of the local politicians and not the immediate cause for workers' self-activity. This leads on to the problem faced by even the most left-wing of councillors - that of their dual role as representatives of the working class and at the same time partial management of frequently the largest workforce in the borough.

Whilst the councillor may be an advocate for the working class population of the borough as voters it is very much less likely that a councillor will immediately identify with and develop solidarity with the council worker. This rings most evidently true when a trade union takes action against a policy pursued by a Left Labour Council and the union is then portrayed as the enemy of socialism. More recently the policy of the 'dented shield' has brought even more Labour Councils into conflict with their own trade unionists as they attempt to push through cuts and redundancy measures in the face of Government expenditure limitation and the privatisation of key local authority services. Once again the relative autonomy of the local state is called into question and whether the act of a Labour council cutting services and making workers redundant is some new form of socialist advance or even socialist retreat. One suspects it was not what Marx had in mind. What had to some optimists appeared to be the dawning of a brave new world of local independence and community spirit rapidly became the old world of a local state unable to deliver the promises of the elected politicians because of its total cohesion with the the central state. Relative autonomy, to all intents and purposes, has become an
unrealistic term to use to describe local government, in the hands of any political party.

4.14 Summary

It has been the intention of the above Chapter to consider some of the theoretical and practical difficulties in assuming that the 'local state' can be looked upon as an autonomous or semi-autonomous body in relation to the capitalist state and with regard to anti-racism in particular. The theoretical problems faced by the 'local statist' who hold on to some quasi-Marxist view of society as a whole are those of showing how exactly the local state can be extracted from the morass of capitalist domination of the national state and used as the basis for either socialist or greater democratic advance. Any conceptions of municipal autonomy away from the national state have had to be very qualified by the capacity of the Conservative Governments in the 1980s to ratecap and cut grant support to Labour authorities.

The amount of control which Left Labour councillors have been able to exert has been extremely limited, not simply because the Conservative Government has been particularly hostile to them but also reflect the position of local government within the the state with ties over all areas of service provision as well as expenditure. In the Case Studies considered below, in the areas of housing and education, the implications of national state involvement are clearly shown. There is the issue of the role of the police in monitoring and acting upon instances of racial harassment (Newham Case Study); the government controls on new house building by local authorities and the paucity of
available good quality council housing (Hackney Case Study); the opting-out proposals for schools and the semi-independence of voluntary aided status for religious schools (Brent Case Study 1); and the ability of the Secretary of State for Education to intervene in disputes where there has been a total breakdown between a local education authority and its teachers (Brent Case Study 2).

The rebirth of the concept of municipal socialism in Britain in the late 1970s and early 1980s brought with it the raising of demands for fuller and wider implementation of the provisions of section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976. As with any other local authority policies and initiatives, the 'race relations' policy provision has seen an uneven uptake nationally. For some authorities the processes of implementation have been hampered by the lack of political will from councillors or officers, for others the input of external groups have 'steadied the hand' of wavering councils. This all goes on within the internal policies and structures of the local state, where left councillors can have some effect on discriminatory procedures or practices. When the councils go beyond what is attainable internally it comes up against the problems thrown up by the lack of real power which the councillors have. Even when it is the council's own employment procedures, the wrong appointment can result in a mass boycott of the council's Race Relations Unit (Liverpool Case Study) or when a council appears to be backsliding over its own strong anti-racism code, so much so that the council's own workers took independent action against the racists (Islington Case Study).

In the broadest terms, one has to return to the question of the production and reproduction of the ideology of racism. If racism
was simply a bad idea or group of wrong facts then it could simply be removed by a process of information and education. If, however, it is expressive of a relationship between Labour and Capital, mediated by the class struggle between the two and reproduced through the material experiences of the working class than a local state anti-racism has to be able to produce material change to undermine the basis for racism.

The fiscal crisis of the Left Labour Councils in the 1980s has meant that they were wholly unable to take a proactive role beyond policy and procedural changes and the setting up of a myriad of local 'race relations' committees and units, strengthening the bureaucracy certainly but not necessarily affecting the mass of the population of the boroughs.

The following case studies under each chapter heading, be it employment, education or housing may not at times provide crystal-clear comparisons between local authorities investigated. When they do not, what are provided are reflections of the differing notions of what constitutes anti-racist strategy under municipal socialism. The reader may consider that direct comparisons are at times limited but the opportunity which presenting two case studies under each area of local authority practice provides is for a fuller, more rounded picture than would be given by one case study alone. It also enables wider consideration of problems faced in anti-racist policy-making and implementation adds further weight to the evidence for and against the municipal socialism argument.
CHAPTER 5

Housing Case Studies - Newham and Hackney

5.1 Introduction

The task of summing up the history of public housing provision in Britain, reflecting the importance of housing within the conditions of reproduction of the labour force for capital and then adding the key dimension of the ideology of racism - which finds its own reproduction very clearly in the 'competition' for the limited resource of council housing is quite a task. The introduction to this Chapter can only touch on the first two themes, refer the reader to more erudite and expansive sources and concentrate on the latter question, that of racism and the provision of council housing. The themes developed within that appraisal are ones which will reappear in the two case studies which follow.

The first is that of racial harassment. As will be shown, despite all the existing 'Race Relations' legislation, levels of abuse, assault, threatening behaviour with a racist motive (usually covered by the term 'racial harassment'), have not been lessened. With the preponderance of attacks being directed towards migrants, from the Indian sub-continent from 'Paki-bashing' onwards, the apparent indifference of the police authorities to the seriousness of such attacks and the racism displayed therein has led to the growth of self-defence groups and calls upon all sections of the state, particularly
the police, to take the issue of harassment more seriously. One reflection of this was in the inclusion in the anti-racist policies of some Left Labour Authorities of methods to prevent black council tenants from being racially harassed and by logical extension, to stop other council tenants from committing that harassment. Most commonly this has been done by improving security and monitoring arrangements, initiating consultative procedures on council estates to locate instances and patterns of harassment, the setting up of 'hot-lines' for victims of harassment to contact and involving the police with black groups to impress upon the former the seriousness of the issue.

One further approach, the subject of this case study, is the course of action undertaken by the London Borough of Newham - the first local authority to evict a family from council housing for persistent racial harassment. The case study seeks to show some of the depth and history of racial harassment, the problems with the labelling of 'victims', the success of self-defence groups and police attitudes to them, and the problems faced by Newham Council in obtaining the eviction. In wider terms it is an expression of the success of pressure group influence upon the local authority, with the pressure group still seeking to retain its independence from being swallowed up in the local state structure, by maintaining the primacy of self-activity.

If one area which has received little attention is the incidence of racial harassment, then by comparison instances of racism in the allocation procedure of local authority housing departments have been extensively catalogued. The work of Rex and Moore\(^2\) is still probably the most famous, despite being 21 years old, and has been followed by numerous studies which have shown both incidences of the
influence individual racists can have on the allocations procedure for
council housing and the way various criteria for letting operate a de
facto segregatory and discriminatory policy. This has been a rich mine
for academic investigation and most recently the Commission for Racial
Equality (CRE) has been involved in conducting investigations to assess
levels of discrimination.

One such case was in the London Borough of Hackney, which
constitutes the second case study in this chapter. The CRE began a four
year investigation into Hackney's housing policies in 1978 resulting in
the Race and Council Housing in Hackney: Report of a Formal
Investigation. Following extensive work the CRE concluded that much of
the discrimination must have taken place by the allocating officers and
was not necessarily embedded in the Council's procedures. The Council
co-operated throughout and was issued with a non-discrimination notice
by the CRE in 1983 with the Council making certain policy changes in
the light of the Report. This case study seeks to examine the CRE
investigation and its conclusions, the interplay of what are termed
'individual' and 'institutional' contributions to discrimination and
the immediate aftermath of the production of the report. The nature and
role of the CRE and the actions of councillors and council officers
during and after the investigation are also considered and this is then
placed in the wider context of the general role of the CRE, a quango,
and its influence on the implementation of anti-racist policies within
local authority housing departments. The contrast between these two
case studies is in the source of the racist activity. In Newham it
emanated from outside the local authority and the Council sought to
lessen the effects on its tenants. By contrast, the Hackney case study
is very internalised, focusing upon the minutiae of housing policy within a poor borough which had a large black population seeking council housing that was being actively discriminated against.

What both case studies show is that the ideology of racism is actively reinforced and reproduced through the scarcity of public housing provision and the assumptions of black housing need, although the roots behind the racist ideas and the material needs run much deeper than prejudice or planning. The points of comparison are limited, indeed it is the contrasts between the two which initially stand out. But both point out the effects of external bodies on housing departments and the way in which the councils have responded to and incorporated the demands of the Newham Monitoring Project and the CRE respectively, without necessarily being able to adequately solve their complaints. From the time racialised groups have sought access to housing in Britain up until the present day, the links between racism and housing have not been substantially weakened and the present central state blocks on council house building allied to the high incidence of unemployment offer little hope for radical change.Š

5.2 The provision of Council Housing in Britain

Engels wrote that, 'In reality the bourgeoisie has only one method of settling the housing question after its fashion - that is to say, of settling it in such a way that the solution continually poses the question anew.'Š That appraisal of the class nature of the public provision of housing in capitalist society is a theme which has been followed up by the Urban Sociologists in the 1960s. Marx, who himself
knew more than a little of the urban, stated the principal function to
be borne in mind in relation to public housing is its benefits for
capitalists. In 'Capital', he wrote:

> Every unprejudiced observer se[es] that the greater the
centralisation of the means of production, the greater is
the corresponding concentration of workers within a given
space; and therefore the more quickly capitalist
accumulation takes place, the more miserable the housing
situation of the working class.\textsuperscript{7}

Writers in urban sociology such as Saunders, Castells and Harloe\textsuperscript{8} have,
in their exploration of the urban, noted upon the centrality of the
collective means of consumption for the reproduction of the labour
force and, as an example, the struggles waged over housing.

