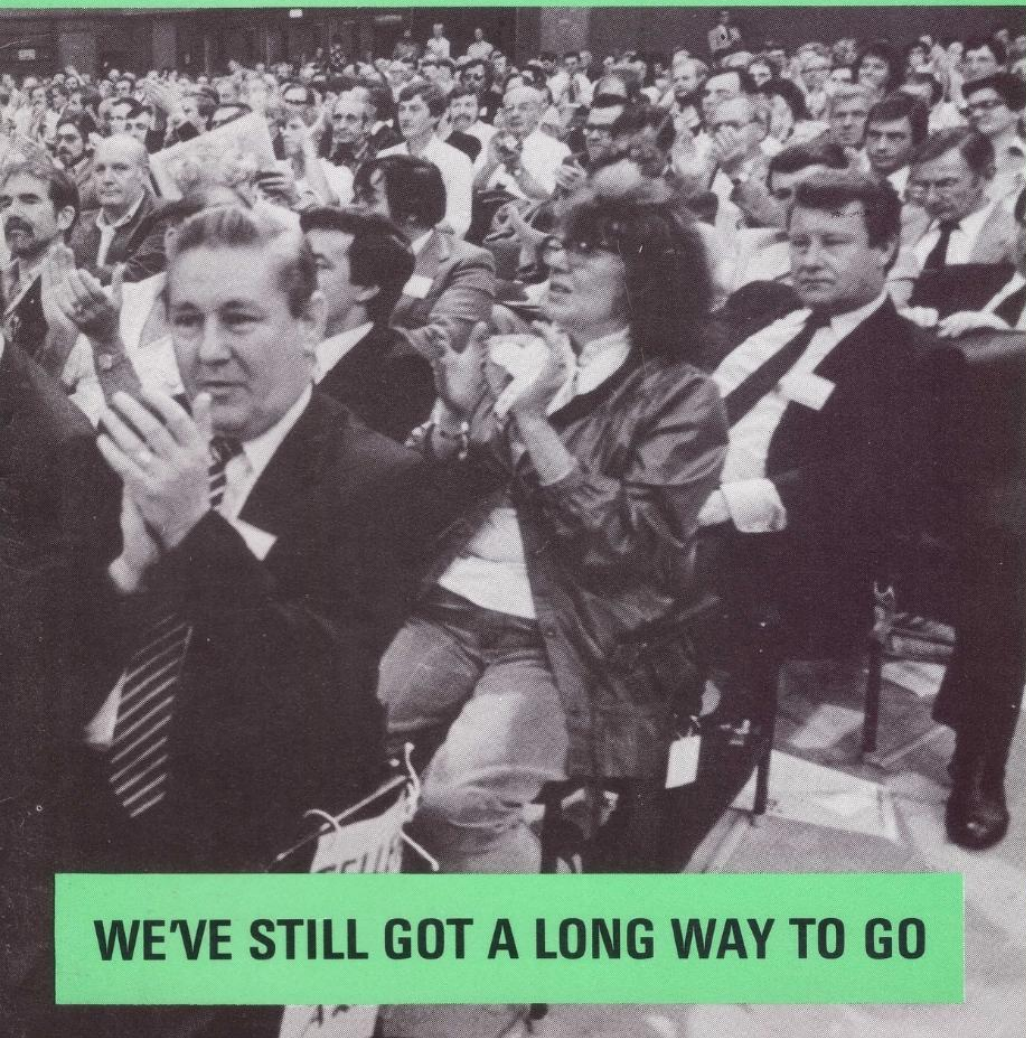
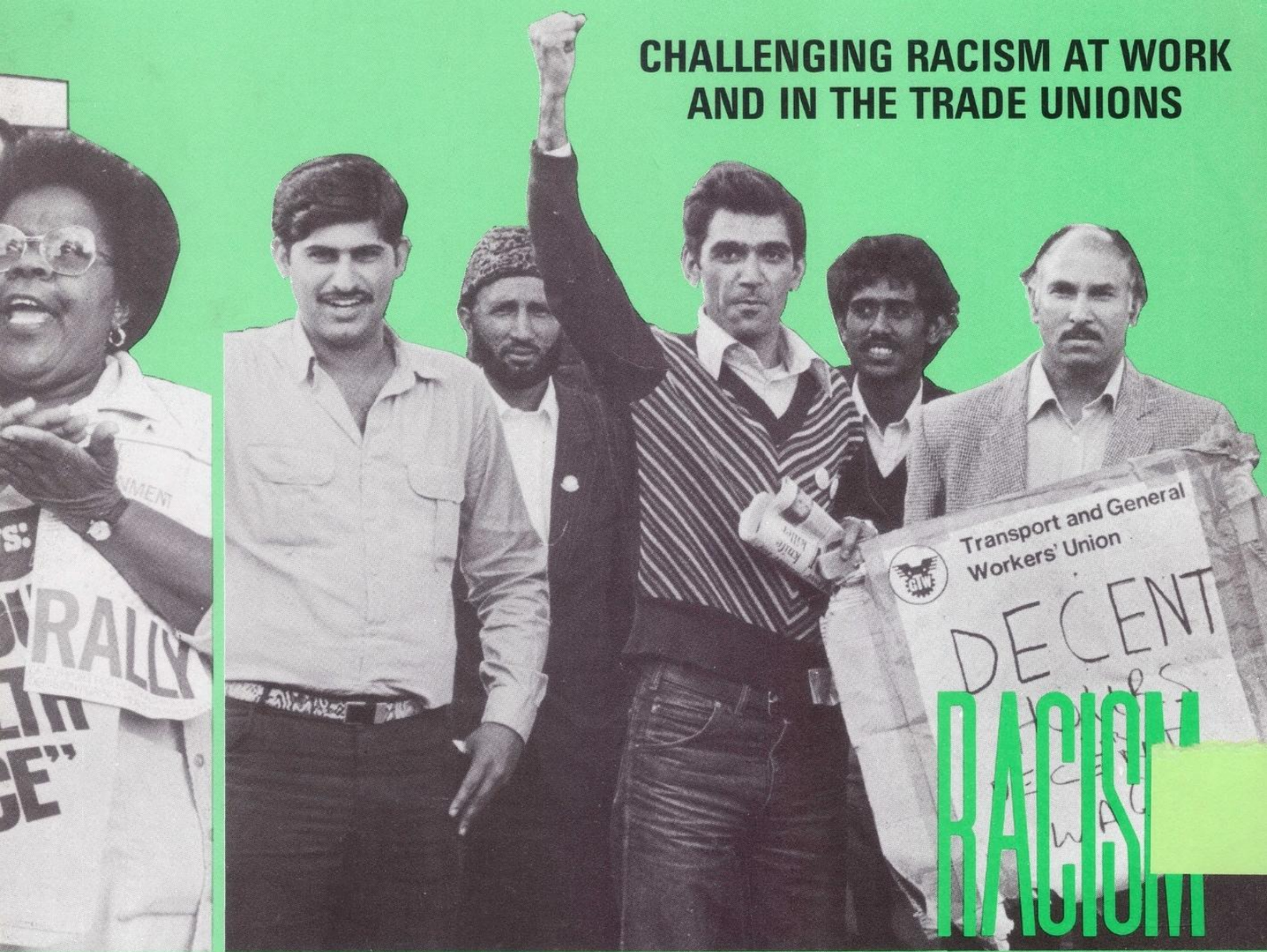


CHALLENGING RACISM AT WORK
AND IN THE TRADE UNIONS



WE'VE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO

WITHIN
TRADE
UNIONS

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This report has been produced by a working group set up as part of the response to the GLC's Anti-Racist Year. It has been published by the Council as a contribution to the debate on an issue of key importance. It does not necessarily reflect the Council's view in all particulars.

**Greater London
Council's**

**Anti-Racist
Trade Union
Working Group**

November 1984

RACISM WITHIN TRADE UNIONS

A survey of provisions
implemented by
Trade Unions active in
London to combat racism
within their own
organisational structures.

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Contents

Preface and Acknowledgements,	3
Introduction,	4
Objectives of this study,	8
Design, method and timing,	9
The Survey results,	11
<i>Anti-racist policy statements,</i>	12
<i>Summary table of results,</i>	13
<i>Provisions to combat racism,</i>	15
<i>Monitoring union employees,</i>	17
<i>Trade unions as equal opportunities employers,</i>	20
<i>Special appointments,</i>	21
<i>Monitoring union membership,</i>	22
<i>Black and ethnic minority participation and representation,</i>	23
<i>Provisions for black and ethnic minority women,</i>	25
<i>Provisions in different languages,</i>	26
<i>Contact with black and ethnic minority organisations,</i>	28
Conclusions,	29
Checklist for unions – what is to be done,	34
Appendices,	36

Preface and Acknowledgements

As part of its commitment to designate 1984 as Anti-Racist Year, the Greater London Council has set up an Anti-Racist Programme Sub-Committee made up of representatives of anti-racist organisations, together with members of the Council. The sub-committee is chaired by Ken Livingstone, Leader of the GLC. This sub-committee is supported by twelve special Working Groups each of which is chaired by a member of the sub-committee.

The function of the Working Groups is to discuss and work on specific proposals which can be pursued and implemented during and beyond Anti-Racist Year. One of the Working Groups, the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group, is concerned with anti-racist activities within London's trade union movement. The Chair of the group is Jim Thakoordin.

The objectives of the Group are to identify and promote anti-racist commitment within the trade union movement in Greater London.

The first meeting of the Group took place on 5 October 1983 and letters went out to a wide range of London-based trade unions, inviting them to nominate a representative to attend meetings of the Group.

At the third meeting of the Group it was agreed to undertake a major study into the nature and extent of provisions implemented by trade unions to combat the racism that exists within their own internal organisation. This report presents the findings of the study.

The conclusion of this study represents the view of the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group. *The report has been published by the Greater London Council as a contribution to debate on this vital issue for the future of the labour movement.* Our particular thanks go to Stephen Small and Ken Phipp who were engaged on a part-time basis to undertake all the fieldwork for the study. In addition, Stephen Small carried out the initial analysis of the results, prepared the first draft of the report and had responsibility for editing the final draft.

We would like to express our thanks to all those unions which returned questionnaires.

Introduction

This Report provides an up-to-date and most penetrating attempt to analyse the relationship between trade unions and black and ethnic minority workers. For the first time an attempt has been made to give all the unions with significant membership and employees in the Greater London area an opportunity to examine in detail their respective organisations at all levels and to ascertain and report on their policies and practices relating to their black and ethnic minority membership.

The Report is based on an objective survey which attempts, through questionnaires, interviews, and examination of policies and practices, to examine the role of the trade unions both as providers of services and as employers; to examine the effectiveness of the unions in their efforts to oppose discrimination, prejudice and racism; to represent, promote, and articulate the interests of black and ethnic minority workers inside and outside the workplace; and to ensure that black and ethnic minority workers are involved and represented at all levels of the unions' structures, organisations and activities.

For a detailed checklist on how unions can work to combat racism, see page 00.

Various reports over the past 20 years produced by Government Agencies, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), individual trade unions and several institutions including the report produced by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) in July 1984, confirm that racial prejudice and discrimination in Britain are widespread, despite the fact that it is now nearly twenty years since it became illegal to discriminate against someone in Britain purely on the grounds of race.

The 1965 Race Relations Act was strengthened by the 1968 Race Relations Act, which was further strengthened by the 1976 Race Relations Act. It made direct and indirect discrimination unlawful, yet black people in Britain are still suffering from direct and indirect discrimination, consciously or unconsciously by individuals and institutions either overtly or covertly.

Black people in Britain are disadvantaged not only because they suffer from all the problems which are common to working

class people irrespective of their colour, but also because of the deep-rooted racial prejudice, discrimination and racism which exist in almost every sphere of socio-economic, cultural and political life in Britain through slavery, colonialism, imperialism and capitalism.

There are right wing political parties who have much to gain in a period of economic crisis, by sustaining and deepening racist ideas. Many employers welcome racism as a divisive force weakening the ability of their workforce to demand decent pay and conditions. Unfortunately, many trade unions seem unaware of the dangers.

Racism is based on racial prejudice; the willingness to discriminate and the power to deny someone justice and equality because of their racial origin exists in employment, housing, education, health and other areas of activity and services.

The extent of existing racism currently faced by black people and ethnic minorities across all the key social indicators in Britain, has been evidenced by a whole series of authoritative social studies, the most recent and comprehensive example being the recent PSI study.

Racism in employment is widespread and well-documented. Blacks are not only discriminated against in recruitment, promotion, training and job status, but are also suffering from various forms of racial prejudice, harassment and abuses. Often the trade unions, either at local or higher levels, are aware of what is taking place but prefer not to intervene because it may antagonise either white union members or union representatives.

The report highlights the fact that many unions are aware of the extent of racism at work and the increasing dissatisfaction and alienation by black members because of the lack of commitment by unions to identify and confront racism inside and outside the workplace.

Despite policy documents, resolutions, race relations courses and conferences and public statements by the TUC and a small number of unions, blacks, particularly the young, are still cynical and suspicious of the Trade Union Movement, because they believe that the unions have no firm intention of realising those policies where it matters most and that is by fighting racism at the workplace.

To be fair to a small number of unions, the evidence indicates that they have given considerable amounts of attention to the question of racism at work and they have made a number of minor changes within their

structures to encourage black and ethnic minority members to participate more fully in affairs at all levels.

Unfortunately, although these measures represent considerable progress and awareness at national and regional levels in recent years especially since the TUC Black Workers Charter was issued in 1981, very little improvement has taken place at the workplace level. Race Relations courses and conferences are usually attended by those members who are generally quite sympathetic.

Those bigoted, reactionary or racist shop stewards, representatives, convenors, branch officers and full-time officers who would most benefit from attending such events generally stay away, since most of them would feel that their union is wasting their money on such provisions.

The data contained in this report indicates quite clearly that the unions are dominated at all levels, particularly at national, regional and district levels, by white males. There are very few black and ethnic minority full-time workers employed by the unions at any level. Few blacks are elected or appointed to national, regional, district committees or conferences.

The evidence suggests that equal opportunities simply do not exist for blacks within the unions despite all the sympathetic propaganda from the TUC and a number of unions. Their recruitment policies do not take account of the need to recruit black employees. Race Relations courses and conferences are poorly attended and for most of the time are found boring and irrelevant to the real issues of racism.

However, it does provide opportunities for white liberals, radicals, institutions like the CRE and other so-called experts on the subject to say nice things about black people and to explain how best to manage and cope with racism at the workplace rather than how to identify and oppose racism at all levels inside and outside the workplace, the unions and the wider community.

Few if any blacks are involved either in the preparation of anti-racist programmes of activity or are given the opportunity to use their own experience to explain the dynamics of racism and how it should be opposed.

In short there's a need for more black and ethnic activists to be involved both in preparation, teaching, and discussions whenever the subject is being raised or debated.

The recruitment of clerical, technical and manual staff in unions tends to be from inter-

nal advertising; friends or relatives of existing staff; employment agencies or Job Centres.

Few unions even bother to use the Job Centres and would normally use private agencies even though it cost them a sizeable sum in fees. They seldom use their own publications/journals to advertise job vacancies.

As far as full-time officers are concerned, these are normally recruited either by a single person who is in charge of the region or district, or a small committee consisting in most cases of white men, or elected by the membership. Many full-time officers once appointed or elected are there until retirement or until their turn comes for re-election by which time the overwhelming majority have become familiar with the system and tend not to be unseated.

This system, of course, tends to ensure that the union at officer level continues to consist mainly of white males and therefore it is not surprising that there are few women or black officers employed in unions, even though women and black workers represent nearly 40 per cent of the total union membership.

On the question of monitoring, the unions are generally opposed to record keeping of any kind in respect of their black members. They generally are not even aware of the number of workplaces where they have agreed with management on the introduction of equal opportunities policies. They are unaware of the number of black members, where they work; what sort of industries; what grades they are in or even what difficulties they are experiencing.

The unions cannot therefore respond adequately to racism without some sort of monitoring and record keeping to ensure that every worker, irrespective of race or sex, is treated equally.

The unions are quite happy to pay lip service to the CRE Code of Practice which came into operation on 1st April 1984 and even to formally adopt it, but real attempts to educate their membership and to implement the modest and liberal suggestions outlined in the Code of Practice has been somewhat lethargic, to say the least.

Unions in the public sector, particularly in local authorities, government bodies and the nationalised industries, are also perpetuating racism through recruitment, promotion and training practices and agreements which discriminate against black workers. In many London boroughs the composition of the workforce is far from representative of the local community.

Even in areas with a sizeable black popula-

tion, few blacks and ethnic minorities are employed by the public sector whether it is the borough council or district health authority.

If there is already a white workforce it is likely to remain so if "internal advertisements first" and other recruitment practices which do not positively encourage applications from and the selection of black people are encouraged. Word-of-mouth recruitment and the recruitment from existing staff or from their relatives also help to discriminate.

Racism at the workplace and within the unions serves to discourage more black members from accepting union positions at workplace or local levels even though black workers are, on the whole, extremely supportive of the principles and policies of the unions in terms of defending and improving jobs and services.

Increasingly, black workers are beginning to recognise the need to establish black caucuses or pressure groups within or across trade unions to highlight and oppose racism within the unions, and to use the Trade Union Movement to oppose racism within the wider society. Black workers organised in the Black Trades Unionists Solidarity Movement and the black workers in NALGO have spear-headed the movement by black workers to combat racism within the unions.

In the near future it is likely that more black groups will be formed in most of the unions with sizeable black membership. I believe that this is considered a positive move by black workers and can only lead to greater awareness of racism within the union at all levels of activity.

For too long issues concerning black people have been discussed by white trade unionists without blacks being given the opportunity to express their own experience and perspectives. The recent experience of NALGO provides a good example of this.

It is not enough for the trade union movement to argue that it is "colour blind", that it represents the interests of all workers irrespective of race, sex or colour, that black workers are no different from white workers and that any special arrangements for black workers would be discrimination in reverse.

The fact is that black workers suffer not only from all the problems experienced by white workers, but also from problems associated with racism which are manifested in prejudice, discrimination and harassment.

It is not surprising, therefore, that black workers are generally the last to be hired and the first to be fired; that they are employed in low-paid, boring, dangerous and dirty jobs

with low status and poor opportunities for promotion and training. They are also disproportionately employed in jobs which force them to work long and unsocial hours.

Many blacks are likely to suffer from racial harassment, abuses and even physical attacks either at work or on their way to or from work. Their families at home or at school are likely to experience similar situations in their own environment.

The trade union movement was built on the principle of "Unity is strength" and "an injury to one is an injury to all".

Racism divides and weakens trade union organisation particularly at the workplace. Unions therefore need to promote unity between workers and a united front in the face of employers, as employers are likely to exploit any form of disunity between the workforce to the detriment of both the black and the white workers.

The struggle for decent wages and conditions at work and to secure equal rights and opportunities for women and black workers inside and outside the workplace should be a major task of the unions.

Opposing racism at work must also be supported by opposing racism wherever it exists irrespective of whether the issue is racist immigration laws, fascist or racist organisations, police harassment, deportations, racism on housing estates or any form of racism in the wider community, including institutional racism.

However, the unions will need to combat and remove racism from within their own ranks alongside their efforts to oppose racism within the workplace or within the wider society.

Black workers will support and work for their unions if the unions are really serious in their endeavours to identify and confront racism.

Black workers in Britain have a long history of opposing the practices of racist employers who wish to use them as a source of cheap labour, undermine working conditions, or to disunite and divide the workforce.

Unless trade unions are actively affiliated to such anti-racist campaigns, they will risk sacrificing the right to be seen as positively reflecting the special needs and concerns of their black members.

The struggles of black workers against employers are well-known within the Labour Movement. They have fought many bitter and prolonged battles to establish trade union recognition at their workplace even on many occasions when they were abandoned or even undermined in their efforts by their

white colleagues or by their union. They have proved their commitment to the principle of unity within the unions, now it is up to the unions to prove their commitment to their black members.

Black women, many of whom are employed in the worst jobs with low pay and poor conditions, have been in the forefront of these struggles. We will never forget the women who fought at places such as Grunwick and Chix.

Black women and black youths are amongst the most discriminated against people in Britain. They not only have to cope with exploitation and discrimination within the workplace, but also within the wider community and even within the family.

Unemployment amongst black workers, particularly amongst black youths, is extremely high. Between 1972 and 1981 unemployment for all workers increased by 138 per cent, but for black workers unemployment increased by 325 per cent.

Unemployment has affected black people more than the rest of the community. It is also more difficult during a recession for black people to find any kind of employment, let alone sought after jobs. It is therefore important for unions to unite black and white workers and to encourage all workers to defend jobs and services.

If the Greater London Council is abolished, many thousands of people will suffer. For the black community abolition will be disastrous.

The GLC, through its commitment to oppose racism and promote equal opportunities and assistance to black groups, has shown the way forward. Hundreds of thousands of black people in education, employment, housing and other services and in the wider community have benefited from the positive anti-racist policies of the GLC.

The unions also have a responsibility to the whole community, both black and white, to unite them in the struggle for real justice, equality, democracy and freedom: but first they must commit themselves in every respect to oppose all forms of racism inside and outside the union organisation, the workplace and in the wider community.

This introduction represents the views of the ARTUWG.

Jim Thakoordin
Chair, GLC Anti-Racist Year Trade Union Working Group.

Objectives

At the initial meetings of the GLC Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group, which took place in the last months of 1983, it was agreed that the group's objectives should be to identify trade union anti-racist commitment, and to develop proposals whereby the Group and the Council could challenge inaction and stimulate action in this area.

A prime objective of the group is to get trade unions with large numbers of members and employees in London to commit their practices and resources to anti-racist struggles, with the main focus being on their own internal organisation, and to make a contribution which will have an impact not only during 1984 but beyond it.

The action research study reported in this publication was designed to provide information helpful in achieving the group's broader objectives.

The group agreed that although earlier work had been carried out on issues of racism and equal opportunities in trade unions there was no detailed study of trade union internal structure, procedures or organisation.

This is a crucial area because trade unions often criticise others for lack of action in combatting racism without demonstrating that they have put their own house in order. And the TUC's own Black Workers Charter, which came out in 1981, lists this area as deserving immediate attention from unions:

Trade unions cannot just talk about equal opportunity they must be seen to be taking active steps to make it a reality. As a first step, they should examine their own structures and procedures.

Trade unions, therefore, must reflect the commitment to equality that they expect and demand from others if they are to win the respect and support of their members and effect concrete change.

While undertaking this work the group recognised that a report such as this is bound to be very contentious. Trade unions have been allowed to adopt a low profile on these issues and to deflect criticism of any limitations of their own instead, highlighting the inadequacies of others.

It was anticipated that trade unions would seek to defend their position steadfastly, to cloud issues, disavow problems and com-

plain about the validity of undertaking a study such as this.

However, the group resolved to pursue its course of action in the belief that without challenging procedures and practices within the trade union movement itself it could hardly get trade unions to persuade others of their own commitment to the cause they were fighting for.

And the information on which this report is based cannot be disregarded for it comes direct from the trade unions themselves.

Equally, the views expressed in this report have been reached on the basis of the information provided to us by the unions.

By obtaining information from key officials in all of London's major trade unions through the completion of a questionnaire and the carrying out of informal interviews this study provides, in a compact and easily accessible form, an up-to-date summary of the achievements and limitations of trade union action in combatting the racism that exists within their own internal organisation.

The emphasis in this study was on actual action taken, measures implemented and resources invested in the light of formal policy statements made at a national level. With this information the group, and others, are able to identify within specific trade unions the extent to which more action is needed.

The report has been written with two distinct audiences in mind, though it will be valuable to any individual, group or organisation active in challenging racism in the trade union movement.

The report is intended, primarily, to equip black and white activists committed in this struggle, with the information they need to offer support to trade unions and challenge inaction.

Secondly, it is aimed at the trade union hierarchies in order that it can precipitate a serious process of introspection with regard to their provisions for combatting racism in London.

Most trade unions would not accept the charge that they are institutionally racist but this report demonstrates that in their procedures of operation and working assumptions they severely restrict opportunities for black people in the trade union movement. Evidence for this view runs throughout the main body of the report.

The principal purpose of this report is, therefore, to convince the existing powerholders within trade unions of both the

weight of evidence in support of the contention that their elective and employment practices are, in effect, racist, and to highlight the necessary steps which must be taken to challenge and redress this very serious situation.