As Lojkine\textsuperscript{9} has suggested, since the 1860s, class struggle
and the needs of capital has forced the British State into a massive
programme of house building for the working class. The increase in the
supply of labour power in the mid-nineteenth century enabled employers
to keep wages to a minimum whereas urban landlords developed housing of
relatively high quality and density. In Liverpool, in 1869, the Council
was the first to build dwellings for rent but as Balchin shows, it was
not until the end of World War I that council house building really
'took off'.\textsuperscript{10} Taking a fifty year leap he also notes that although
503,000 dwellings were built under the 1923 and 1924 Housing Acts
(under the first Labour Government), it 'was doubtful however whether
the needs of poorest working class families had been met.'\textsuperscript{11}

With the end of World War 2, Aneurin Bevan's Housing Acts of
1946 and 1949 ensured that council house building dominated the period
1945-51. He held the view that council housing should be improved in quality and in house size whilst at the same time being made available not only to workers but to the middle class in each locality. In 1944 Bevan estimated that a minimum of four million new houses were needed just to return to pre-war standards - in the event the post-war Labour Government built only one million. In 1946 Bevan attacked the squatters' movement with mass evictions being carried out. This situation was played out again when in 1988 Left-dominated Hackney Council sent in the Special Patrol Group to remove squatters from previously derelict Council premises.

The period of Conservative Government rule, post-1951, saw the end of a major thrust towards mass local authority council house building. As Balchin sums up, 'Bevan's philosophy of classless and high quality council housing had been reversed within five years...public sector activities diminished as the Conservative Government placed its emphasis on owner occupation.' Throughout the 1950-80s the issue of council housing allocation has been given a whole new tenor with the demands made upon local authorities by black migrants. It is important therefore to follow through the development of the twin themes of racism and housing provision in tandem in the period 1950s to the present day and to explore the way that the contest over a limited resource such as housing has reproduced the ideology of racism. As Miles notes:

In most of the major English conurbations there are areas of declining capitalist production which are also characterised by poor housing conditions... These are also areas...chosen by migrant labourers and their families as areas of residential settlement. The coincidence of their settlement with material decline combined with their demand for access
to resources (especially housing) which are in short supply has, in the context of the racist legacy of colonialism, served as a direct stimulus to the articulation and reproduction of racism within the working class resident in such areas. ¹⁷

5.3 Racism and the allocation of housing in post-war Britain - an overview of the research.

The concentration of black workers in the 1950s and 60s in lodging houses and then slum quality housing was reflected in the style of research undertaken at the time. Ward has suggested that the focus in that period was upon the housing conditions of the migrants and structures of settlement. ¹⁸ Both Foot and Patterson¹⁹ suggest that the lack of direction given by central and local government was reflected in the considerable variation in the help offered to the black migrants both by private and public landlords. At this time, of course, private landlords could legally refuse a property to a prospective tenant on the grounds of skin colour²⁰ and as the bulk of immigrant’s problems fell upon the shoulders of local authorities, problems which were beyond their limited resources, as Foot affirms, ‘the general rule [was] muddle through without fuss and without success’.²¹ Patterson broadened the debate by arguing that the most immediate factor in conditioning migrant-host relationships in the field of housing was the tremendous and long standing housing shortage since World War 2 (pre-empting the comments of Miles above). As Jacobs stresses, in the political sphere the perception became generalised whereby ‘it was the black presence, and not the squalid conditions that they were forced to endure, that was seen as the problem’.²².
As the demands made upon the state by black workers and their families grew for better long-term housing, frequently council housing, so the degree of discrimination in the allocation procedure became more apparent. Writers such as Smith and Whalley dismiss a conspiracy theory as such by local authorities but seek recourse in another problematic concept, that of 'racial disadvantage'. Rex and Moore's *Race Community and Conflict* put the point that for local authorities, in their case Birmingham, 'it is quite possible under the present arrangements to discriminate without a policy of discrimination ever being publicly admitted.' Rex and Moore also espoused the concept of 'housing class' in their study, as an analytical tool which gained some academic currency.

The Race Relations Act of 1968, following the results of the PEPRS survey which established that substantial discrimination was being practised in housing, attempted to redress the problem by enlarging the scope of anti-discrimination in legislation to include housing. It is worth remembering that 1968 was the year of an Immigration Act and Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech. Daniel's *Racial Discrimination in England*, built upon the PEPRS report, concluded:

the main point about local authorities and coloured immigrants' housing...is not any discrimination against individuals that may exist at present, but the fact that the criteria applied in selecting the people who are to be allocated council housing are such that few coloured immigrants have as yet been housed by local authorities.
One concept was the notion of racial disadvantage. Its exponents sought to explain racism in the housing market by reference to rules, 'unrelated to race which affect racial minorities disproportionately ... Disadvantage is seen as something that normally arises from the process of allocation normally adopted by housing departments'.\(^{29}\) This led the argument away from the centrality of the ideology of racism and its affects on the housing situation. Instead it attributed the poor housing of black people to the fact that they were more prevalent in certain housing categories which were historically less favoured by the allocations system (a claim which was to resurface in the Hackney investigation below). In this respect the blame was shifted away from those in housing departments and the state in general. Jacobs, suggests that the:

\[\text{racial disadvantage argument, dealing in symptoms rather than causes, ignores the ideological context in which housing departments function. It provides an ahistorical, classless and hence statically descriptive account, serving to confuse and exonerate rather than expose and condemn.}\]^\(^{30}\)

Van den Berghe has more succinctly called it 'the convenient obfuscation of the source of inequality'.\(^{31}\)

In the 1970s, with stabilisation of black demand for housing, research centred upon residential distribution, often explained through 'choice' and conflict' and the work of local authority housing departments in the field (see Richmond and Smith & Whalley).\(^{32}\) It was in this period that the general shift in housing policy moved from slum clearance and demolition towards urban renewal. Economic crisis and government expenditure cuts reduced the public
housing programme substantially and a path was opened up for black families to obtain housing through the growth of housing co-operatives and housing associations. The inception of the CRE in 1976–7 saw the promotion of a body which could carry out limited investigations of cases of racism and the latter half of the decade saw the growth in the body of literature showing the degree of discrimination in local authority housing departments (e.g. Clark, Power and Flett).

At the same time as academic exploration of the levels of discrimination proliferated, so black people who had found common cause in the 1960s against a racism that denied their basic needs in housing, education etc. moved into open conflict with the state in the 1970s. Sivanandan writes of the time that:

Already, Afro-Caribbean youth were being brutalised by the police and criminalised by the 'Sus' law; now, the Asians were suspected of being illegals and so open to arrest in their workplaces or homes. And on the streets, the sport of Paki-bashing had grown, with police indifference (or connivance), into more generalised and organised racial violence.

The anger of black youth erupted into running battles with the police, the climax being the Notting Hill Carnival of 1976. At the same time the National Front, gaining in strength, became more confident in its attacks on black people, mainly the Asian communities. Asian self-defence groups sprang up and it was the lasting influence of these groups that in the 1980s saw local authorities beginning to take a stand against racial harassment on council estates.

From interpretations of the 1981 Census black families are more likely to live in overcrowded accomodation, are disproportionately
represented amongst the homeless and amongst those experiencing the greatest delays on council waiting lists. At the same time they are victims of harassment and abuse. It is these two themes which are discussed in the case studies below. The Newham Council case shows how activities from pressure groups in the borough forced the Council into taking action against a white family of council house tenants who were found guilty of persistent racial harassment. The other case study explores the CRE investigation of the Housing Department of Hackney Council which declared that the inequality of council housing between black and white council tenants was due primarily not to the policies and practices of the Council but rather to direct racial discrimination.

The comparison of the two case studies is, therefore, of internal and external mechanisms. One is the result of an external local pressure group, the Newham Monitoring Project, bringing instances of racial violence and harassment to the attention of the local authority. The other case study explores the response of a local authority to a national investigative body, the CRE, which sought to assess the reasons for the persistence of racism in the allocation of council housing. One point to be remembered throughout this Chapter is that the centrality of racism in the area of housing should not obscure the fact that discrimination occurs over a small, dilapidated housing stock and that racial violence is set against a general background of unemployment, urban decay and overcrowding. There is no justification for racial harassment and violence but the truth is that many of the harassers live in the same appalling conditions as their victims. As
Miles and Phizacklea note, 'Working class racism is less an aberration than a likely response in the current circumstances.'

THE NEWHAM COUNCIL CASE STUDY

5.4 Housing and Newham's Migrant Communities

Newham is an outer London borough sitting just north of the Thames. It is part of the traditional East End of London which also comprises Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Together these three authorities make up the most extensive area of urban deprivation in the country. Although Newham is officially an Outer London Borough, the 1981 census showed Newham to have the second highest level of urban deprivation (after Hackney) in the country. Unemployment in 1981 was a third higher than the national average. It has been made worse by the closure of the Trebor's sweet factory, the streamlining of the Tate and Lyle plant in Plaistow and a general loss of manufacturing industry. While 8.5% of the borough's households are officially overcrowded, the proportion rises for black immigrant households. Poor housing is one of the most pressing sources of discontent in the borough.

The area's major growth started in the late nineteenth century around the docks and expanding industry. The old County Boroughs of East Ham and West Ham were joined to form Newham in 1965. Most of Newham's private housing was built at the turn of the last century by small builders for private landlords. Much of this was poor quality and has since been demolished by the local authority. A quarter of the homes in the borough were also lost during the heavy bombing of
the East End in the Second World War. House building since then has almost exclusively been undertaken by the Council, but the need to provide a large amount of housing quickly has led to the building of high density, high-rise estates with their attendant pitfalls. The redevelopment of the Docklands area was originally mooted as solving many of the problems of the area. A third of the land in Newham falls within the Docklands area but this redevelopment is largely controlled by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) and the land intended for new housing for rent has mainly been taken for speculative private house building which has done little to relieve housing stress for most existing Newham residents. It was not until 1987 that Newham Council halted its policy of non-cooperation with the LDDC.

The Housing Department manages nearly 33,000 units of accommodation, the majority of the stock consisting of maisonettes and flats, with over 1000 units having been lost due to the evacuation of Ronan Point and another 8 Taylor Woodrow Anglia (system built) Blocks because of their structural insecurity. Newham Council houses 38% of households in the borough and in addition housing associations provide homes for a further 4%. In 1985/6, 303 new homes were completed by the Council but despite this, the already overcrowded and dilapidated stock had been diminished mainly through tenants exercising their 'Right to Buy'. The Council rehouses over 2000 households each year and encourages the maintenance and rehabilitation of the private sector stock through the provision of Housing Renovation Grants.