Design, method and timing

The project was designed to obtain basic factual information from London-based trade unions about the extent to which they had acted upon their policy statements and invested time and resources into overcoming the obstacles to racial equality.

Acknowledging that action may be initiated at different levels in the trade union hierarchy it was decided necessary to obtain information from several different levels.

The need to recognise formal lines of communication within trade unions was accepted and those at the highest levels in all the unions involved in the study were informed that it was going ahead.

A self-completion questionnaire was designed to provide the information required to compile a report, and arrangements were made for a series of follow-up interviews with key officials.

The questions in the questionnaire highlighted a number to which the group felt trade unions should address themselves if they were effectively to counter racism within their own organisation.

The specific wording of the questions was agreed at one of the meetings of the group. A full copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix II. The questions relate to the adoption of formal policy statements against racism, specific provisions made to ensure implementation of policies adopted, the source and nature of the information used by unions to decide action in this area and procedures established for contact with black and minority group organisations.

The group was particularly concerned to ensure that the representation and needs of women from black and minority groups should take a high focus in the study and a question was included to take account of this.

It was agreed that the term 'ethnic minority' be defined broadly to include all groups that are the victims of racism.

Throughout this report the term 'black' therefore, also is designed to cover other ethnic minorities.

It was felt necessary to keep the

questionnaire brief, given the proven low response rate in previous surveys of trade unions, and make provision for trade unions to volunteer additional information.

To take account of the dimensions of union bureaucracy and the need for appropriate information from different levels letters were designed to go to general secretaries and questionnaires to division/district committees. A suggestion that questionnaires should also go to branch levels was abandoned as impracticable.

To emphasise that the study had the full support of the GLC and to make for a greater response rate the letters which went out to general secretaries were signed by Ken Livingstone, leader of the GLC.

This letter described the work of the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group as part of Anti-Racist Year, outlined that a study was being carried out and informed unions that questionnaires had gone directly to division/district committees.

A second version of the letter was sent to those unions whose division/district committees were not due to meet for some time with the questionnaire enclosed so that it could be forwarded to the appropriate officer. Copies of these letters can be found in Appendices III and IV.

The questionnaires then went out to division/district committees with an accompanying letter. A copy of this letter can be found in Appendix V.

Reminder letters and phone calls were made long after the questionnaires should have been returned to enhance the response rate. A copy of the reminder letter can be found in Appendix VI.

The interviews with key officials were carried out by the two researchers responsible for the fieldwork of the study.

In some instances unions agreed to fill in the questionnaire only during the interview though most interviews took place after questionnaires had been returned. The objectives of the interviews were to give the unions the opportunity to expand upon the information contained in the questionnaire.

The researchers sought to encourage the officials interviewed to clarify and elaborate upon the information contained in the questionnaire. They tried to get as full a picture as possible of the exact position of what had been achieved by the union in each area highlighted.

Where possible, they tried to obtain details of how and why the union had adopted its particular stance in each of the areas under

discussion. For example, had a formal statement been made or decision reached? Was the issue currently under discussion? What criteria had been used to decide the stance, and on the basis of what information?

The interviewees were informed that the information collected would be used to write a report intended for publication and that their own suggestions for action were welcome.

The letters signed by Ken Livingstone went out to general secretaries on 26 March 1984. The questionnaires with accompanying letters were posted on 2 April 1984 with requests for them to be returned by 23 April 1984. Reminder letters were posted out on 16 May 1984 to all unions who had not yet returned a completed questionnaire. Phone call reminders were made in the final weeks of May and first weeks of June.

The interviews were carried out in June and July 1984.

The survey results

A complete list of all the unions to whom questionnaires were sent can be found in Appendix VII.

A list of all unions that returned questionnaires can be found in Appendix VIII, along with details of the combined national membership of these same unions.

Out of a total of 56 different unions contacted, completed questionnaires were completed and returned for 20. The majority of these returned their questionnaire by post while a small number completed them during the interview with one of the researchers. The response rate was therefore approximately 33 per cent.

However, the actual number of questionnaires sent out added up to approximately 250, including reminder copies. This is because where some unions had several different divisions or districts covering the London area, separate copies were sent to all of them. The response rate on this score was therefore much lower.

In addition to all the reminder letters a total of more than 50 reminder phone calls were made, in some cases several to the same union, to try and elicit a greater response.

In addition to the 19 questionnaires received, letters were received from a further four unions.

The AUEW (engineering section) said it was best to fill in the questionnaire at an interview but despite numerous efforts the appropriate officer could not be contacted.

COHSE acknowledged receipt of the questionnaire and informed us that copies had been sent to their three regional secretaries with members of the London area. Despite attempts to find out what became of the questionnaires we heard nothing more of them.

The HVA informed us that the questionnaire arrived too late for it to be returned by the date requested and added that 'this Association has adopted no specific anti-racism policy, neither has it made any of the provisions indicated in the questionnaire'.

And the EETPU said that it did not participate in such surveys except where undertaken by the TUC.

From the information in Appendix VIII it will be seen that the unions which responded have a combined membership of six million members nationally.

The figures for London membership are not available because of differing union administrative boundaries.

Although the study was aimed at unions having members or employees in the London area many of the responses contained information that holds valid for the situation nationally. Where necessary the unions made additional reference to differing conditions in London.

With the survey thus covering such a large combined membership we believe it has succeeded in getting details from the larger and more prominent unions. There are, of course, unions which we would particularly like to have seen included but numerous efforts were made to involve all unions in Appendix VII and the time factor meant that we could not delay compiling a report any longer.

Although we do not have figures for the black and minority group membership of the unions covered it is certainly very high. The figure of six million members out of a total union membership of just over 10 million is substantially high.

Interviews were carried out with 13 of the unions which returned questionnaires. The details of those unions interviewed are contained in Appendix VIII. The interviews lasted on average $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

In the case of the other unions from whom questionnaires were received it was too late to carry out an interview, or the appropriate officer could not be contacted, and in the case of one union an interview was declined.

We anticipate that many unions will disassociate themselves from the findings of this report because they are not themselves covered, or where covered, did not state their case in sufficient detail. We reject such a disavowal.

The information contained in the questionnaire and from the interviews was provided by a range of officials who varied in rank and responsibilities and we have to rely on this.

However, what is most important is that this information came directly from the unions themselves and with the consent of the highest ranking officer in the union.

We believe that the information we obtained represents each union's formal position on

the issues raised. We do not claim that all that was said is necessarily true.

Some officials clearly felt the pressure on them, and the need for them to be defensive of their union's position.

Other officials we believe, feigned concern and interest in the issues. Others still were clearly opposed to racism but inhibited by their position and the strength of their union's structure in resisting change.

It is possible to learn a lot from the actual content of the questionnaires. It is also possible to deduce and infer much from the brusque and cursory answers, from the tone and style of response, from what was omitted or deemed trivial, and from the fact that many unions did not even bother to respond at all.

We comment on some of these aspects of the survey in the conclusion of this report.

We believe that some unions will claim that they were not given the opportunity to participate in the survey.

We reject such a claim entirely. All the unions listed in Appendix VIII were contacted on several occasions by letter and telephone and given every opportunity over a period of months to return a questionnaire. This included letters from Ken Livingstone, Leader of the GLC, from the secretary of the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group and from the researchers. We believe that it is a sad reflection of the bureaucratic inertia endemic to unions that a number of questionnaires are slowly grinding their way through the machinery.

But we also believe that some unions just could not be bothered to see or accept the importance of the issues raised and failed to respond for this reason.

Further, we believe that a number of unions calculated that it was better, from their point of view, to abstain from the survey altogether than to declare publicly the limited amount of action they had undertaken in this area.

It would not be correct to say that all the unions which did not reply have done nothing at all relating to the issues raised. Information from other sources would not confirm this.

But we believe that had they been committed to overcoming the obstacles to equality which clearly exist and taken substantive action to achieve this, then they would willingly have volunteered the information.

For those unions that did not respond the burden lies with them, and their members, to

demonstrate the extent of their commitment to combatting racism.

In the following section we give a summary of the responses received. We combine the information obtained from questionnaires and interviews. We have quoted extensively from the questionnaires from the position adopted by unions, and their thinking behind it, is clear from what they have written.

We summarise the overall response to each of the issues raised and point out interesting individual responses. At the end of these sections we summarise our conclusions.

Where quotations are found in the following sections they are from questionnaires, except if otherwise indicated.

The summary table of results provides an at a glance guide to the unions, responses to the questionnaire. A star indicates a positive answer in the sense that some measure has been taken in this area. It has been included in order to facilitate ease of access to the results.

However, it cannot be understated that in order to obtain a true picture of the situation the survey results need to be read in full.

Anti-racist policy statements

The first question that we asked unions was:

Have you adopted an anti-racist policy? If so, what form does it take and what measures exist to ensure implementation of the policy?

When the group began this study it anticipated that the vast majority of unions would have some sort of formal declaration of opposition to racism, incorporating condemnation of racial prejudice and discrimination, racial abuse, and membership or identification with individuals, groups of organisation that openly held and advocated such views or action.

We expected this opposition to be enshrined in union rule books or documented in conference and committee resolutions and decisions at national, regional and local levels. Our study did not set out to get details from all of these areas, rather to obtain the formal national position.

We hope then to compare and contrast these policy positions with the nature and scope of action taken to implement measures effective in ensuring adherence to the union's policy.

Our views turned out to be largely correct although we were surprised to learn that several unions had not found it necessary, to formally declare their opposition to racism.

Summary table of results

Trade union	Question 1 Policy Statement	Question 2 Internal Provisions	Question 3 Data on ethnic break- down of employees	Question 4 Equal Opportunities Programme	Question 5 Posts of special responsibility	Question 6 Data on ethnic break- down of membership	Question 7 Encouragement of active union participation	Question 8 Provision for ethnic minority women	Question 9 Facilities in other languages	Question 10 Contact with black orgns.
ACCT		✓					✓			✓
ASTMS	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓
AUEW- TASS	✓	✓		✓						
BU	✓								✓	
CPSA	✓									
FTAT										
GMBATU		✓					✓		✓	✓
GMWU	✓	✓							✓	
MU					see appropriate section					
NALGO	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
NATFHE	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
NGA										✓
NUJ	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓
NUPE		✓					✓		✓	✓
NUR									✓	✓
NUT	✓	✓					✓			
NUTGW							✓		✓	
TGWU		?							✓	
UCW										
UCATT										

Looking at some of the statements in the questionnaire and examples of policy statements submitted gives the impression, almost the illusion, that all is proceeding well. Strongly worded rulebook clauses, conference decisions and a host of journals, leaflets and advice sheets would convince the uninformed reader that racism was long since dead and buried within the trade union movement.

The seeming battery of provisions unions claim to have in operation, simply as a result of policy statements, implies that 'all is well in our house'.

Several unions declared in no uncertain terms their belief that a formal policy statement was unnecessary and irrelevant because equal opportunity had been a fact of life since the union's inception.

If formal policy statements and declarations were sufficient to eradicate institutional and individual racism then those enshrined in the documents of the unions contacted would certainly have done the job.

However, the reality as we observe it is from the evidence substantially different from this position.

Below we give examples of formal declarations plus the statements of those few unions which would have us believe that formal opposition is unnecessary. In some cases copies of statements were enclosed with the questionnaire; in others they were summarised.

A number of unions have statements in several forms, including some which have declarations enshrined in rulebooks.

For example, ASTMS has passed several conference resolutions condemning racism and calling for action from its National Executive Committee. The most recent of these was at the 1983 Annual Conference. It reads as follows:

"This Annual Conference recognises that there is massive institutional racism in British Industry and instructs the NEC and all negotiating officers to make the union's existing commitment to fight against racism and racial disadvantage a high priority for as long as is necessary to achieve complete equality of opportunity.

In particular, the NEC should draw up guidelines for negotiators to use in obtaining non-discrimination agreements and operating the monitoring schemes necessary for their enforcement, and should especially encourage lay negotiators and full-time officials of the union to attend one of the con-

tinuing programme of race relations courses at Whitehall College.

These guidelines should be based on the 1982 Whitehall College report. Accordingly, Conference instructs the NEC to circulate this report, together with any draft representatives guide already produced, to all groups within the Association in order to stimulate discussion and initiate early action in the field of equal opportunities.