The ethnic composition of Newham's population was determined by Newham Council in 1984 and was extrapolated from data gleaned from the 1981 Census. Households of Indian Sub-continent origin make up
nearly 15% of Newham’s population and thus form the borough’s largest non-white group. About 9% of Newham’s population are of Afro-Caribbean origin. In 10 years Newham’s NCWP origin population nearly doubled, from 28,330 in 1971 to 55,334 in 1981, an increase of over 27,000. This was the second largest increase in London. The borough’s black population is concentrated in the north around the wards of Upton, Kensington and Monega, over 50% of the people in these wards being of NCWP origin. South of the Barking Rd., Canning Town and Plaistow are seen as 'no-go' areas for black people and Newham Council has been besieged with transfer requests to the area seen as safe for black residents - around High St. North.

Nearly 80% of households originating from the Indian Sub-continent are owner occupiers. Only 1 in 8 find their accommodation in the public rented sector and about 1 in 10 in other rented accommodation. Households whose members originate from the Caribbean are 56% owner occupiers and nearly 40% rent from the local authority. Extrapolating from the figures in Newham, this gives approximate figures of 850 households from the Indian Sub-Continent in Council Housing and 200 from the Caribbean.

5.5 Race Relations policies in Newham Council

In 1978 Newham Council's Policy Committee set up a Race Relations Sub-Committee 'to review and formulate proposals for consideration by Policy Committee in relation to the Council's arrangements -

(i) to avoid racial discrimination within its services;
(ii) to support the improvement of race relations generally. 39

The Policy Committee agreed with the Sub-Committee's proposals that a Race Relations Unit be located within the Chief Executives Office.

Two years later the Council, through its Policy and Resources Committee formed a Community Relations Sub-Committee to review the policies of the Council and to consider arrangements for monitoring policy implementation and promoting good race relations in the borough. In December 1982 the Council along with Newham Council for Racial Equality and the CRE decided to set up the Newham Race Relations Association in order to facilitate the re-emergence of a properly constituted and 'representative' Community Relations Council (CRC). As Ms Vernica Crooks, an officer in the Race Relation Unit noted, 'the CRC was not really established in any sense of the word, it had collapsed through infighting.' 40 With the establishment of this Association, its staff 'relieved the Community Liaison Officer [appointed in 1982 - MC] of some of the "traditional" community relations work' 41 and enabled the Council to press ahead with the formation of the proposed Race Relations Unit.

The moves by the Council were framed within the terms of reference of Section 71 of the 1976 Race Relations Act both to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate unlawful discrimination within the employment and services offered by the local authority. As the Race Relations Sub-Committee noted, 'There was a growing need for a succinct statement of objectives...[which] could act as a yardstick against which progress on implementing the Council's race equality and equal opportunities policies can be measured.' 42 In late 1983, Bhag Jassal came from Walsall Council to take over the position of Principal Race
Relations Officer (PRRO). It was not until February 1985 that the Policy and Resources Committee finally agreed to the establishment of the Race Relations Unit headed by the PRRO and with four other posts created within the unit.

5.6 Newham Council and Racial Harassment

A report to the Policy and Resources Committee of the Council in January 1982 investigated the incidence of racial harassment in Newham, where the bulk of available council housing is in the South of the Borough, in Silvertown and Canning Town. The report noted:

The reputation of areas such as Canning Town, Customs House and to a certain extent Stratford for racial intimidation leads families to opt for overcrowding in private properties with poor amenities in Upton Park and East Ham rather than to accept a much needed council flat in these areas.  

As a result of this, in June 1982, Newham's Housing Committee agreed a policy to deal with incidents of racial harassment on and around Council housing estates. The Director of Housing made a statement, in June 1983, on the ten point Departmental Race Relations Strategy. Point (x) of which noted:

That an effective policy and a set of procedures and practices will be developed and implemented to tackle racial harassment in Council housing estates in the Borough and that racist graffiti will be removed from Council property as a matter of priority.
In spite of these declared policy aims, the GLC (1984) report Racial Harassment in London noted that Asian families were still being moved into Canning Town, an area notorious for racial attacks and National Front activity and that Lettings Officers for the area, E16, claimed that there were no recorded incidents of racial harassment in Canning Town. In September 1984 the Housing Committee endorsed the ten point strategy to eliminate racial discrimination and disadvantage from its Housing Services. One of the major influences upon Newham Council was the uptake by the Council of the recommendations of the Joint Government/Local Authority Association Working Group report Local Authorities and Racial Disadvantage. In this report, it was noted that 'it is also difficult to obtain evictions of those guilty when it is considered an appropriate solution' but recommends that 'Positive action by a local authority in co-ordinating the response of other public agencies to this problem, together with a clear statement of opposition to racial harassment and encouragement for other organisations to take a similar stand, would be seen as providing real support in a practical way.' One of the, if not the, major organisation(s) in the Borough fighting racial harassment and violence is the Newham Monitoring Project which comes from the larger tradition of black self-defence in the Borough.

5.7 Racist attacks and black self-defence in Newham

Newham has both a large black population and a history of racist attacks and fascist activity. The first recorded victims of racial attack in Newham in recent times are said to be two Bengali
workers stabbed to death in 1965.\(^7\) The first incident to claim
national attention was the case of the four Indian Virk brothers in
April 1977, who defended themselves from an attack outside their house
but found they, not their attackers, were tried and convicted of
grievous bodily harm. The campaign around their case threw up the
Newham Defence Committee, which went on to monitor and publicise racial
attacks and police responses, as a forerunner of the Newham Monitoring
Project. The incidence of attacks in Newham increased in the late
1970s, when Newham Housing Department carried out a policy of dispersal
of black families onto white housing estates in the South of the
Borough. As has been shown in Chapter 3 above, this period was one of
both numerical growth and street activity for the parties of the far-
right with little apparent police interest and no police policy. West
Ham's football ground, Upton Park, in the centre of the borough became
a focus of activity for both the National Front and British Movement.\(^8\)

In 1980, Akhtar Ali Baig, an accountant, was stabbed to
death in a busy shopping street in broad daylight. Two marches were
held in the area, each over 3000 strong, to protest against what were
seen as the twin evils - the level of racial attacks and the degree of
state indifference. As the Newham Monitoring Project noted, the case
was exceptional in the Borough in that the assailants were brought to
court.\(^9\) Since the mid-1970s, Asian Youth Movements have been formed in
response to the need to defend communities against racist attacks. In
Southall, after the murder of Gurdip Singh Chagger in 1976, the
Southall Youth Movement came into being;\(^50\) in Bradford, when the NF
tried to march through the Manningham area of the city, the Bradford
Asian Youth Movement coalesced to oppose it; in East London, the
murders of Altab Ali\textsuperscript{57}, Ishaque Ali and Michael Ferreira brought about the formation of various local black movements concentrating on the issue of self-defence. In what was possibly the most important black political trial of 1983, a case known as the 'Newham 8' showed the way independent community organisations were acting outside the auspices of the local authority.

5.8 The Newham 8 Campaign

In September 1981, there were a string of racist attacks by gangs of white youths on Asian children at the Little Ilford School in Newham. There had also been considerable organised racist activity in the area and on Friday September 24th, on learning, they claim, of yet another planned attack on the school, a group of Asian youths waited outside the school gates. No white gangs appeared and the youths claim they were checking the surrounding area when a car drew up containing several white men (who were, in fact, plain clothes policeman). A fight ensued in which one boy was hospitalised and another lost his front teeth.\textsuperscript{52} A police van arrived and the Asians were arrested and taken to Forest Gate Police Station. The youths were charged with offences ranging from threatening behaviour and affray to conspiracy to cause injury to persons unknown\textsuperscript{59} and became known as the Newham 8.

Immediately a major campaign was initiated for the charges to be dropped and to build support for the Newham 8. As Wilson notes, it:

was the decision of the Newham police to charge the eight youths with 'conspiracy to assault persons unknown' that did
most to increase fear and anger in the East End Asian Community; if they tried to defend themselves that same police force would bring serious criminal charges against them.\textsuperscript{54}

On November 5th, when the youths appeared at Newham magistrates court, a boycott of schools was supported by 80% of Asian children in the area. The trial ended in late December 1983 with four of the eight defendants found guilty of affray and one of a minor assault. The case was summed up by the anti-fascist magazine \textit{Searchlight} which concluded that:

\begin{quote}
the prosecution's decision not to proceed with the conspiracy charges, and their failure to secure a single conviction on the charges of possession of offensive weapons and assaults occasioning actual bodily harm, vindicate the defendants' assertion that their right to go on to the streets, armed if necessary, in defence of their community, and their right to defend themselves if attacked.\textsuperscript{55}
\end{quote}

As with prior case of the Bradford 12,\textsuperscript{56} the right to self-defence was established. The perception of the necessity for black self-help against racial harassment prompted the formation of the Newham Monitoring Project, which has sought to monitor the levels of racist activity, the response of the police and Newham Council and to help and advise the victims of racist attacks.

\section*{5.9 The Newham Monitoring Project}

The Newham Monitoring Project was formed in 1980 after the murder of Akhtar Ali Baig and an increasing number of attacks on black
people and their property in the area. As Unmesh Desai, a full-time worker with the Project described: 'Some people from the law centre, Newham Rights, some black groups and other community workers went to the local MP to inform him of the situation, and he said he wanted hard evidence. In less than three months they had documented 80 cases of racial assault. The Newham Monitoring Project was set up. It has always managed to attract wide support especially from the Asian community.'

A regular bulletin, the Newham Monitor, was launched and financed by the Labour Party, local churches and trade unions. On the involvement of the latter, Unmesh Desai claimed, in 1982, 'we have only had token commitment from the unions so far ... We would like to see anti-racist work within the unions, especially in the NUT and the social services unions, such as Nalgo'.

The problem facing the group, but which at the same time gives it a certain autonomy to act, is its degree of separation from the local authority. With no statutory powers to act when asked to rehouse people, the Project can only put pressure on individual councillors and make representations to officers. Unmesh Desai summed up the role of the Project as:

a core of people who meet regularly and give practical guidance and help to self-defence groups. The whole purpose of monitoring racial harassment is not just to provide statistical documentation, but to use this towards the organisation of community groups and towards responding to this threat. It is also vital to assess the response of the police and the local authority.

Elton Lewis works as an outreach worker for the Project and it is his job to go into the community, liaise with various
organisations and individuals and take on case work with those facing violence and harassment. He puts the cause of racial harassment down 'very much to a white ethnocentric type view that anybody from outside the East End, be they black or white, shouldn't be allowed, and it comes to a head when you have black people moving into the area'. So it is here that the Project seeks a dialogue with the Council as Elton Lewis explained,

This is where we work with the Housing Office to try and prevent this type of situation developing and hardening. So we have a system, or the Housing Office has a system, whereby they do what they call targetting which is moving in groups of black people to live in that area. Quite often though, this doesn't work because people are not there for many months before they are forced to leave because harassment is happening to them on a daily basis. 

The project has 110 individuals and 40 organisations affiliated. It runs a 24-hour 'Hotline' for victims of attack to call for assistance and immediate protection. In 1987 the project received a grant, in line with the Council's responsibilities following the disbanding of the GLC, of £81,000. Although Newham Council has brought in some procedures to prevent and be responsive to incidents of racial harassment, the Newham Monitoring Project feels the Council is still bureaucratically inflexible in terms of rapid response to attacks. As Elton Lewis argued,:

people put up with a lot of harassment... when they come forward [to the Council - MC], they expect not only to be supported, but if they want to be, to be moved. This is when they find that it's very difficult because there's a lot of people that need to be housed in an area like Newham and people, even when they claim of racial harassment, are allocated points on a unified points scheme. The result is
that people who aren't being racially harassed but have easily more than the points allocation, whose life and limb aren't in danger have more of a right than these victims.\textsuperscript{62}

Whilst working with and funded by Newham Council, the Monitoring Project critical of what it sees as a lack of political will on behalf of the Council. In calling for more serious treatment by the police force of racial attacks the Project believes that without the local state taking a more interventionist position, community self-defence is of paramount importance. Elton Lewis suggests:

the best thing that could happen is if the local authority, the Housing Department, started to put some money where its mouth is and started to prosecute more people who perpetrated attacks on black people. It's no good asking us to have faith in their policies and rules if they don't take people into court and prosecute them successfully because quite often this hasn't happened properly.\textsuperscript{63}

Unmesh Desai made a more graphic comment to the Guardian of July 11 1985 in which he simply noted, 'Anyone who talks about 20 years of racial harmony in Newham is talking bullshit'.

5.10 Policing and racial harassment

Much has been written about the lacklustre responses of the police to racial harassment and the problems of standard police practices in dealing with racial attacks. Paul Gordon\textsuperscript{64} cites five problems faced by black people in the reporting of racial violence to the police:

(1) Delays in response:
(ii) Denial of racial motive;
(iii) Unwillingness to prosecute attackers;
(iv) Mistreatment of victims;
(v) Marginalisation of 'special measures' to combat racial violence.

Both the present Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Peter Imbert, and his predecessor Kenneth Newman expressed concern about the levels of racial attacks and sought to prioritise them as an issue (given the Met's perception of the problem) but there is little evidence that this has filtered down to beat officers. Unmesh Desai of the Newham Monitoring Project suggests that, 'rank and file police thinking is different from the highly educated, highly articulate and increasingly media conscious flannel of senior officers...policing in terms of racist attacks has not improved one bit where it counts, out on the streets'.

In broader terms, local authority and community group influences on the police are still minimal despite the much vaunted police committees of some of the Left Labour local authorities. In 'K' Division in Newham, the police write out racial incidents on separate forms and notes attached to the form instruct officers 'to make special efforts to adopt a sympathetic and understanding approach to victims'. Despite these policies and apart from the statistical problem of the collation of racial harassment statistics being up to individual police officers, the Newham Monitoring Project argues that the whole structure of reporting racial incidents separately tends to marginalise the crimes. As Unmesh Desai notes, 'what we say is that if racial harassment is to be counted just like any other crime then its got to
be part and parcel of everyday policing'.

In 1985 moves were afoot to put a Racial Harassment Bill through Parliament which would identify the crimes involved and would define it as a greater issue for active police attention. The Bill failed and in one respect, those who argued against its necessity were correct - there is no need for new legislation for dealing with the criminal actions which make the totality of racial harassment. Breaking a window is 'criminal damage' and spitting against somebody is 'threatening behaviour'. As Vernica Crooks of Newham Race Relations Unit argued, 'with the police it's a question of political will. A more serious attitude in individual officers would make the job of the Council that much more easy. The reticence of victims to go to the police because of their past record makes everything a self-fulfilling prophecy'. And as Gordon concludes:

The policing of racial violence and harassment does not require any special policing qualities as demands for special measures imply. They only require the diligent application of standard police techniques and, above all, an understanding of the phenomenon of racism which underlies such attacks. It is precisely these which have been lacking.

5.11 The eviction of the McDonnell family
Pages removed due to Confidentiality reasons
CRE, on the housing policy of Hackney Council provides a notable case for comparison.

THE HACKNEY CASE STUDY

5.17 Introduction

The inner London Borough of Hackney is situated at the north-east centre of the city and was formed through the amalgamation of the three Metropolitan Boroughs of Hackney, Shoreditch and Stoke Newington. It is one of the poorest and most economically deprived areas in the whole of the United Kingdom. Hackney has one of the highest unemployment rates in London (consistently between 15 and 20% in the 1980s) and its working population, on average, earn the lowest wages in London. The Borough's housing statistics accurately reflect the degree of deprivation and decline in the borough, especially in the Council's housing estates, the quality of which determine the physical character of some 60% of Hackney. Figures available from 1986\textsuperscript{11} put the number of people on the Council waiting list at 15,580, with the Council managing 45,730 dwellings out of a total of 76,800 dwellings in the borough. The number of homeless in Hackney has risen by 219% from 728 in the five year period 1980/81 to 1985/86.

The 1981 Census assessed that nearly 10% of the Hackney's population live in overcrowded accommodation; that 11.9% of its households lacked the exclusive use of a bath and an inside toilet; and that the borough contained proportionally the largest number of single-parent families in the country (10.5%). The GLC was responsible for the
running of 40% of the public housing stock in the borough, Hackney Council administering the rest, until 1981, when the GLC's policy of handing over housing to the relevant boroughs was followed through, thereby putting a large amount of poor quality housing, some of the worst in the borough, in the lap of Hackney Council. At the beginning of the 1980s, 80% of the Council's housing stock was flats - 1,000 of which (pre-war type) needed renovation or demolition, a further 9,000 requiring comprehensive repairs or improvements.

For the sake of this case study, the important fact is the large amount of poor quality, run-down housing which the Council has to house people in. Any degree of racial discrimination in council housing allocation in the borough will, therefore, put many black families in living conditions of advanced urban decay. They will not be alone, for good quality desirable council housing is at a premium in Hackney, but the fears expressed by the CRE, in investigating the allocations procedure in Hackney Council, were that black people had little or no chance of obtaining that rarity because of racism operating within the Housing Directorate.

5.18 Housing and Hackney's Migrant Population

Over many years, migrant workers have settled in working class areas such as Hackney - Huegenot weavers in Shoreditch, Irish labourers for the docks and Jewish refugees from the pogroms in the late 19th century. The foreign-born population of Hackney in 1951 was overwhelmingly European and was estimated at 6.5% of the total population. Certain demographic factors made Hackney a pole of
attraction for migrant black workers in the 1950s - available work, a
surfeit of accommodation at low rents and one further reason, offered by
Harrison, in his study of the area,¹⁷² that 'Hackney was one of the few
places where discrimination against black tenants was less pronounced.
The mainly Jewish landlords were not concerned about the colour of
their tenants.'¹²³ The 1971 Census estimated the black population of
the London Borough of Hackney as being 11.5%.

The central factor affecting the percentage of the
population of Hackney was the exodus of the white population during the
1970s which accounted for the drop in total population in the Borough
of 40,000. As Harrison comments 'the inner city was becoming a racial
semi-ghetto as well as a social ghetto.'¹²⁴ Black and other ethnic
minority groups in Hackney now form over 25% of the borough's
population with West Indians, Africans and Asians constituting 19%. The
largest single non-white group within the borough is of West Indian
origin, indeed Hackney has the largest number of people of West Indian
origin for any London Borough.

Hackney's black population does not live uniformly in all
parts of the Borough. The greatest concentration of black residents
live in the centre of Hackney in an area consisting of poor quality and
decaying Victorian housing and the worst of the council housing
estates. As ever, the quality of housing available to anybody is to a
greater extent related to their ability to pay. The result of racism in
the labour market in the 1960s was the concentration of black workers
in the quality of housing which they could afford, mainly the rented
sector in the inner city. This was precisely the case in Hackney. As
the black migrants to Hackney became more settled and thus fitted the
criteria of the Housing Department for council housing, so a fresh set of circumstances were there for discrimination to occur.

There are now similar proportions of West Indians and whites in council housing, about 60% of each group. The 1977 National Housing and Dwelling Survey, which at the time of the CRE investigation was practically the sole source of data on the housing conditions of ethnic minorities in Hackney, found that black tenants lived in older properties, in more crowded conditions and on higher levels than their white counterparts. It is fair, however, to draw the general conclusion that at the time of the NHDS survey, West Indian tenants were living in poorer conditions in the public sector in Hackney than white tenants. The GLC allocation survey 'Colour and the Allocation of GLC Housing' found that whites were three times more likely to be allocated a house, as opposed to a flat, than black people and that blacks were more than twice as likely than whites to be living on the eleventh floor and above. Four times as many whites than blacks were in the best quality housing (on an index measuring the age, type and floor space of the property) and three times as many blacks as whites were in the worst quality of housing.

Although some of the conclusions of the NHDS and GLC surveys have to be treated with some caution, because of the small sample size used, the results do at least highlight trends in housing in Hackney which were used as evidence of the necessity for the CRE investigation of the council housing allocation procedure in the borough. The poor conditions of housing, into which black people were being positioned in such a way as to keep them in the worst sectors were under the nominal local control of the local Labour Council
and it was only with greater black influence in local politics that issues such as racism in housing allocation were aired.