The NEC is further instructed to draw up, in consultations with Divisions, a list of major national employers with whom special efforts will be made to conclude effective equal opportunity agreements.

Conference also instructs the NEC to make necessary arrangements for all divisional officers to receive, as soon as possible, appropriate training at Whitehall College in the field of Race Relations."

Quite an impressive motion – on paper. As we shall see a little later, ASTMS has been less impressive in actually fulfilling these provisions. Other unions claiming to have policy statements include AUEW-TASS, BU, GMWU, NALGO and NATFHE.

Unions which claim to have opposition to racism enshrined in their rulebooks are, for example, CPSA, NUJ and NUT.

For two unions at least it would seem that life is already a haven of equality within their union; for they have no such statement of opposition and feel strongly that it is unnecessary.

In the case of UCW it is stated quite simply 'We have no anti-racist policy'. The issue was pursued at the interview where the officer reiterated that point, saying that while there were clearly some racists at UCW branches, no 'trade union referrals' had been made at all. He added that large numbers of 'coloureds' were members of the union, that many sat on committees at various levels and that some had held senior posts. This confirmed to him his view that there was no racial discrimination in UCW.

The NUR statement speaks for itself and we print below the letter sent to us in place of a questionnaire. The NUR's answer to this first question is best understood in the context of the introductory comments made in the same letter:

"Most of the questions in the questionnaire appear to me to be irrelevant to the situation in this Union as all of our members have equal opportunity and there is no discrimination against any member for any reason whatsoever...

... Have we adopted an anti-racist policy?

The answer to that question as it is phrased must be 'No.' However many years ago some difficulties were experienced at certain depots on the railways where members were making difficulties if black people were appointed to promotional positions.

These difficulties were reported to our Executive Committee and instructions given that no one should be barred from securing promotion on account of colour.

There have been no known instances in recent years and it is believed that the promotion arrangements providing equal opportunity are working well as is evidenced by the staff one sees on the railways and on the tubes occupying supervisory positions."

We have note of many cases of discrimination and allegations of lack of support for NUR black members from the NUR. The most recent of these was reported in the Caribbean Times in July this year.* We cannot, therefore, give any credence to the NUR's claim that there is 'no discrimination against any member for any reasons whatsoever.

The Group's view is that formal opposition to racism, not only within the trade union movement but in every other area of life, must be explicitly and unequivocally voiced in the strongest terms and at the highest level, as a minimum condition for all trade unions. This in no way constitutes effective opposition to racism but is a necessary start in any programme of action.

We call upon all trade unions to review their existing statements in this area and to satisfy themselves, their membership and other institutions in British society that all that can be done is being done.

In addition, unions should ensure that all such statements are available and distributed to all union members, as well as to any appropriate organisations and individuals with whom the union has contact.

Provisions to combat racism

We asked unions:

"What provisions have been made by your union for combatting racism within your own internal organisation? (We are thinking here of officers appointed, race relations day-schools and seminars, handbooks, negotiators' packs, advice sheets, etc.) Please give details."

*This refers to the case of the ticket collector at an east London station who was stabbed through the eye with a metal bar and who subsequently died.

To most unions this question was clear, and so too were their replies. However, a number of unions apparently misunderstood the question and commented on provisions for negotiating equal opportunity policies with employers on behalf of their members.

Whether this was a genuine misunderstanding is unclear. Even so most unions understood that the question was directed at their own structure and procedures.

The types of provisions that exist include committees (mainly advisory), day-schools and seminars for officials and/or members, leaflets, journals or other publications, and special appointments. One union claims it has a positive action programme for appointing black people. (We discuss the issue of special appointments later on in this chapter so we do not refer to it here.)

Of course, the provisions which unions say exist are, on initial investigation, impressive. Many unions seemed honest and candid in outlining the strengths and weaknesses of such provisions as did exist but others felt their provisions were beyond reproach.

Six unions said they had implemented no provisions because it was unnecessary. The views adopted by these unions was that as they had condemned racism in their rulebooks of at conferences, this was sufficient to prevent its existence.

This view was held despite the fact that several unions admitted that such statements had been made many years ago, had not especially been brought to members' attention and may have been forgotten.

Examples of unions where committees exist as part of their provisions are ASTMS, NALGO, NUPE and NUJ. ASTMS provided a brief outline of the development of its own policy in this area between 1978 and 1983. Developments during the period saw the establishment of a Race Relations Sub-Committee by the National Executive Committee in 1978.

The committee had organised several conferences over the years. The National Executive Committee had also agreed the setting up of a Race Relations National Advisory Council based on divisional representation and this Council held its first meeting in January 1984. Its members are mainly white.

The divisional committees of ASTMS are also encouraged 'to set up their own Race Relations Sub-Committees, with particular emphasis on the participation of ethnic minority members'.

In 1982 NALGO established a Race Equality Working Party which submitted a report to

the 1984 conference. This committee was made up mainly of white members and led to much acrimonious discussion within the union. As a consequence many issues of contention are yet to be resolved.

After its report was submitted to the conference in June the Race Equality Working Party was disbanded.

Black members groups have existed in NALGO for some time although in an unofficial capacity until recently. These groups have now been officially sanctioned, but only since the 1984 conference. NALGO also runs work schools on race equality.

Other unions with similar kinds of groups are the NUJ which has a Race Relations Working Party.

In addition NUPE has had Race Relations Advisory Committees in the London Division for the last five years, and has recently established a national Race Equality Advisory Committee.

The GMBATU has a regional conference, publications, negotiators handbooks and an officer designated 'to include Race Relations matters amongst his other duties.'

The GMWU which of course, incorporates GMBATU in the separate questionnaire submitted added that courses were run for stewards, though no details were given.

ACTT and NUT also run schools or seminars.

The four-day shop steward training course run by ACTT has a half-day devoted to equal opportunities and NUT holds a number of 'racism awareness courses' at the union's training centre with the objective of enabling participants to run their own workshops locally.

The TGWU questionnaire was somewhat unclear but it stated that the responsibility for organising such courses should lie with the TUC. No further relevant comments were added.

The only mention of any positive action programmes actually being implemented at present comes from AUEW-TASS. They say:

'TASS operates a Positive Action Programme for appointing officials with ethnic background, or females, to the union. Divisions are regularly given advice on positive action programmes.'

This seems a salutary development and if, upon investigation, it proves to provide special measures to ensure that black and minority group officials are well represented among the existing workforce then it would demonstrate how such measures can be implemented within the existing legislative

framework provided by the 1976 Race Relations Act, without unions having to make any fundamental changes to their constitutions.

For this reason the details of AUEW-TASS's 'Positive Action Programme' merits early inquiry.

Many unions, including several already quoted, produce a range of leaflets, books or other publications. A number of examples were submitted with the questionnaires and include articles condemning racism, articles calling for black and white solidarity, as well as negotiators' packs and leaflets.

We have pointed out that six unions claimed that they had no provisions to combat racism. The CPSA points out:

"Racism within the union has never been a problem. Racism within the Civil Service does exist and many steps are now being taken to eradicate and form of discrimination."

The CPSA failed to say what these steps consisted of. If this first sentence is to be believed then surely they will have much to teach other unions. The NGA claims:

"Where cases of racism occur we use the provisions of the NGA Rule Book to apply discipline in forms of suspension, fines or expulsion. The need for special measures, i.e. seminars, etc, has not arisen and no request received."

Clearly the power of the written word has freed the NGA from all racism; since special measures to tackle racial disadvantage appear, by its own admission, to be irrelevant to this particular task.

The NUR say that they 'issued propaganda inviting foreign nationals employed in the catering departments to join the NUR' a few years ago but have done nothing else since.

And UCATT explains.

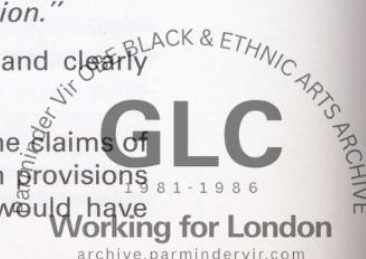
"There have been no provisions by this Union for the form of activity referred to in the question."

It adds further:

"This Union's policymaking body, The National Delegate Conference, has carried resolutions unanimously condemning any racialism and as such would regard this as being positive anti-racist policy, but there has been no follow-up on an implementation of the policy, apart from this declaration."

The BU and UCW state simply and clearly 'none'.

It is not possible to corroborate the claims of unions to have implemented such provisions as are outlined here since this would have



required a great deal of further follow-up research. Yet more importantly it would be beyond the scope of this study to provide an assessment of the extent to which such provisions are proving effective.

Our own assessment of effectiveness would be based on the information provided. The results seem far from impressive even acknowledging that many unions have only begun to tackle such issues in recent years.

In commenting on provisions many unions spoke about the debilitating effects that the general recession was having, i.e. rising unemployment, falling membership and consequent cutbacks.

If unions see racial equality as such a high priority as their policy statements imply then we consider that means would be found to ensure effective action to achieve it. Not all such action involves additional expenditure though some of it clearly does.

The unions have a choice to make.

Those unions that claim publicly to have done nothing and yet maintain that their own structures are free from racism must be challenged as a matter of priority.

Monitoring union employees

We asked unions:

Is there any information collected on the ethnic breakdown of your union's employees? If you do not have this information do you have any commitment to monitoring your workforce?

The answers to this question demonstrate clearly, in most unions, a failure to realise the contradiction between their demands that major employers with whom they bargain undertake the keeping of ethnic records, and their failure to carry out such measures themselves.

Several unions apparently misread the question – although it was emboldened in the original questionnaire – and mistook *employees* for *members*.

The fact that so many unions came out against the keeping of ethnic records is in gross contrast to their claims to know and understand the needs and aspirations of their black members.

Most unions made clear their belief that as they only employ a small number of people the issue was not a problem for them.

This reflects the failure of those unions to follow general advice, and statements made by numerous organisations, groups and

individuals, that they should examine critically their own structures if they are to attempt to tackle inequality.

We note that this is a particularly sticky area for unions as employers, because they must discuss and agree this issue with the union or unions which represent their employees.

Many of the issues relevant to a discussion of monitoring union employees are also relevant to monitoring union members and will be briefly restated in a later section on members.

However, there are important differences between the two and these will also be discussed.

Before discussing the responses of unions to this question it is important to make clear what we understand to be the nature and advantages of keeping ethnic records because there has been much controversy over such records.

By ethnic records we mean records of the ethnic origin of both employees and job applicants which would enable an employer to have at hand the details of the ethnic composition of his or her workforce.

Following the guidelines of the Commission for Racial Equality a good monitoring system would include the following:

Records of recruitment, training and promotion decisions showing the ethnic origins of candidates, decisions made and reasons for these decisions;

Records of the workforce showing the ethnic composition of each plant, department, section, shift and job category, and reflecting changes in distribution over periods of time.

(Equal opportunity in employment: a guide for employers. Commission for Racial Equality).

These are general guidelines for a comprehensive monitoring system for any size of employer, and any actual system selected would be best decided in the light of facts about a particular employer's circumstances.

Such policies equally apply to trade unions as employers, though as many are only employers of a small workforce it would not be necessary for a highly sophisticated system.

However, no matter how small the workforce, there is a vital need for records of this kind. It must be emphasised that records are not to be kept as an end in themselves, but rather as a means to highlighting questions about how the union as employer organises itself and the potentially detri-

mental effects on applicants and/or workers from black and minority groups.

Clearly there is a distinction to be made between ethnic monitoring being carried out by trade unions with the aim of improving their anti-racist practice; and monitoring carried out by agencies such as the DHSS where the aim is less specific and where there is no control over the use of the data collected.

Many employers reject the keeping of such records, ostensibly because of the cost and administrative arrangements which they entail.

We believe the real reason in many cases is because such records are bound to raise embarrassing questions about their recruitment and promotion policies.

Such embarrassing questions were raised, and not satisfactorily answered, when the Government undertook experimental monitoring of the civil service in Leeds.

There it was found that 2.2 per cent of civil servants were from ethnic minorities compared with 4.1 per cent minority population in the area and that despite higher qualifications (18 per cent of minority group applicants had degrees compared with 8 per cent of white applicants) only 30 per cent of interviewees from minority groups were fit for the civil service compared with 63 per cent of white interviewees.