5.19 The political make-up of the borough

Continually dominated by a ruling Labour Group, Hackney Council underwent a political shift to the Left in the local elections of 1982. Prior to that the Labour Group was predominantly working class and in common with many other local authorities, a degree of colour-blindness operated within the Council's political leadership. The Labour leader John Kotz and his predecessor Martin Ottalangui had both held positions in the housing department of Newham Council. Both tended to be representative of the 'old guard' Labour of the 1970s which was rapidly being replaced by the New Left in the early 1980s.

After the 1982 election, at the first meeting of the new Labour Group John Kotz was deposed and Tony Kendall, a polytechnic teacher, assumed the leadership. The Hackney Gazette of 6 June 1982 noted that the 'Hackney old guard of Labour right-wingers has been completely humiliated in the Council's Committee elections. The anticipated power struggle became a battle between the so-called soft left and the more radical hard-left'. During the ratecapping crisis of April 1984 the hard left of the Council took over with Hilda Kean becoming Labour leader. The results of the surcharging of several councillors over the ratecapping campaign led to the election of Tony Millward who was more prepared to co-operate with the spending limits set by the government. Following the next local elections, Millward was replaced by Andrew Puddephatt - deputy to Hilda Kean in 1984.
The development of race relations policies in the borough has run along parallel lines with the political tenor of the Labour leadership of the Council. The influence of the New Left Councillors' is reflected in the changes made from 1978 when, until the appointment of Alan McFarlane as Senior Housing Adviser (Race Relations), there were no black people at senior officer level in the Council and no officers at policy making level taking responsibility for 'race relations', to the present position of there being over 60 officers attached to the Race Relations Unit alone. As McFarlane remembers of those early days, 'In a place with a 40% non-white population, to have one non-white person at a policy level is outrageous, but it shows how bad things were that it wasn't thought of as outrageous...It meant that at every meeting you went to, you would be the only person who might even be thought to have the view of one-third of the population'.

The nature of the development of race relations strategies in Hackney from 1978 onwards, is tied in with both the ongoing CRE investigation and with the Council's own investigation into the running of Hackney Council for Racial Equality (HCRE) so it is appropriate before discussing the CRE study to first examine the web of relationships between councillors, council officers and HCRE in the borough, some of which were to become acrimonious during the Council investigation of HCRE.

5.20 Hackney Council and the development of 'Race Relations' policy

As long ago as 1965, the year of the first Race Relations Act, Hackney Council set up the Hackney Liaison Council to work with
black migrants to Britain. In 1967, in common with other similar bodies in London and elsewhere, it took the name Hackney Community Relations Council later becoming Hackney Council for Racial Equality (HCRE). In the early years, the Council continued to have a major involvement in the running of HCRE and has continued to fund various posts linked with the promotion of good 'race relations' gradually expanding to the position whereby the Council continues to fund the major part of HCRE's activities by meeting the cost of many of its posts and the cost of accommodation.

In the mid-1970s, Hackney was attracting the attention of external bodies concerned with 'race relations' nationally and the Chair of the Community Relations Commission (CRC), Mark Bonham-Carter, requested a meeting with Hackney Council to discuss the quality of accommodation being allocated to black people in the borough. The stimulus to this request had originated in a Runnymede Trust Report (based on the 1971 Census statistics) which showed that Hackney had the greatest number of families of New Commonwealth origin in older properties than any other London borough. Officers of the Council met Bonham-Carter in January 1976 at which point the CRC suggested that research should be undertaken into the whole housing experience of black people in Hackney - this request being withdrawn when it became clear that the Chair of the Race Relations Board (RRB) would be seeking a full investigation of the Council under Section 17 of the Race Relations Act (1968).

The RRB made an approach in May 1976 to Hackney Council and the Council Leader met officials of the RRB on 29 July 1976 at which time it was made clear to the RRB that the Council would not allow the
Board to inspect tenants' files (because of the Council's confidentiality rules). The Council also contended that a survey of the ethnic origin of council tenants in Hackney would not be 'appropriate' at that time. Any intention of either body to initiate investigations was temporarily forestalled by their merging (under the terms of the 1976 Race Relations Act) into the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The formal investigation into Hackney Council was finally announced by the CRE in May 1978 following local speculation.

Martin Ottolengui, Council Leader, welcomed the study, noting the assertion made by the CRE that the Hackney investigation was not so much of Hackney but rather of a local authority housing department, and claimed that 'we have absolutely nothing to hide.'

This was refuted at the Day Conference organised to discuss the CRE report (on 11 Feb 1984) when it was pointed out that the Council, both elected members and employees, had strongly denied the existence of racial discrimination in Hackney's housing allocations. Furthermore, as a report of the conference noted, 'they objected to any investigation, and argued that such an enquiry would be a slur of the Council's good name. Indeed, it was reported that the then Leadership of the Council at one point wanted to go to the Courts to prevent the investigation'.

Patrick Kodikara, of HCRC, also applauded the CRE's investigation, seeing it as long overdue. Hackney United Tenants Association accused the Council of using slum estates as dumping grounds for black people. A leaflet issued by the Association claimed that 'Black families tend to be in low paid jobs and councils keep them in slum flats so that they can screw the maximum rent on their 'good' estates from those who can afford full rent.'
In what may be considered a shrewd policy move, Hackney Council established in 1978 a Housing and Race Relations Monitoring Unit. It was staffed by two officers, the Senior Officer being Alan McFarlane, whose major responsibility it was to 'monitor and review continuously all policies and programmes of the housing service ... in order to ensure that no racial discrimination occurs and that equality of opportunity and good race relations are promoted.' In 1981 the Officer Review Team, looking into the workings of HCRE noted that 'this Unit (is)...an excellent example of a Unit working exclusively on race relations issues'. Whilst keeping up on developments in the field of ethnic monitoring and surveying the progress of other housing authority directorates, the Unit was unable to circumvent the Council's lack of appropriate monitoring machinery.

The Unit worked to build up policies from a low base in the Housing Directorate in Hackney and concentrated on other issues in housing such as racial harassment and the need to make housing services information available in all languages spoken by the residents of the borough. The two specialist race relations officers, appointed as a consequence of the CRE's decision to undertake the investigation, did little work in the area of allocations in the five years after their appointment (although reports had been submitted to the Housing Services Committee on the establishment of a monitoring system in June 1981).

The Race Relations Sub-Committee was set up by the Council in 1982. It is a Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee and is chaired by the Council Leader. Its terms of reference included the usual duties to stimulate policies and programmes in the context of
Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 and included a particular reference to 'consider and advise the council on the implications of new legislation, Government reports, papers issued by the Commission for Racial Equality and other material coming before the authority insofar as they affect race relations.' There are four co-opted members on the Race Relations Sub-Committee; two nominated by the HCRE and two by Hackney Ethnic Minority Association (HEMA).

In October 1980, Hackney Council was considering increasing its funding to HCRE and because of criticisms which had been voiced about the running and political direction of HCRE decided to undertake a detailed review of its activities. The review amounted to only a rap on the knuckles for HCRE and served as a way of exploring Hackney's own Race Relations policies and recommendations were made by the Panel to both set up a Race Relations Sub-Committee to promote policy development in Hackney and to set up a Race Relations Unit within the Council. The Race Relations Unit came into being in 1983 with the appointment of Dan Thea from Lambeth as Principal Race Relations Adviser leadership with the implanting of Race Relations Advisers in each Directorate as there had been in Housing since 1978. The Unit now has a staff of over 60, including officers following Thea from Lambeth.

Hackney Council had thus, during the period in which it was being investigated by the CRE, itself investigated HCRE, and had proposed the setting up of the Race Relations Unit and the Race Relations Sub-Committee. In some respects these developments mirrored the work being undertaken by many of the Left-Labour Authorities, with the added dimension of the Council being the focus of attention of an external body. The degree of involvement of the Councillors in the
actual investigation itself was minimal and indeed officers tended to work through informal meetings and responses to the requests of the investigators. Following publication of the report, Race and Housing in Hackney: Report of a formal investigation in January 1984, both the Council and the CRE sought to make capital out of it - the CRE for the prestige attached to the Report and for the controversy it stirred up throughout local authorities and Hackney Council for the chance to show its commitment to tackling racism head on in one of its own Directorates.

5.21. The CRE investigation

The CRE was formed in 1976 out of a synthesis of the Race Relations Board and the Community Relations Commission and decided at an early stage that, because of the wide discrimination occurring against black people in all sectors of the housing market, it would initiate a comprehensive investigation of the causes of racial discrimination in the provision of public housing in one particular area. Hackney, an inner London borough which has a large black population, was considered to be a suitable subject, especially, as has been mentioned above, both parents of the CRE had attempted to probe the housing system in Hackney for possible racial discrimination.

The CRE contacted the Council and in the general process of discussions with Councillors and officers, an alternative internal investigation was suggested by the Council allied to the setting up of a monitoring unit within the Council to work co-operatively with the CRE (rather than Hackney Housing Department being made the subject of a
formal investigation). The CRE welcomed the willingness of the Council to look into its allocations policies but argued that the investigation should proceed not only because of the thoroughness and clarity an external organisation could apply to the study but also because of the importance of the case in the formulation of race relations policy in local authority housing departments up and down the country. The CRE Report noted that it was:

our view that if we found unlawful discrimination, the results of this type of exhaustive study of one borough's housing allocations could subsequently be used as a basis for persuading other local authority housing departments throughout the country to develop their own effective equal opportunity programme.\textsuperscript{124}

The national dimension and the reaction of other local authorities to the applicability of the Hackney Case will be returned to in the general conclusions below.

The CRE embarked on its formal investigation of the allocation of council housing in the London Borough of Hackney in May 1978. The two key investigators were Mary Hunt (later to advise London Regional Transport) and Colin Hann who took control of the investigation at the half-way stage and sat in on Council committees after the presentation of the report. The terms of reference, drawn up under Section 49(3) of the Race Relations Act (1976) were as follows:

To inquire into the allocation, disposal and management of local authority housing accommodation and the provision of housing services and facilities by the London Borough of Hackney by themselves, their servants or agents to the residents of the Borough with particular reference:
(a) to the elimination of unlawful discrimination within the meaning of the Race Relations Act 1976;
(b) to the promotion of opportunity between persons of different racial groups within the meaning of the said Act; and
(c) to the arrangements made by the Borough pursuant to the duty imposed by Section 71 of the said Act.125

The investigation was primarily concerned with three areas of study. Firstly, in the period 1978/9 the allocation procedures - via the waiting list, homeless, decant (rehousing because a property is being modernised, improved or demolished) and transfer cases - were reviewed to assess the impact of such procedures on black applicants and tenants. Secondly, the CRE focused upon two particular housing estates in the borough which had both a large black population and poor-quality housing stock in an attempt to locate causal factors in specific instances. Thirdly, the role of the GLC (which has diminished since 1983) in rehousing a sample of homeless cases from Hackney over the same period. In total, the CRE was investigating the impact of racial discrimination on seven distinct housing populations. The results are laid out in these categories below.

A key issue in the investigation was the degree to which council officers could, in the everyday course of their work, ascertain the ethnic origin of the persons involved, particularly if they had not met the person or talked to them on the telephone. This was in part fuelled by the argument which the CRE had come up against before, that discrimination could not occur in a particular council's housing department because there was no way in which the officers responsible could know the ethnic origin of the applicants/tenants. This was the main area of contention when the results were published, for the effects were catalogued adequately but the next step, the attribution
of causality, was more problematic and inferential. As will be seen below, the lack of other explanations were held by the CRE to point to individual discrimination as a major problem in allocation policy.

5.22 Results of the investigation

The CRE investigation looked at a sample of 1,292 Hackney Council tenants and the main channels of access into council housing over a two year period. The Commission also focused on two run-down estates, the Holly St. Estate and the Stonebridge Estate, to determine how disproportionately large numbers of black and other ethnic minority families had come to be given accommodation on them. The picture was to a degree clouded by the the effect of the GLC in rehousing Hackney's homeless cases over the two-year period in question. The Report itself carries all the relevant statistical information and within the confines of this case study, although some of the data is used, the figures are taken as read within the likely statistical variations accepted by the producers of the Report. It is the political and strategic implications of the study rather than the total accuracy of its figures which are under consideration.

Housing Applications

White applicants were found to have received better quality properties compared with black applicants. They were more likely to be offered houses, as opposed to flats; more likely to receive new properties, whereas black people tended to be allocated to a particular
group of inter-war properties that had been modernised to a relatively low standard. White homeless applicants were more likely to be offered houses as opposed to flats and when offered flats were more likely than black applicants to be offered premises below the fifth floor. White tenants received better quality accommodation in that they were more likely to receive new property than black tenants. In relation to flats nearly half of white tenants were allocated new property but only 4% of black tenants in similar situations. This was the only area where no significant difference was found between white and black cases and the quality of property allocated in transfers.

The Stonebridge and Holly Street estates and the role of the GLC

In Stonebridge a picture emerged of a relatively large numbers of white residents leaving the borough to be replaced by a disproportionately large amount of black residents. A high proportion of those white tenants allocated to the estate were those defined by Hackney Council as being 'poor' tenants (because of prior evictions or arrears) whereas there was no such pattern in black applicants allocated housing on what was generally held to be a very poor quality estate. The CRE decided that ethnic origin was a causal factor in the allocation of black tenants to the estate. The increase in the proportion of black tenants in Holly Street occurred in the period 1977-80 and black tenants were over-represented in this period to what again was held to be an undesirable estate. As the CRE could find no factors in the types of families given housing in that estate, it was again contended that ethnic factors were at play in the allocation of
black families there.

Nominations to the GLC were included in the study because a relatively large proportion of Hackney's homeless cases had been rehomed through this channel. Ethnic minorities were found to have been allocated in much larger proportions by the GLC to pre-war properties than white homeless cases. As Hackney had taken over GLC housing in the Borough in 1980 the CRE saw fit to include allocations to these properties in the general conclusions.

5.23 Conclusions of the investigation

There was some concern shown over the length of time taking to produce the report and indeed as Alan McFarlane remembers, 'Everyone had forgotten about the investigation's existence. No-one was interested, neither members nor officers, except that these people would turn up occasionally and ask for a few files. It should have been an intensive one year investigation but there were ages when we saw and heard nothing.' When after three years and the Senior Housing Adviser (Race Relations) had not received any results from the CRE he drafted a letter for Charles Clarke, the Housing Chair, to send to his personal friend Sir David Lane to find out what was happening. Lane replied promptly but there were no actual figures or conclusions provided until Peter Newsam took over at the CRE and a further letter to him brought forth the provisional conclusions of the CRE investigators.

It was in November 1982 that the CRE reached a provisional conclusion that between June 1977 and December 1981, Hackney Council
had unlawfully discriminated against various persons of West Indian, African or Asian Origin (black people) who were rehoused from the Council's waiting list, rehoused as homeless cases, or rehoused as a result of being decanted from their existing accommodation. The Commissioners noted that in over 60% of cases, the investigators were able to correctly ascertain the ethnic origin of housing applicants purely from the information available on the Housing Directorate's files - thereby allowing for individual acts of discrimination. It is noteworthy that the CRE'S findings were based upon their inability to find any other salient factors to explain the unequal distribution of black people in poor quality accommodation - there were no actual acts or instances of racism which were pointed out, rather that the procedural machinery and discretionary role of officers allowed the possibility for racism to percolate the system.

Peter Newsam finally replied on 17 December 1982 with a letter suggesting some provisional findings of the investigation. Whilst claiming that there was evidence of racial discrimination in the Housing Directorate which contravened the 1976 Race Relations Act, Newsam did offer the proviso that any conclusions were by no means of importance only to Hackney. He wrote:

The Commission did not start this investigation because they believed that Hackney was unique. On the contrary, in the light of all the research which has been conducted, whose findings have since been verified, they were convinced discrimination in Hackney is widespread. They chose Hackney because they wanted to find out in detail what was happening in one particular housing authority and then use this to illustrate, and thereafter remedy, what is happening elsewhere. Procedural machinery and discretionary role of officers allowed the possibility for racism to percolate the system.127
On the night that the Newsam letter was received, the Chair of the Housing Services Committee, Charles Clarke, (now an advisor to Neil Kinnock) stated to the Council that the Housing Directorate accepted the criticisms made by the CRE and went on to praise the work of the CRE claiming that:

it is setting out on a determined course to establish the secure legal basis which is necessary to fight the racial discrimination that exists in institutions throughout Britain...I believe that the Council should accept the report fully, should implement its recommendations and should continue to support to the fullest extent the efforts of the CRE. 129

The report of the provisional findings of the CRE team was passed on to the Director of Housing Tony Shoultis who noted to the Housing Services Committee on 5 January 1983 that 'the accuracy of the results of the study are hardly in doubt and the findings can hardly be questioned'. 129 This was in marked contrast to the assumptions made by Councillors at the inception of the investigation some four years earlier. It was also decided that four of the recommendations made in the provisional findings of the CRE be followed up immediately —

(i) that ethnic monitoring of new allocations be initiated;
(ii) that a review of lettings procedures be undertaken;
(iii) that training of officers be undertaken to make them aware of the possible ways that discrimination may take place and the importance of working to ensure that it does not and that Alan McFarlane should be appointed as a Senior Officer to oversee these policy changes and additions.
A non-discrimination notice was issued by the CRE to Hackney Council by the CRE on 9 May 1983, the notice becoming final on 20 June 1983. Non-discrimination notices were first introduced by the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and were a somewhat novel conception, in that they permitted a body other than a local authority or government department in practice to establish, by merely issuing and serving such a notice, that a breach of that Act had taken place. The Race Relations Act (1976) Section 58 (2) allowed the CRE to issue a non-discrimination notice only when a formal investigation had taken place. Had the Council failed to comply with the non-discrimination notice, the CRE would have been able to apply to the Courts for an order to enforce compliance. Failure by the Council to do that could lead either to a fine or an injunction restraining the Council from so operating. (For the non-discrimination notice in full see Appendix 4)

5.24 The response of the Council following the publication of the full report (in January 1984)

The One-Day Conference

One of the first things the Council did following publication of the full report of the CRE investigation was to hold a day conference at Hackney Town Hall on 11 Feb 1984 to inform Hackney people of the Council's response to the report and to consult them as to the way forward. In the end the conference provided a number of groups with an opportunity to criticise the conduct of Hackney Council. Questions were raised as to whether the CRE had been given full access
or whether certain documents had been removed first. The general answer
given was that only confidential documents were removed and that these
had had no bearing on the conclusions. Again and again speakers
returned to the fact that the Council did nothing to amend allocations
procedures between the announcement of the investigation in 1978 and
the publishing of the report in January 1984. The CRE itself was
severely criticised for taking more than five years to report. The
CRE's representative Colin Henn did not speak, but it was pointed out
that there had been foot-dragging and only lukewarm co-operation by the
Council at the start of the investigation and that the CRE wanted a
well researched report that was fair to the Council, hence the delay.

It was also noted that there had been no effort to change or
discipline any senior officers, including those most closely associated
with the housing allocations procedure. Indeed the Council, wary of
possible claims for unfair dismissal, announced that Council employees
would only be punished if clear evidence of direct discrimination was
available. Speakers from the floor of the conference asked how the
Council could hope to turn over a new leaf when the same management was
in place. There were suggestions that either an independent Councillor-
level body should be made available to monitor complaints whereas
others wanted a group outside the Council i.e. composed of community
representatives to monitor housing allocations in the Council. Once
again with the whiff of possible funding, many community groups came to
argue their case for representation and to support the monitoring of
the Council's response to the CRE non-discrimination notice and report.

There were two key reports which catalogued Hackney's
developments in housing policy to satisfy the requirements laid down by
the CRE. One was the report of the Allocations Working Party (9 March 1984) which examined the findings of the CRE report with regard to the changes already being made by the Council to the allocations procedure. The other report was the submission made by the Council in September 1984 outlining the progress made to date in meeting the requirements of the non-discrimination notice (which had then been in force for over a year). These are discussed below.

A number of changes in the allocation process were introduced by Hackney Council before the final report was published. Other more long-term changes in systems, procedures and record-keeping were set in motion following the final report. Ethnic monitoring was introduced from September 1983 for all new allocations. A new Target Allocations policy was proposed to replace the then, rather vague, 'priority' system—thereby setting an annual target for all types of tenants to receive offers of all types of property. Staff training was to be extended to cover both racism awareness and non-discriminatory practices. Amendments had already been made to visit report forms so that questions allowing discrimination no longer appeared.