We believe that monitoring forms a sound basis for questioning procedures which lead to situations such as these, and provide robust prima facie evidence of discrimination.

However, as we shall now see, the vast majority of unions do not subscribe to the keeping of such records.

All but two unions say that they do not keep records on the ethnic composition of their workforce.

There are only slight differences between the attitudes of unions on this matter.

Some refuse outright to keep such records offering little or no explanation, or claiming that they are unnecessary; others highlight practical problems, some of which are real enough; and a few claim that the issue is currently under discussion or that monitoring will begin soon.

A number of unions which have a small workforce claim to know the ethnic composition already and suggest that formal record keeping would not be of any use.

It is clear in these cases that their knowledge is impressionistic. In any case, where the information is known to unions it seems

never to have given them reason to ask why the composition is as it is, or to act on this information.

Having the information without acting upon it is as bad as not having the information at all.

In answer to this question several unions put a simple 'no' and added no further comment. These were BU, MU, NUR, NUTGW and UCW.

The CPSA and UCATT confused the question with records on members.

The GMWU also stated 'no' but GMBATU expanded upon their answer:

"No information collected but we are aware of the number of employees from various ethnic origins since we are a fairly small employer and we communicate with each other on a regular and friendly basis."

Two unions said that the keeping of records was not necessary. FTAT said:

"There is no collection of this kind of information. There is no commitment to monitor, the workforce as this is not considered necessary, particularly in view of the small size of the workforce."

And NGA pointed out:

"We do not operate an ethnic breakdown on staff nor monitoring procedures. We have employed staff from different ethnic minorities over many years."

Three unions claimed to know the ethnic composition of their workforce but apparently this was an incidental fact and not one that merited discussion or action.

ACTT answered: 'No – but we have very few employees and are easily able to see the ethnic breakdown of our employees'.

The NUT said that the matter had not formally been discussed and was unlikely to be in the near future. However, an informal count had been carried out of their small workforce.

The NUJ's answer is revealing. They say 'No – but all job adverts state that the NUJ is an equal opportunities employer. We have a significant number of black employees – about 20 per cent.' A remarkably high proportion of black workers, it seems, and the issue was taken up at interview. All the black workers, said the interviewee upon reflection, hold lowly clerical jobs with little chance of promotion.

Two unions pointed out that the matter is under discussion. However, it appears discussions are suffering from institutional inertia. ASTMS claimed:

"Not as yet. This is currently under discussion between the APEX staff and ASTMS Officials Joint Negotiating Committee."

Yet in the document outlining the development of ASTMS policy since 1978 it was noted that the 1982 conference instructed the National Executive Committee 'to ensure that ASTMS itself operates a model equal opportunities policy, including the introduction of positive action to improve the position of ethnic minorities within the Union, as permitted by Section 38 of the Race Relations Act 1976; if a thorough monitoring of the ethnic composition of Union members and employees indicates significant racial disadvantages'.

At that time this move probably seemed a giant step forward but if it has taken more than two years to get the matter of monitoring to begin to be discussed then how much longer will it take to get a system operational, and to act upon the information or introduce positive action? NUPE state:

"No. Union nationally committed to monitoring in principle, but not implemented for itself. Looking at it now."

NALGO and NATFHE claim that monitoring has been undertaken although only NATFHE's system has been formally agreed. NALGO say:

"Officially there is not agreement on monitoring with the staff-side unions. However, a NALGO Staff Black Workers Group has been set up by black members of staff and they have collected this information."

We are afraid that NATFHE's answer to the question was a simple 'yes'. We could not talk to the official to expand upon this. Clearly if such a system is going ahead it would be useful and interesting to find out how it was accepted and how it works operationally.

The question of ethnic record keeping is one which has caused much perplexity in recent years, not least in local authorities.

Fears of the potential misuse of such records are often quite genuine, but it does not stand as a sufficiently strong objection to the fact that without accurate and systematically collected information on institutional procedures and practices, an organisation cannot function effectively and fairly.

It will be argued by many that organisations such as trade unions have functioned effectively for years without such information. But we reject this for it has been at the expense, and to the detriment, of black and minority group citizens in this society, and this has reduced the effectiveness of their organisations.

This group does not claim that monitoring will provide the ultimate solution to the problems which beset black and minority group trade unionists as a result of racism. Far from it.

Monitoring must not be seen as an end in itself. It is, and remains, essentially a means to an end.

By collecting this information one can begin to ask questions about why the situation is as it is.

We believe strongly that the case for the keeping of ethnic records on the workforce, in whatever area of society, has been proven. We accept that there are practical problems and that there will be more expenditure implications. We do not believe that all aspects of monitoring raise expenditure. How do we believe that these problems are insurmountable.

The problems of defining ethnic groups, maintaining anonymity of individuals and ensuring adequate precautions against misuse have been widely discussed in Britain and information is readily available in the form of publications. There are also people who are available to talk about the lessons that they have learnt. Such information can be obtained from the CRE and the GLC.

Systems must be discussed at high levels and must be discussed seriously. There is no uniform system with universal applicability. Unions must develop their own system depending on the particular conditions in their union and consultation with members is vital.

We believe strongly that the keeping of records will raise many questions about institutional procedures and practices, and institutional racism endemic to trade union structures.

The keeping of records as set out in the CRE Code of Practice will be an asset in the struggle for greater equality.

We realise that unions will not readily accept the benefits of such records and the strategy for getting them to adopt records has also to be discussed seriously. Such records should not be allowed to dominate discussion of measures to promote equality or become an end in themselves. If record keeping is accepted then mechanisms must be established to ensure that the results of the records are both discussed and acted upon.

Discussion on record keeping can be used to precipitate broader discussion and action, generally, about racism in trade unions.

Without the information to demonstrate that equality is a fact, it remains a fallacy.

Working for London

We know that many black and minority group unionists believe equality in unions to be a fallacy and that unless unions are prepared to demonstrate that:

(a) black needs, requirements and aspirations are being met and

(b) that unions are taking concrete steps to tackle racism within the trade union movement then they will need to continually raise and maintain discussion of these issues.

Such a strategy has been adopted successfully within the realm of local authorities in recent years.

Trade unions as equal opportunity employers

We asked unions:

"What steps has your union taken to implement an equal opportunities programme for your employees?"

The contradictions here between unions as negotiators and as employers which have been stated several times earlier are as blatant to this group as they are hidden from the unions.

As with the keeping of records many unions do not see as necessary this examination of their own policies as employers, to ensure that they are fair and impartial.

Many unions believe that, as their rulebooks or constitutions state they treat all members fairly, then this must be the case in practice.

This remains their view despite publications from the TUC, CRE, GLC and many others demonstrating that the 'colour-blind' approach possesses many flaws and often leads to indirect discrimination.

This is so not only for black and minority group trade unionists but for women and disabled trade unionists.

Again unions claim that as they are only small employers, examination is not required; or because they know that they have one or two black workers, regardless of position, then all must be okay.

We reject this position entirely and argue strongly that unions must themselves fulfil the conditions they expect other employers to meet.

If unions insist on claiming that consideration of their own procedures of recruitment is unnecessary then they must produce evidence to demonstrate that they are fair and equal in the treatment of all applicants.

We believe that they will fail to do this. In

light of our findings we believe that union procedures are institutionally unfair. We also do not believe that unions fail to understand and recognise that this is the case.

From the information we received in the survey only three unions said that they have explicit policies as equal opportunity employers.

These are AUEW - TASS, NUJ and NATFHE. None provide details of how such a policy is implemented or reviewed.

ASTMS, NALGO and NUT say that the matter is being discussed.

ASTMS point to the discussions with APEX, the union that represents their employees; discussions which, we have seen in the last section, seem to have been going on for years.

NALGO say 'The staff-side unions have set up a Working Party who will be submitting proposals to the Staff Whitley and the issues are currently under discussion'.

Officials of NUT say that a memo went to senior officials suggesting the union declare itself an equal opportunity employer. No reply had to date been received.

The majority of unions either said they had done nothing because there was no need or failed to reply.

The GMBATU and GMWU, and the NUR provide us with classic colour-blind approaches.

GMBATU say 'We recruit and promote each person on their ability to perform a certain task or tasks, irrespective of colour, race, religion or sex.'

And GMWU merely points out that no measures have been taken.

The NUR say 'No member is prevented by reason of race from aspiring to any position within the union'.

The TGWU claims 'no problem here' and say that its own employees are also represented by TGWU which prevents any complications.

Other unions have nothing to say.

From answers to other questions a number of unions have taken measures to enhance the possibilities for fairness for employees and recruits.

For example, the ACTT structure of equality officers is described in a different answer and highlights how each of the union 'shops' has a post of equality officer who seeks to ensure fair treatment for all, with emphasis on women and black and minority groups.

However, most unions have followed their traditional practices of the 'colour-blind' approach.

It is widely believed that one of the most unfair practices for its effects on opportunities for black people is internal advertising. This is practised widely within unions and must discriminate against black and minority group applicants in many situations due to the existing imbalances of black workers in trade union organisations.

Formal declaration of a union as an equal opportunity employer is insufficient to change a thing unless action is taken. This has been demonstrated in the realm of local authorities. A range of measures can be taken, most fundamental of which is a review of existing practices and procedures.

Again, unions might be frightened of this because of its expenditure implications. Again, we argue that effective review can be undertaken without substantial expenditure.

Special appointments

Unions were asked:

"Have any persons been appointed with special responsibility for tackling racism and racial discrimination within your union? At what level is the appointment made and what other responsibilities does the person have?"

In all unions, high ranking officers have responsibility to ensure fair play for all.

In practice this often means ultimate responsibility, as officers and officials lower down will have these duties as part of their brief.

In some instances the higher ranking officer will take particular concern to see that certain aspects of the policy, for example, with regard to race, women or disabled members, receives special attention. This will depend on the person's workload, as well as their priorities and those of other high ranking officers or committees.

When we asked this question, we did not mean to suggest that all unions ought to have a specific officer dealing only with race.

We recognise that this type of appointment, as with race relations groups or committees, may lead to a sectioning off of work, and specifically to other groups and individuals shrugging off responsibility for these matters altogether. This view was reflected in some of the comments received from unions.

We recognised that a number of unions had made special appointments such as equality officers, or others with general titles such as

education officer incorporating responsibilities for race relations. We suspected that in some instances these officers had large workloads and found race being tagged on. We believed that the area merited consideration.

What we set out to ascertain in asking this question was what conception of the role and work the union itself had. We anticipated that some unions had achieved very little in the area of combatting racism and felt that the appointment of officers with special responsibilities may have been seen as a move to precipitate quicker results.

As stated, all unions have a person with (ultimate) responsibility for ensuring fair play, so it is difficult to distinguish between how far different officers and different ranks can achieve what they set out to do.

Certainly we have received information on a large number of such officers who vary greatly in rank, grade and the other tasks expected of them. Some unions have a national officer plus regionally based officers or officials.

As was pointed out earlier, there are a wide range of officers and the titles do not really indicate the nature and range of their work, nor their ranks within their own union. For this reason it is not advisable to comment on such officers by referring to specific unions.

Rather we think it is important to make two points.

Firstly, no union had an officer designated to work entirely with the position and circumstances of the union's black and minority members, or to deal with issues affecting the union's position on racism more generally, that is, relating to affairs outside the union.

We found no equivalent of a race relations officer such as exists in a number of local authorities, who is there to 'sensitise' the authority, and ensure that its policies take account of the presence of black people and other minority groups within its area.

But there are officers who spend a great deal of their time dealing with issues relating to black and minority group trade unionists.

Secondly, we would like to open up this area for debate and question whether, given the longstanding union membership of black people and the failure of unions to ensure that equal opportunity really does exist, there ought to be such officers who can ensure that such issues are always taken on board.

Such officers could exist to precipitate a more explicit discussion of matters of policy and practice which adversely affect black and minority group applicants and ensure that

counter measures are taken to offset the effects of racism.

We believe that such a discussion could lead to more effective measures being implemented but we are not optimistic about the willingness of unions to take it on board.

Monitoring union membership

Unions were asked:

"Is there any information collected on the ethnic breakdown on your union's membership? If you do not have this information do you have any commitment to monitoring your membership?"

Many of the issues raised here were discussed in an earlier section on monitoring union employees.