Residential qualifications which previously applied to waiting list applicants were abolished in April 1983. The 10 Year Rule enabling tenants with 10 or more years residence to qualify for transfer would cease to apply and waiting time points would be awarded only as a percentage of a broader 'needs scheme'. Each of these 'gate' criteria were noted by the CRE as having possibly contributed to keeping ethnic minority families out of good quality housing. The CRE also criticised the informal and often haphazard procedures followed by
officers and the lack of information available to the public. Written guidelines, if they existed at all, were often unclear and contradictory. The Allocations Working Party recommended that a manual of policies and procedures be produced and formal guidelines be drawn up to cover allocations. The report concluded 'The Council has made considerable progress in introducing changes in policies and procedures which, in the past, have left the door open to discrimination... the combined effect of all these proposals is to ensure greater fairness in the assessment and allocation of property which, it is hoped, will go some of the way to meeting the criticisms of the CRE report'.

In response to the CRE's non-discrimination notice Hackney Council issued a submission which covered broader areas than the specific remit of the above Allocations Working Party. A Housing (Race Relations) Sub-Committee was set up in October 1983 charged with the responsibility of producing the submission. Ethnic monitoring commenced in September 1983 but proper monitoring of monthly figures did not start until January 1984 and figures were not available until March 1984. A timetable was also set for a target date of September 1985 for gathering the information about racial origin of all rehousing applicants to provide a general picture of housing needs of transfers, decants, homeless etc. The Council also embarked on a massive survey to classify all its property (over 40,000 houses) in five categories of housing quality, this being completed in late 1984.

In terms of the requirements to deal with racism, in the Housing Directorate it was recognised that there had to be a common understanding of all policy procedures and practices which allowed at
the same time for flexibility in style and operation by management. The report therefore stressed the dual approach of developing a statement of policy to ensure equality of treatment to all groups whilst putting more emphasis upon training of frontline staff in the needs of ethnic minorities and in racism awareness and non-discrimination. A Senior Officer was appointed in January 1984, one year after Alan McFarlane had been nominated for the post by Charles Clarke, Chair of Housing. McFarlane was effectively blocked by Dan Thea who sought someone more in line with the politics of the Council leadership in the post.

The Council periodically reported to the CRE on the progress of the various strategies employed to accede to the demands of the non-discrimination notice even allowing Colin Hann of the investigation team to sit in meetings of the Housing (Race Relations) Sub-Committee. The Council also suggested certain long-term measures which, if implemented, would contribute to the improvement and promotion of race relations work in Housing and the Borough as a whole. These included racial harassment which the CRE had not raised as a possibility for some Council estates with small black populations living on them. Also included were monitoring of rent arrears cases, where a very high degree of officer discretion had previously been applied; staffing, where the workforce was to be targeted to have a similar ethnic composition to the Borough population in general, and a complaints procedure to investigate allegations made against the housing service of racial discrimination. The report concluded, 'The proposals ... represent an approach to make race relations work an integral part of the area base level of the Housing Service and if adopted would
indicate the seriousness with which the Council proposes to deal with the issue of racism in the area of Housing'.

5.25 External opinion on the report

Not surprisingly the claim in the CRE Report (para 15.10) that it regarded Hackney as being representative of most housing authorities was hotly contested by those local authorities tarred with the same brush. In an article in the May 1984 edition of Housing magazine, David Radford, Assistant Director of Housing at Wolverhampton District Council, argued that the political messages behind the CRE report, about the need for ethnic monitoring and the removal of subjective discretion from allocation procedures, were delivered 'about three years too late for most innovators in the field.' Not only did Radford suggest that the CRE Report had little new to offer but that a deeper methodological question was raised in the report. Radford's legitimate point was that the CRE, in demonstrating that two or three non-racial explanations did not account for unfair housing allocation, could not then go on to conclude that the explanation must be one of racial discrimination per se.

The accusation made by Radford is that much of the CRE report, having started with a demonstration of the manifest inequalities in the provision of letting, then took a major inferential leap in laying the blame at the door of individual officers. Not only were there problems with the CRE report, according to Radford, it had also caused his department some problems. Following the conclusions of individual officer discrimination by the report, Wolverhampton's own
housing study, which found no evidence of racial discrimination, was considered by local black groups to be a whitewash. Radford noted, 'It will take some time to repair the damage caused to local communications both by this and by the customary inaccuracies in local press coverage of the Hackney report.' This opinion is in contrast with Ben-Tovim et al's experience of Wolverhampton Council's Race Relations Strategy, of which they write, 'It is almost as if a number of the initiatives have been conceded to grudgingly and maintained in order to spite political opponents rather than out of any underlying commitment to the principle of positive action.'

Coincidentally, Gabriel et al cite the neighbouring Conservative-controlled Dudley Council as having a position on race relations not dissimilar to many Labour-controlled local authorities and it was the Dudley Housing Chairman, John Watteson, who was the lone delegate to claim 'I believe there is no racial discrimination in my area' at the conference organised by the Institute of Housing and the CRE to discuss the lessons of Hackney (on 17 April 1984). The CRE report was used by local authorities as a justification for the inception of individualist schemes such as RAT to remove elements of racism from those particular officers who, as in the Hackney case, had exerted undue control in the allocations procedure - the assumption being that the collective curing of individuals would cure the collective problem. At the IOH/CRE Conference Arthur Oscroft, Director of Housing in Nottingham, noting the implications of the CRE report, argued that 'the main aim was to persuade people to question their own attitudes' and was glad to have stirred up a hornet's nest in one of
his DLO's. A similar point was made by Alan McFarlane about what he saw as the importance of the report. He noted:

it was a propaganda exercise but it was a valuable propaganda exercise. I'm sure it made everyone more conscious of the problem. All the other housing departments who followed the suggestions of the report, their consciousness that the result would probably have been the same in their place is going to change their behaviour."

5.26 Summary

It is noticeable that the publication of the final report, and this was implicit in the report itself, produced a variety of interpretations which were then used to promote a variety of solutions. It clearly demonstrated what Hackney was doing but not so absolutely how. The CRE had failed to find straightforward procedural discriminatory practices and rather pointed out areas where officer discretion could take a decisive role in the allocations procedure. The recommendations of the report were couched very much in terms of tightening of policy and procedures rather than blaming individuals or finding fault with the Council itself.

The publication of the final CRE report in January 1984 prompted the following statement from the Leader of Hackney Council, Anthony Kendall:

I do not dispute their findings though it has taken so long for the report to be published that we have already started dealing with most of the problems. For over a year now we have been taking measures to combat the sort of discrimination it describes. The important thing is that it shows how institutionalised racism occurs in the housing
department and provides clues about how to deal with it.\textsuperscript{137}

(my emphasis)

No heads rolled as a result of the investigation and the Council politicians were quick to frame the response to the CRE report in terms of the changes in allocations procedure, monitoring of applications and allocations and RAT for individual officers. Certainly the CRE found evidence of discrimination but was unable to pinpoint why, despite years of research. If it is the fault of the system, they should have said so too but they didn't'. In fact, in an article in *Housing* (April 1984) Sir Peter Newsum, Chair of the CRE hedged his bets somewhat. He rightly noted 'The report showed widespread patterns of discrimination' and went on to suggest that the report highlights the way in which discrimination operates:

On the one hand there are rules and procedures, such as very restrictive residential qualifications, which may operate to the detriment of ethnic minorities and are therefore directly discriminatory. Once identified, these rules can be re-drawn ... On the other hand there is the discrimination that occurs because of the way individuals make decisions about housing allocations or employment matters.\textsuperscript{138}

(my emphasis)

The CRE itself made much of the report, organising a Conference of senior housing officials and black groups to promote the applicability of the Report's recommendations to many local authorities up and down the country (at RIBA HQ on 17th April 1984). In this way it made a political intervention, given that it was facing a degree of hostility from the Conservative government, that the 1981 riots had provoked the development of more initiatives to combat racism through
local initiatives. It may be too strong to talk of the CRE seeking to establish its hegemony by moral suasion in this way by setting its report up as the Bible for anti-racists in housing but it came very close. The report itself claimed that it was 'a significant milestone on the long road toward eliminating racial discrimination.'

Hackney Councillors were also keen to deflect too much criticism aimed at itself by stressing how well the report was likely to travel. It further limited the damage of the report by accepting the findings in full and undertaking immediate policy changes to take account of the non-discrimination notice. The delays in producing the report (one year after the findings had been forwarded to the Council and five years after the investigation had started) helped Hackney off the hook by allowing them time to bring in policy changes, and to get the Race Relations Unit established and headed by Dan Thea before the non-discrimination notice was even issued. The only senior officer and key influential who was moved following the publication of the report was Alan McFarlane, one of the least radical people working in race relations in local government. At a meeting attended by Peter Newsam, the Chair and Deputy Chair of Housing, and the Senior Housing Adviser (Race Relations) prior to publication of the report the Director of Housing, Tony Shoults's first question was 'What will this do to my position'. The answer was very little and he survived the publication of the report relatively unscathed.

The Race Relations Sub-Committee summed up the position of the Council to the CRE report in their own report produced in June 1983. In it they attempted to allay the disquiet amongst black organisations by contending that policy adjustments were the
appropriate strategy to remove elements of discrimination from the housing allocation process. It is worth reproducing the Sub-Committee report at length because it accurately represents Hackney Council's whole approach to Race Relations Policy which was also shown in the growing Unit headed by Dan Thea. The Sub-Committee noted:

We accept the comment of the Director of Housing that none of the council's basic policies and procedures had been found at fault. However, the implementation of these procedures had still resulted in worse housing being allocated to black people than to white people. Bearing this in mind, some apprehension was expressed by co-opted members and advisory representatives from Black organisations on our Sub-Committee that the measures proposed by the CRE would deal with the problem and they felt that there was rather a need to initiate action against any individual responsible for implementing the council's policies in a racist manner. We reject this approach and believe that the organisational arrangements outlined in the reports will ensure fair implementation of the council's policy.140

This case study was concerned primarily with the circumstances leading up to the CRE investigation and the immediate aftermath, particularly the response of Hackney Council. Following the implementation of the immediate procedural changes listed above in 1983-4, the battle with the Government moved into full swing over funding cuts and ratecapping. Several Councillors who refused in effect to set a legal budget were surcharged and the Council acceded to the requirements of the Government. Although black groups and housing groups had sought to point out the racism in the allocations procedure, it was the central body covering many of these organisations, the HCRE which found itself under investigation for its racism, before the advent of the new Left Council. As the statement of the Race Relations
Sub-Committee report cited above notes, the Council did not find any officers that should be disciplined and preferred to take on board the recommendations in terms of policy and procedural amendments which the non-discrimination notice proposed.

The role of key influentials in the investigation was a deflected one to a certain extent. The old Council leadership was unable to stop the CRE investigation and the degree of isolation in which its officers worked strictly limited the intervention of the Senior Housing Officer (Race Relations), Alan McFarlane. In the period up until the election of the New Labour Left in the Council in May 1982 he was the key influential in the Housing Directorate and the criticisms of the Housing Directorate made by the CRE, allied to the political gulf which had emerged between McFarlane on one side, and Dan Thea and the Council leadership as top influentials on the other, made his position unworkable.

Undoubtedly the CRE made major political capital out of its report. The fact that the investigation, originally planned for two years, took nearly six years in all to produce added to the weight given the report. But there is still a perception that the CRE investigators did not really get to the heart of the matter and whilst finding considerable evidence of discrimination were unable to name names or highlight actual faults in the machinery. It tended rather to fall back upon certain standard factors which have been shown to obviously discriminate against black people, such as time factors, and a call for greater monitoring and staff training.

Paul Harrison summed up the essential weakness of the CRE investigation when he wrote that the 'new study certainly provides
strong evidence of pronounced racial difference in the quality of housing being allocated. But it is not so successful in proving - at any rate to the standards a court might require - that racial discrimination (rather than class or other socio-economic factors) is the main causes of these differences.' As Harrison notes, the receptiveness of Hackney Council to the recommendations made by the CRE were in its favour. Had the Council investigated been openly hostile and challenged the grounds of the non-discrimination notice through the courts, the judges may have been in some difficulty finding for the CRE, when it had failed to eliminate all other possible variables. The extent of racial discrimination in the Hackney Housing Directorate was not questioned by those involved in the investigation but could only be gauged when these other factors were removed from the equation. He concludes, 'dealing with racial inequalities in isolation from other inequalities is no guarantee that even black people with additional social or economic disadvantages will get a better deal.'

In that one sentence Harrison encapsulates the problem of the whole investigation. The CRE is the Commission for Racial Equality, not homeless, unemployed or single parents' equality. Although Hann has attempted to justify the exclusion of other factors, claiming they were not in the CRE'S remit, it is impossible to take the issue of racism in council housing out of its wider social and class context. The availability of council housing is strictly limited. Because of this, the best monitoring policies cannot bring substantial improvement in the living conditions of working people in the borough without the necessary funds. The CRE'S recommendations could only then result in a
more equal distribution of black and white residents in the borough's poor housing stock. Jacobs perhaps sweepingly argues that 'the CRE's prescriptions are, at best, irrelevant, likely to help no more than a handful of black applicants and then, only at the expense of equally badly housed whites.'

The development of anti-racist policies in the Left Labour Councils has mirrored and frequently gone beyond the policy recommendations made by the CRE. The role of the CRE, however, is little more beyond that of an advisory body which can occasionally undertake investigations into cases of formal racial discrimination, usually on a smaller scale than the Hackney investigation. It cannot extend an analysis of the racist allocation procedures of run-down council housing in Hackney to a critique of why working class council housing has never had a particularly golden age and it cannot take a holistic approach. Rather, to use the words of Jacobs, it has to 'tinker' with the policies by the one group which would accept its recommendations wholesale, Hackney Council.

5.27 Chapter Summary

Housing, especially good quality council housing, is a limited commodity and increasingly so. In neither of these case studies is the phenomenon under observation unrelated to the other. There is racial harassment in Hackney which acts as a deterrent to black people choosing certain areas of housing. In Newham, despite the lack of the formal investigation accorded to Hackney, the likelihood is that racism operates within the allocations procedure of council housing to
unfairly deposit black families in the poorest quality housing. Having made that general point there are more telling points of congruence in the 2 studies.

The first area which begs comparison is the role of external organisations in both case studies. To the casual eye the links between the CRE, the national body discharged by Parliament with the duty of promoting good race relations, and the Newham Monitoring Project, a small local pressure group offering practical help to victims of racial harassment, seems tenuous. Looked at in isolation their differing roles appear predominant. But when the practical relationships they have with the respective local authorities are considered there is more substance to a clear relationship.

The CRE's initial interest in the housing policies of Hackney was unwanted as was the early dealings of Newham Council with the Newham Monitoring Project. Both groups acted because they saw the failings in the local authorities' duties to its black council tenants. In Hackney it was discrimination in allocation, in Newham failure to adequately protect black tenants. Following that initial hostility presented by both local authorities to the external pressure and the realisation by key influentials that the CRE and racial harassment were not going to go away, the question was how to accommodate them within the environs of the local state. For Hackney their position was aided by the number of procedural changes they were able to make in inordinate time it took the CRE to reach its conclusions. The Council could thus draw the teeth of many of the CRE's recommendations by pointing out the improvements already made. The internal political situation had altered during the course of the investigation such that
from a position in 1978 where much of the Labour Group was reluctant to confront racism within the locale the Council shifted via the appointment of Dan Thea and the influx of the New Left to enable it to be critical of the CRE for not being a radical enough body.

In Newham the process was that much more reflective of the pressure group/local authority relationship discussed above in Chapter 4. Using Short's model of grass roots political organisation, this seems most appropriate when considering the Newham Monitoring Project in the the grass roots group is reliant on a socialist/collectivist activist form of organisation. The Newham Monitoring Project was born out of Asian self-organisation against racial attacks but as a result of its own success and growth has commanded greater attention and funding from Newham Council and the GLC. With the demise of the latter body the bulk of its funding now comes from Newham. The Newham Monitoring Project is not more involved in the Council's decision-making processes but its opinion and supported has been courted more effectively. It now treads the line between maintaining some form of critical autonomy from the Council and greater involvement within the local state. As such its growing affinity with the Housing Department may lead to greater incorporation and its use for legitimation of existing and future council action.

Similarly, were not the CRE investigators incorporated into the consensus of the local state perception of how to eliminate racial discrimination within a housing department by attentiveness to policy and procedural issues leaving the onus for these alterations very firmly within the hands of senior officers? The CRE could not locate racist individuals nor actual evidence of racist individuals, only by
inference. The Newham Monitoring Project, on pressing for the evictions of racial harassers can only rely on those evictions being supported by top influentials within the housing department. In a further respect, by being incorporated both external bodies have actually helped the local authorities the criticised.

In Newham the Newham Monitoring Project had to exert a considerable degree of pressure to secure the McDonnell eviction. It is now called in at an early stage in cases of racial harassment reported to the Council and has more involvement in the collection of information, finding witnesses, giving victims the confidence to complain etc. and thereby doing much of the Council's job for it. In its keenness to secure justice for the victims it has given the Council the opportunity to combat racial harassment with the Newham Monitoring Project doing much of the spade work. That should not be seen as an argument against any effort to combat racial harassment but returns to the point that it is the terms of reference set by the local state, and not by the pressure group, that determine strategy.

In the case of Hackney, the internal and external considerations were handled by the local authority to shape anti-racism into its own proceduralist strategy. As stated above, the action undertaken by the Council reflected its efforts to pre-empt some of the recommendations of the CRE report. The actions of the CRE, in attempting to widen the implications of the report allowed Hackney to suggest that the problems faced there would be replicated within many other local authorities up and down the country. The public meeting held by the CRE sought to present the results of Hackney in a form applicable to other councils in the assumption that they would
take similar action to Hackney. Internally, the Housing Directorate was able to implement its policy changes and seek the opinion of pressure groups in the area whilst holding the possibility of funding out for those bodies more amenable to the Council's aims. The remit of the CRE could not, and did not, take account of the wider housing issues which emanate from the Hackney and indeed the Newham case studies.

One is the question of the agglomeration or dispersal of black residents. The former had been effectively done, putting the majority of black tenants into the worst council housing by the actions of housing officers in Hackney, so the CRE found. The policy of dispersal as followed by Newham put black families into an isolated position where they could be forced out by racial harassers as happened in Clements Ave. The fact that both policies resulted in a qualitatively worse situation for black residents in the boroughs suggests that the more underpinning issues of general housing quality and racial violence are not solvable by local authorities despite their profound effect on the areas under consideration here.

Ofle suggests that 'wherever the state expands services and infrastructures, they become the focus of conflicts'\textsuperscript{145}. The problems thrown up by services in contraction, such as housing, are that much more complex. Ofle's writings tend to offer succour to the municipal socialists, projecting the state as a contested terrain for radical intervention\textsuperscript{146} but the fiscal crisis which has totally enshrouded local government since the defeat of the rebellion in 1984 over ratecapping in Britain acts as an undertow to the overoptimism of the premise. The contradiction offered by Ofle between legitimization and efficiency within the welfare state is now resolved in the Left local
State by recourse to the policy of the 'dented shield'. The central state constraints upon Newham and Hackney Councils which prevent them from building substantial numbers of council houses to improve the material living conditions of their residents have tended to force them into resorting to 'efficient' methods of shuffling black people around the borough until they are located in a fairly safe environment.

It may be suggested that for black people there are two key factors in their housing need. One is fair access to the best quality council housing available, the other the fullest available protection from racial violence accorded to them as tenants especially from other council tenants. In Hackney black residents were clustered within the poorest housing because of direct discrimination within the Housing Directorate to which the CRE sought indirect solutions. For the Newham black residents isolation provided a greater risk, that of physical and mental harm which both police and local authority have failed to adequately deal with. For both boroughs the respective case studies were 'firsts' in race relations and housing in Britain - the first CRE investigation, the first local eviction. What they show is that the limited and selective commodity of public sector housing to working class people are given a dimension only now being faced by local authorities because of racism and its internal and external effects.