There we highlighted the need to have accurate and systematically collected information; to have agreement on the usefulness of the records from union officers and members; the practicalities involved in collecting records; the need to ensure adequate safeguards and confidentiality; and the need to ensure that records are a basis for highlighting action that can be taken.

The issues are relevant here although this area has a slightly different emphasis.

Ethnic records usually refer to records kept by employers to ensure that the needs and requirements of their workers are being met. Here we are not talking about employees, rather about members of an organisation.

We believe that there are many advantages in keeping records on members, though our argument for such records are not as strong as they are for records on employees.

Nevertheless, records can help to highlight unfair practices and procedures which impede the active and full participation of unionists from black and minority groups.

We would question how unions can expect to act on behalf of their members if they do not accept that racism is a feature of trade union organisation or that black members may have different needs or know where different groups of members are situated.

To argue that all union members are union members and have the same needs is the 'colour-blind' approach which we reject entirely.

Unions must acknowledge the conflict that also exists.

It seems to us, that there has been no real attempt by trade unions to act on behalf of all black and minority group members. This is

the case notwithstanding the existence of tiny numbers of officials and officers drawn from the black community.

Only one union claimed that records on the ethnic composition of their membership were already being kept or had been agreed. NATFHE again claims that this is so without providing details:

"An exercise is currently taking place. It should be added that not all members from ethnic minorities are altogether pleased that it is taking place. The arguments about vulnerability which have been raised elsewhere have been put again."

The NUJ seems to be tackling the issue –

'No information so far; we are in the process of devising a questionnaire to establish how many "black" members we have'.

NALGO said:

'Despite a commitment to monitoring it has not been implemented'. TGWU said a note was kept on numbers who attend courses.

Most unions said that records were not kept and felt that they were not particularly desirable or that the practical problems involved in collecting them would be immense. UCATT is a prime example of real difficulties:

"We have no information collected on the ethnic breakdown of our Union membership, bearing in mind that in the Construction Industry, which is very much a cosmopolitan industry made up of all races, creeds and colours with a fluctuating membership, it would be difficult to establish the type of information referred to in the questions."

Others highlighted difficulties because of their previous systems of receiving branch returns – for example, ASTMS, GMWU, FTAT – and others talked of difficulties of definition, acceptance to members and so on.

In most cases it was clear that there had been either no discussion at all of whether such records ought to be kept, or that discussion had been per chance and not of a sustained nature.

In several cases, though, it was pointed out that issues had been discussed and rejected at a senior level.

Thus the NUT say 'No. Working Party on Multi-ethnic Education asked for this to be done but the membership committee refused'.

The BU said that an executive decision had been taken not to keep records.

Again, the important issue is not that records ought to be kept for themselves but rather

that they can provide information which can be the basis for action being taken.

We suspect that unions fear the implications of the results of such records and the demands that would be made for black members to be more adequately taken into consideration in the way the union is organised.

It is important to ask how large the black and minority group membership of each union is and how far this reflects the presence of black and minority group workers in the labour market; it is important to ascertain whether the number of black officers reflects the proportion of black members; and it is important to ask whether the existence of such members is acknowledged and measures taken to counter the effects of any racist practices or procedures which discriminate against them.

It is only when unions have such information and can answer such questions that they can hope to persuade black and minority group trade unionists that they are really committed to combatting racism.

Black participation and representation

We asked unions:

"In what ways is encouragement given to members of black and ethnic minority groups to:

a) participate actively in your union's activities?

b) play a leading role in your union?

It is worth restating the fact that black people have consistently been members of trade unions in larger proportions when measured against numbers in the working population than have white people. Thus the latest PSI survey of the circumstances of black people in Britain, published this year, shows that 56 per cent of Asian and West Indian employees are union members compared with 47 per cent of white employees.

However, it is still the case that, apart from a small number of unions, the existence of black and minority group officers and officials is conspicuously absent.

The same PSI survey showed that 11 per cent of white male union members held some kind of post, yet only 4 per cent of Asian or West Indian males did.

The proportion for women is even lower, with 6 per cent of whites and 3 per cent of blacks holding posts.

It is true that some unions have a number of black and minority group officers, officials and members active in their affairs. And a number of unions currently have, or have had at sometime in the past, such individuals in places on executives committee, nationally and locally.

This fact has been pointed out by many of the unions that responded to the survey.

However, we have yet to discover a union that has in its organisational structure black and minority group officers/executives, male and female, that is anywhere near their proportion as members of the union.

It is as if unions believe that one or two black or ethnic minority individuals, including the occasional women, scattered about the union represents evidence of equal opportunity and fair play for all.

Some people have suggested that the absence of black and ethnic minority officers, and so on, is due to the fact that they do not come forward to take up such places.

Whatever amount of credence is given to this we argue that it is more important to ask what is the reason that individuals do not come forward?

We suggest that the answer to this question will be uncovered in many of the traditional procedures and practices of trade unions, and in the attitudes of officers at all ranks. It is true, as pointed out by one of the unions interviewed, that many members treat their union as if it were some type of private club, i.e. they pay their premiums, request help or advice when in difficulties and do not otherwise get involved at all.

Such a charge may be applicable to all members and black members would be included. If it is a general problem then it must be tackled, but the specific problems of racism within unions faced by black members require specific attention.

Many unions stated that they had made a number of special provisions to encourage black and minority unionists to be active in the union. These measures included co-opted seats, work of special officers, conferences or leaflets. Other unions maintained their colour-blind approach saying that all their members were encouraged to be active and that no special attention was or ought to be paid to black members.

ACTT, NUJ and NUT said that they had reserved or co-opted seats on committees or working parties for black members. Again these seemed mainly to be advisory committees.

ACTT's National Committee on Equality is

made up of twenty places, four of which are reserved for black members. In addition the union has local equality representatives at its 'shops' with responsibility for encouraging black and female participation in union affairs.

NUJ has a Race Relations Working Party on which black members can be co-opted though no details about how it functions were provided.

And the NUT has two ethnic minority members co-opted to serve on its Working Party on Multi-Ethnic Education, as well as having sent a circular to all its division and associations to urge them 'to involve ethnic minority members in union affairs and to ensure their concerns are represented'.

The NUT added that a suggestion that a black co-optee be agreed for the national executive was turned down, though no details were provided.

A number of unions claim to be doing several things to encourage participation. Most notable of these, comparatively, is NALGO.

The report produced by the Race Equality Working Party for the 1984 conference made a wide number of recommendations for action which could be taken to change practices and attitudes within the union, and effect similar changes outside the union.

These include positive action, race equality committees at NALGO branches, black co-optees to the National Executive Committee, special efforts to recruit black people for education courses and an end to internal advertising.

At the time of writing there is still a dispute over the manner in which the working party was set up and the fact that most of its members were white. It is not clear what developments will ensue as black members of NALGO were especially critical of the working party.

Prior to the 1984 conference there has been much discussion of racism within the union, and black members groups and staff groups were meeting. It was also noted that an officer exists who, in practice, deals with more race relations issues and often represents the views of black members to senior levels in the union.

ASTMS, again noted earlier, encourages its divisions to set up race relations sub-committees and to seek ethnic minority participation, though whether this encouragement extends beyond a circular to the appropriate official is not clear. There is an active committee in the London Division of the union.

GMBATU say that encouragement to their

black members is facilitated through conferences, seminars, education, courses, publications, statements, regular circulation of information and by encouragement from full-time and lay officers.

As it was not possible to interview the officer, no elaboration on the effects of these measures was obtained.

NATFHE said that 'A great deal of work is taking place in the London Region and there is no reason to think this is atypical' but again no details are provided.

And NUPE state that its London Division Race Relations Committee has spent a lot of time encouraging its members to take up other positions in the union.

NUTGW claim that most of its members are from minority groups and therefore widely active. It states:

"It is not unusual for our factories to be mainly minority groups and it is taken as normal by all concerned for any of those groups to supply the stewards. Our main London branch has always numbered amongst its members representatives of such groups."

The remaining unions claim to make no special provisions for any members and say that they encourage all their members to be active. It is clear from several of these that the union felt that to make a distinction between members on the basis of ethnic differences would be wrong.

The MU say simply 'No distinction is drawn between members'.

The NGA say that 'All members are encouraged to play a full part. We do not allow special treatment to any group'.

The NUR say:

"No particular encouragement is given to members of black and other minority groups to participate actively in the Union's activities or to play a leading role in the Union. We should like all members to be activists and try to encourage them to be so."

And the TGWU argue 'All members are equal, therefore no problems. To have it separate means that we are fighting the race issue rather than the class issues'.

The TGWU either fails to realise, or refuses to acknowledge, that this stance is in stark contrast to the position that it has adopted on many occasions involving its black members, most notable of which was the dispute at Imperial Typewriters.

To conclude we argue that the 'colour-blind'

approach makes for unfair differential treatment of black and minority group members.

To claim that all members are equal persons is naive, and a shirking of responsibilities.

Black and minority group members do have differing priorities and differing needs not shared by other union members. These priorities and needs have come about precisely because of the racism that is endemic to the trade union movement. One of the foremost problems facing black and minority group trade unionists is to get their white fellow members, and their union itself, to understand and accept this.

This is a very important area of discussion and is topical currently with discussions in the Labour Party about the need for black sections, and similar discussions taking place in a number of unions.

The basic argument is that unions fail to represent the needs and priorities of their black and minority group members and that representation through black sections will counter this.

This revolves around discussion of the right of black members to meet separately on the basis of being black.

At the time of writing, the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group is itself organising a conference to discuss these issues.

Provisions for black women

We asked unions:

"We are particularly interested in problems faced by ethnic minority women. Do any provisions exist to take account of the particular problems they face?"

In all the questions asked in the questionnaire there was, of course, scope for unions to highlight any particular efforts being made on behalf of black and minority group women trade unionists.

However, we felt that unless we brought special attention to this issue then it would remain implicit in all the answers provided, i.e. that the actions being taken generally would subsume any action taken on behalf of black and minority group women.

We were correct in our assumption since any special mention of women has been conspicuously absent in the answers to earlier questions. It is clear from a wide range of documentation that in general all women have a tough time in unions. Black and minority group women are likely to face even more difficulties, since they face the double discrimination of racism and sexism.

The traditional patronising and condescending attitudes of many male trade unionists, and the procedures and practices which have become endemic to unions over the years have only recently begun to be challenged.

There are, as is well known, a number of measures which have been implemented to take account of problems faced by women generally, through committees, officers, conferences, and so on. This has often been too little, too late and we cannot be sure that such measures take into account the particular problems faced by black women.

There are signs of achievement in the union movement, with women found here and there in the upper echelons of hierarchies, as well as being particularly active in certain areas.

But, like black representation, these signs cannot be taken to mean that there is equality. And when we search for black and minority group women in high positions, we find none.

We wanted to know if trade unions had found it necessary to identify, accept and combat the special problems that racism has caused for black and minority group women.

What we found is a range of measures initiated on behalf of women generally, few of which had taken specific account of the differences of black and minority group women. These measures seem to assume that benefits for all women will be beneficial to black women.

As it was pointed out earlier, measures to benefit union members generally do not necessarily benefit black union members, mainly because there are some conflicting objectives; similarly, measures for women will not all be of benefit to black women.

There is little in what we found in this survey to suggest, persuade or convince us that the problems which we believe black and minority group women face in the trade union movement are likely to become less severe in the near future.

NALGO, NATFHE, and NUPE have some kind of women's committee, so too does AUEW-TASS.

NALGO have a National Equal Opportunity Committee which deals with issues relating to problems faced by women. They point out that:

"There are no standing provisions to cater for the problems faced by black women in particular. The issue is increasingly being tackled by the National Equal Opportunity Committee which has a remit only for sex and sexual discrimination. A national confer-

ence of black women in NALGO is in the pipeline. It will be facilitated by NEOC but its content will be decided by black women activists in the union."

NATFHE say:

"There is a battery of provisions for women members in general. This may not wholly address the problems of ethnic minority women, of course, but we have provided creches, baby sitting allowances, reserved places in the structure and special training, so as to greatly increase women's participation. This has had a prior call on resources so as to see it through properly."

NUJ point out 'In addition to our Race Working Party we have an extremely active Equality Council dealing with issues affecting women particularly', and NUPE say that they have no special measures for ethnic minority women 'but do have a Women's Advisory (Committee) nationally and in the London Division. Most members of the Race Relations Advisory (Committee) in London are ethnic minority women'.

And ASTMS:

"The problems of ethnic minority women are within the remit of both our Race Relations NAC and our Women's NAC. Specific issues are dealt with by either of these bodies as and when they arise."

The ACTT say that they do not have any particular measures except that equality officers generally 'push' on issues involving women, and the union makes a number of donations to black womens' groups.

The NUTGW say that 'ninety per cent' of their members are women and issues facing women are regularly discussed and dealt with. No mention was made of the proportion of black women.

The remaining unions claim that any particular problems facing black and minority group women are already provided for by the union's existing provisions. Others just say 'no'.

GMWU say that the matter 'is under active review' while GMBATU says that 'The same facilities are open to all our staff' and that women members are free to discuss any specific matters with any of the appropriate officers.

NGA says 'Women can use the disciplinary or complaints procedure of the NGA.'

BU, CPSA, FTAT, MU, UCW and NUR say that no provisions exist.

The TGWU argues, again, 'No. All members are equal and issues are fought on that basis'.

In the same way that many unions manifest a 'colour-blind' approach they are also blind to the differences which exist between male and female trade unionists, and indeed to the differences which exist within this latter group.

Of course, we need not point out that it is in the favour of male trade unionists to adopt such a position, and that female trade unionists, especially black and minority group women, are the ones that are detrimentally affected by this.

We find that the problems facing women generally are great, and those facing black women even greater.

Moreover a failure to recognise the specific problems which black and other minority women face results in a failure to bring union support to those areas where workers are most vulnerable.

The case of homeworkers is a classic example of this, particularly when one remembers that employers in the east London rag trade themselves have calculated that anything from 30-50 per cent of their homeworkers are Asian or Cypriot women.

If there are no special measures taken or no special consideration given, in a way which is central and integral to the whole of a union's operations, then equality will remain an uncertainty and probably an unreality.

Provisions in different languages

We asked unions:

"Does your union offer advice facilities, guidelines, leaflets, etc, in languages other than English? Can you provide us with any examples?"

A number of unions have members who do not speak fluent English or who are more comfortable communicating in a language other than English.

For this reason alone there are advantages in having important information – union rule-books, constitutions, procedures, advice, etc – in an appropriate language(s) other than English.

The particular language(s) will depend on the membership of the union. Further than this, printing documents in languages other than English, and providing other facilities such as advice sessions in different languages, has much to its credit in demonstrating union willingness to provide its service for all its members, and its commitment to a multi-cultural ethos.

The extent to which such action could and should be taken will depend on the proportions of members requiring such services and the costs likely to be incurred.

We found a small number of unions which produce, or have produced in the past, certain documents of leaflets in languages other than English. We found in the majority of cases that unions did not feel such a course of action was necessary or advantageous, even though it was quite clear that few unions, if any, had investigated the matter.

In most unions all members from black and minority groups will speak fluent English and unions may be correct in claiming that additional provision is unnecessary. We are not certain of this and would like to be convinced.

It lies with those who are familiar with the workings of unions, especially any where there are members who do not have a good command of English, to let us, and their own union, know how appropriate and beneficial this course of action would be.

Nine unions said that they have at sometime produced documents in languages other than English. The languages included Asian languages as well as some South European languages.

The documents included rule books, advice sheets and occasional leaflets on campaigns in which a union was involved. Some of these documents were not produced directly for members of the union but rather for other individuals with whom the members have professional contact (e.g. NATFHE produce leaflets during campaigns aimed at Adult Education Students); or for potential recruits to the union, thus NUR several years ago produced such leaflets.

From the information provided it seems that no union regularly produces, as a matter of policy, documents in languages other than English.

The nine unions which have produced such documents are GMWU, GMBATU, BU, NALGO, NATFHE, NUPE, NUR, TGWU, NUTGW.

The BU produced versions of its rulebook in three Asian languages several years ago after some concern was expressed that some of its members did not speak English. The view was expressed during the interview that this had made it easier for some members to participate in union affairs. The exercise had not been repeated and the rulebooks were now somewhat out of date.

GMWU, GMBATU and NALGO said leaflets

were occasionally published on an ad hoc basis.

GMWU said that such leaflets were 'mainly in South European languages and specific to the hotel and catering industry.'

And GMBATU point out:

"We occasionally prepare recruitment literature in various languages including European languages, especially for our staff in the Hotel and Catering Industry. We do not print our regular or specialist publications in other languages. However, we would be prepared to print certain leaflets/documents in other languages if there is a demand for the same."

NALGO said that some leaflets for publicity purposes had been produced but as a rule documents were in English. An exception was leaflets for the Muhammad Idrish Campaign which involved one of NALGO's members threatened with deportation.

NUPE said 'The London Division has produced leaflets in four languages including a Spanish recruitment leaflet. There is one in process of production in five South Asian languages'.

And NUTGW said that they had produced advice leaflets in seven different languages.

No union except TGWU said they had provided any facilities, other than documents, in languages other than English.

The TGWU response suggests that some courses had been run in a different language but that they had elicited little response. As the comments on the questionnaire are ambiguous, whether this is in fact the case is not really clear.

In addition TGWU had produced leaflets in some Asian languages.

The overall impression from the answers to this section is that unions have not really given this issue much thought. We believe that it should be given serious consideration, especially in unions where it is known that large numbers of members do not speak English fluently, or speak it only with difficulty.

Information from other sources suggests that in some areas of work, situations arise where union meetings are held in English despite the fact that a majority of the members present do not speak fluent English.

It is ridiculous that unions do not, in such circumstances, seek to have a representative who speaks the language common to the members, or make provisions for an interpreter to be present.

Contact with black organisations

We asked unions:

"Have any procedures been established for contact with black and minority group organisations?"

Most unions which returned questionnaires stated that they had set up formal or informal procedures for contact with a large number of organisations including many black and minority group organisations.

The procedures ranged from union affiliation or subscription to organisations, campaigns or pressure groups at national, regional or local levels, or to members within a union also being active in black groups.

The types of groups ranged considerably. Such contacts existed with Amnesty International, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, National Council for Civil Liberties, Labour Party Race Action Group, Commission for Racial Equality, Anti-Apartheid Movement, Liberation, Black Media Workers Association and Black Trades Unionists Solidarity Movement.

This range of groups would not necessarily all be considered as falling under the title 'black and minority group organisations' but many of them do, and others are clearly active over issues of relevance to black and minority groups.

In other cases unions did not have any formal procedures for such contact.

As all the answers to the question simply declared 'no', or where 'yes' just listed the organisations with whom contact was maintained we present below the unions in each category.

Those unions which said that no formal procedures were set up are BU, CPSA, FTAT, GMWU, MU, NALGO, TGWU, UCW, UCATT. A couple of these said they had members who were active in black organisations.

Those unions which said that procedures were established are ACTT, ASTMS, GMBATU, NATFHE, NGA, NUJ, NUPE, NUR.

Conclusion

The trade union movement has a major role to fulfil in challenging racism and promoting equal opportunity in British society today.

Trade unions have enormous scope and influence as employers, as providers of services and as major partners in the process of negotiations which affect all aspects of working life of the British labour force. And in other areas of life they are a major medium through which attitudes can be influenced and examples of good practices set.

With mass membership and support from working class people of this country, not only those who are employed but also the millions that are unemployed, trade unions are at the very centre of the processes which affect the views of the British public generally.

With such power, authority and influence at their command trade unions can considerably challenge all aspects of racism – institutional and individual, intentional and unintentional, overt and covert – and promote procedures and practices to advance equal opportunity.

We believe that unions are not fulfilling this major role and find that although trade unions express good intentions they pay little more than lip service to this struggle.

We believe that the findings of this report speak quite clearly for themselves.

We have written to over fifty different unions having significant numbers of members or employees in the London area and have received completed questionnaires from twenty of these unions. These questionnaires provide us with information about the policy stances of the unions, and the provisions and resources invested by them to ensure that they are combatting the racism that exists within their own internal structures and methods of organisation.

The twenty unions which have returned questionnaires have a combined national membership of more than six million and although no figures exist on the proportions of black members belonging to particular unions we know from information about the employment patterns of black people that these unions have a high proportion of black members.

We reiterate the point made several times in

the course of this report, that the information we have obtained comes direct from the unions themselves and that their statements on the progress they are making has been quoted in their own words extensively, and that the views expressed in this report have been reached on the basis of the information supplied to us by the unions.

The information that we have received in this survey does not persuade us that anything substantial has been achieved in this area.

We acknowledge that there are many signs of activity, such as committee meetings, workshops, booklets, leaflets, advice and so on.

We recognise, too, that some unions are confident that there are some signs of achievement which can be identified, as is exemplified by the tiny numbers of black people to be found active in union affairs, or the publications which have become available.

These signs are welcome and where it is clear that they are effective first steps in ensuring that racism is being challenged then they must be encouraged and supported. But we find that despite these signs of activity there is little to indicate substantial achievements. For this reason this report has had to be critical.

We believe very strongly that the signs and symbols of commitment to combatting racism are first steps, and welcome first steps at that. But such activity does not amount to an effective attack upon racism unless it can demonstrate that success is being achieved.

Black people from the Caribbean and Asia have been in Britain for over three decades; a smaller black population has been present in Britain since the sixteenth century.

Black people are not convinced that equal opportunity exists just because committees exist, or leaflets exist or a couple of black men or women can be found in some middle position in union affairs.

Black people have been constantly active in large numbers in union affairs and despite their continuing efforts they are not being rewarded.

The trade union movement is facing a particularly difficult time at the present moment.

The wider effects of the recession combined with the present government's policies and legislation are imposing great strains on the movement's resources and cohesion.

Black people are well aware of these

difficulties, as they particularly feel the adverse effects of recession and government policies.

But black people have always been committed to trade unions and have supported them in good times and bad. The test of commitment to principles must be how far these principles are upheld during the most difficult circumstances.

Unions cannot relax their commitment to the principles of unity and fair treatment to all.

We feel that the unions are already failing to do the most they can to combat racism and we fear the consequences for the trade union movement as a whole if this continues to happen.

What then are the major findings of this survey?

Just to sum up, self-completion questionnaires went out to over 50 different trade unions having significant numbers of members or employees in the Greater London area requesting information on the nature and extent of policies taken up, and provisions implemented, to combat the racism which exists within the internal structures and methods of organisation of unions.

The questionnaire highlighted areas we felt were of particular concern in challenging racism.

We requested information on formal policy statements, conference resolutions and motions passed. We asked what specific provisions had been implemented to ensure that the policy statements established, special appointments, training and advice, publications, and so on.

We wanted to know the information base on which such decisions had been taken, that is, whether records were kept on the ethnic origins of union employees or members and whether there was formal contact with black and minority group organisations.

We were particularly concerned about any provisions to combat the particular problems racism causes for black women within unions.

We asked unions about their own policies as equal opportunity employers and any particular measures taken to encourage black people to be active in union affairs.

Despite the wide ranging nature of the questions, the questionnaire was a short one (only three pages long) and unions were encouraged to supply additional information if they felt this was necessary.

A number of interviews were carried out with

officials within unions to expand upon the information contained in the questionnaires and clarify any ambiguous aspects.

The fact that we have received twenty completed questionnaires containing considerable information relating to all the areas highlighted demonstrates that the exercise was clear and straightforward.

Several unions wrote to us saying that they were about to fill in the questionnaire, or that they had no measures to combat racism.

One union said they participated in such surveys only where carried out by the TUC.

A large number of unions, approximately twenty-five, did not bother to respond at all, despite reminder letters and phone calls.

The names of all unions contacted can be found in Appendix II and the names of unions which returned questionnaires can be found in Appendix VII.

What we found overall was that there were strong words and rhetoric when it came to policy statements but that commitments took a low priority when it came to action.

All aspects of racism, racial discrimination, racial prejudice and racial abuse are formally castigated in rulebooks and conference decisions, and in a range of union journals and leaflets. Even so, we were surprised to learn that several unions had still not formally declared their opposition to racism and felt that it was unnecessary to do so.

These unions claimed that equal opportunity had always existed within their organisation, even when it was obvious to us from case histories and incidents reported in various areas that discrimination was frequently conspicuous.

What this amounts to is a substantial gap between the adoption of policy and its effective implementation. The policy statements are impressive; the provisions implemented to effect change are far from impressive.

There are some signs of developments which we welcome and encourage but which must be consolidated and taken further.

There is evidence of activity in a range of areas but it is not matched by evidence of success.

A number of unions have made specialist appointments of people such as equality officers with responsibilities for promoting equal opportunities, and there are a range of advisory committees, conferences, training sessions and publications which give some time to discussing racism.

Some of these provisions are devoted entirely to discussing racism.

Parliament of the Black & Ethnic Arts Archive
GLC
1981-1986
Working for London
archive.parvindervir.com

A discussion of racism within the trade union movement has taken on a high profile in some unions and the major obstacles to equal opportunity are beginning to be discussed.

But it must be acknowledged that it is only a start.

Several unions have declared themselves equal opportunity employers though no details were provided as to whether any particular measures followed this. If their policy statements against racism are anything to go by then they are clearly inadequate for the task.

A number of unions have held special conferences to discuss race relations and have encouraged black people and minority groups to attend.

These have been used to encourage black members to be more active in union affairs and to obtain comments and criticisms about the unions' achievements.

On a very limited scale rulebooks and advice sheets have been published in a range of languages to increase the involvement of union members who do not speak English well.

And a number of formal procedures have been laid down for contact with various black and minority group organisations, for benefiting from their advice and supporting them in their struggles against racism in the wider society generally.

There seems, then, to be slow but steady advances being made and many individuals committing a great deal of time and energy to overcoming the obstacles to equal opportunity.

However, for all the signs and symbols of commitment, and for all that seems favourable to trade union commitment in this area, there is much that is discouraging and alarming.

Some unions have refused point blank to adopt any form of anti-racist policy, insisting that such policies are irrelevant to their own unions and that their existing approach ensures fair treatment for all.

The existing approach of such unions is one built at the start of the union movement in the last century and which fails to take account of the ethnic and cultural diversity in British society at the present time.

This omission is racist in its effects and cannot fail to work to the detriment of black union members for all the reasons set out in the main body of this report.

Most unions have failed to take on board and

fulfil the commitments they expect of others with whom they bargain.

Many unions insist that employers promote equal opportunity policies yet fail to take on such policies themselves and, paying scant attention to principles, claim that their small workforces do not require such policies.

At this time not a single union has at its disposal systematically collected records on the ethnic breakdown of union employees or members, and only two unions say that such an exercise is currently taking place.

Unions claim that such an exercise is costly and time-consuming, would be difficult to carry out and is not really necessary. Yet these unions still claim to know the proportions of their black membership and the numbers of officials active.

These claims appear to be based on impressions and guesses.

Many unions say that they have no commitment to monitoring their own workforce or membership even though they call upon major employers to undertake such an exercise.

An area which seems to hold a particularly low priority is that of problems facing black and minority group women.

A number of committees and officers exist to deal with problems facing women generally but measures to take into account racism facing black women seem only to have been tagged on. The effect of this omission is a further distancing of black women from union involvement on either a representational or employed basis.

While a few unions recognise that publishing essential documents such as rulebooks and advice sheets in languages other than English enables larger numbers of non-English speaking members to be active in the union, they have not taken any steps to broaden this commitment right across the range of union activity.

And most other unions claim that such facilities are unnecessary, even when it is clear that the matter has not been investigated.

Although some unions have established formal links with organisations active on behalf of black and minority groups, they have not drawn upon the wealth and abundance of information and experience that exists in the wide range of such groups.

Many of the findings of this study have not come as a great surprise to the members of the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group.

We have, in individual capacities, been active

in the trade union movement for many years and have considerable experience which assisted us in evaluating and answering the responses of unions.

We felt it particularly important to give unions the chance to speak for themselves instead of taking unsubstantiated criticism from others.

Our report has been critical, but we believe that it has been critical in a constructive way.

We acknowledge the pressures on unions at this moment and the conflicting demands made on them. But they must be prepared to face valid criticisms and to meet these criticisms by improving the way that they operate.

We believe that the criticisms in this report are based on sound evidence provided by unions, and are valid and substantiated.

We expect unions to respond to these criticisms and fulfil their obligations to *all* members, black and white.

We recognise that there are many problems inherent in the trade union current system of organisation and that these problems affect all trade unionists in some way or another.

The kinds of problems we are thinking of here derive from the large size of unions, their hierarchical organisation and their massive membership which is geographically dispersed. This results in problems of communication, of decision making and so on.

This inhibits progress in unions generally but is a facet of the reality of life in modern industrial societies today.

There are, too, the problems of the historical basis of trade union organisation, the fact that they were established for predominantly white male memberships and have not yet resolved the many ambiguities they contain over the presence of large numbers of women unionists and of black and minority group unionists.

Such ambiguities are the necessary result of regarding a heterogeneous membership as being homogenous in nature, as being a single body of members with clearly identifiable goals and needs.

The problems of unions generally become compounded by problems of sexism and racism, with women and black people feeling the brunt.

Unions being for the most part highly traditional organisations manifest a high level of resistance to structural change, and often reflect a reluctance of the leaders to modify structures in ways that lead to a wider more democratic sharing of power.

In times of recession, as at present, they are increasingly defensive and highly reluctant to spend money, especially on areas they consider of low priority. These are all possible reasons or causes of inaction. They must be challenged and overcome in principle and in practice.

Black people especially must challenge and overcome them. We consider that black people have far too long been told that unions are committed to their struggle but that things take time to change, or they take money, or attitudes die hard and that they must not provoke a white backlash.

They are sick and tired of being fobbed off with all the other reasons, complications and excuses for inaction.

We consider that few substantial advances have been made by unions in combatting racism in Britain today.

This has most recently be evidenced by the publication in 1984 of the PSI Study *Racial minorities in Britain*.

Again, as with the union movement, there are many signs of activity but few signs of achievement.

There is no order of meaningful action by unions which has benefitted the large proportion of black people in unions and in this country.

Discrimination is still rampant, disadvantage pervasive, inequality manifest, racial attacks and abuse constant. Successive studies have demonstrated this and the most recent of these is unequivocal in its conclusions. The third PSI survey published this year states:

"We have moved, over a period of 18 years, from studying the circumstances of immigrants to studying the black population of Britain only to find that we are still looking at the same thing. There is just the same need now as in 1976 for action to give black people access to widening economic opportunities and life chances; and there is just the same need to pursue equality between racial groups in Britain."

These findings relate to all areas of life in Britain for black people and there is little in our survey of unions to suggest that they are in any way exempt from them.

It is our view that because of their past practices and attitudes trade unions have abrogated their responsibilities and obligations to their black and minority group members.

They have done this knowing full well that black people have for many years joined and would continue to do so.

But unions have been blind to the diversity of their membership. They have been blind because of their own racism which has meant that they see all their members as being homogenous and as having the same requirements and needs. Because of this stance they have failed to provide for all members.

We understand the arguments of unions that their past practices make it difficult for them effectively to redress the injustices which have been forced upon black people.

But that is something that they have to deal with, and it cannot be a reason for turning their back again upon their responsibilities. They cannot continue to argue that principle must be subordinated to practical circumstances.

We consider that black people have heard that for too long.

Effective institutional changes can be made, individual attitudes can be changed, and individual actions too.

All this does not require massive expenditure but it does require the will.

The Trade union movement claims to advocate strongly this will, to represent the interests of all its members. In practice it manifestly does not fulfill this claim.

Trade unions must change this situation as a matter of urgency.

If the unions do not make efforts, *effective* efforts, themselves then black and white activists committed in this struggle must bring the pressure to bear upon these unions to achieve the necessary changes that will allow unions to respond and reflect the needs of *all* their members.

There is a need for concerted and sustained action by black people for black people.

White people who align themselves to this struggle, on black people's terms, will be welcomed and encouraged. Black people should seriously consider the strategies at their disposal.

They should reject the rhetoric and reject it forcibly.

They have to reject tokenism and reject it firmly and steadfastly.

They have to consider as a real and viable alternative to the present situation the setting up of black sections within trade union structures; that should collect and analyse, disseminate and promote information on issues promoting the struggle against all aspects of racism.

Steps are being made by the GLC and these should be endorsed, but not uncritically.

By being active, by taking part in the political processes which affect their circumstances in British society black people can make real and substantial advances for themselves, and their children.

Trade unions are a central power base.

If black people succeed in them, they shall succeed in the wider struggle.

Checklist for unions — What is to be done

The trade unions have a vital role to play in the struggle against racism but only clear, consistent and positive policies and action consciously devised and applied will help to defeat both individual and institutional racism.

No single individual, union or policy can achieve real equality. But a concerted effort by the trade union and labour movement involving black and white workers of both sexes and all age groups will go a long way to achieving this.

The following are a series of points which trade unionists should adopt immediately as a first step towards the struggle against racism at the workplace:

- Oppose all forms of racism, discriminations and prejudice at the workplace and in the wider community.
- Implement positive and affirmative policies at work to ensure equality in recruitment, training, promotion, personnel and industrial relation practices.
- Treat deliberate acts of racism and discrimination as disciplinary offences. Consider withdrawing credentials or even membership from members, lay and full-time officials if they are overtly and persistently racist.
- Examine thoroughly all complains of racial discrimination against employers, stewards, full-time officers or even groups of members.
- Appoint a full-time Race Relations Officer within the union.
- Take positive measures to provide and encourage all full-time negotiators and workplace stewards/representatives to attend education courses, seminars, conferences etc., on racism and its effect on relations between groups of workers.
- Both management, supervisors and union officials should attend training courses on racism awareness.
- Introduce and monitor Equal Opportunities agreements and where possible and/or necessary, introduce record keeping.
- Set up workplace monitoring committees consisting of both black and white members to regularly monitor Equal Opportunities

policies and agreements at the workplace and to report and highlight problems of direct or indirect discrimination. Suggestions by the Monitoring Committee should be given serious consideration by all parties.

- Ensure that all agreements are free from discrimination, direct or indirect.
- Implement the recommendations contained in the CRE Code of Practice and strengthens the same by introducing further measures depending on the level of awareness and commitment by both management and union representatives at certain workplaces.
- Encourage recruitment of black members through publicity in journals, policy statements, recruitment material aimed specifically at ethnic minority workers and printed in various languages.
- More publicity should be provided in union journals on issues of importance to black workers such as the Police Bill, the Nationality Act, racial harassment, racism, and anti-racist issues.
- Encourage more participation of black workers at every level of union and labour movement activities from the workplace, branch, district and regional levels to national and international levels. Review procedures to ensure the black people are aware and have full access to union policies and services.
- Recruit black and ethnic minority workers into full-time jobs at every level within the unions and where necessary provide relevant training to enable this.
- Ensure that both black and white members understand union policies and procedures. Provide relevant training if necessary. Review union publications, policy statements etc., to ensure that it is transmitted and understood by members.
- Union structures should be altered to encourage positive involvement and action by setting up national and regional Race Relations consultative/advisory committees and conferences with positive policies to involve black workers in the decision making process by introducing quotas/targets for black members on such committees.
- Encourage the setting up and provide resources for black groups within the unions. Unions should regularly consult with black members particularly on matters of racism and sexism.
- Establish positive links at national and local level with black and ethnic minority groups including black activist groups such as the Black Trade Unionists Solidarity Movement,

the Labour Party Race Action Group and black community and workers organisations.

- Unions should pay special attention to problems both of sexism and racism facing black women both in the workplace and in the wider community.

- Affiliate to and join with local anti-racist and anti-fascist groups campaigning and demonstrating publicly against racial harassment and attack on black people.

- Unions should consistently challenge racist attitudes and practices at all levels at the workplace and within their own structures.

- Invite speakers, men and women, from black groups and organisations to address branch meetings, union conferences etc. and provide union speakers for black groups and organisations.

Jim Thakoordin

Chair – GLC Anti-Racist Year

Trades Union Working Group.

Appendix I

Name and Union of members of the working group. (Accurate at time of going to press).

Jim Thakoordin
GMBATU
Chair of ARTUWG

M. Souranui
Divisional Organiser
TASS

J. Cornelius
Assistant Divisional Organiser
NUPE

John Ball
Education Officer
GMBATU

F. R. Higgs
TGWU

David Roussel-Milner
ASTMS

Derek Kotz
Liberation

Kay Beauchamp
Liberation

Mike Cummins
Black Trade Unionists
Solidarity Movement

Dharmpal Kaw Malhotra
Black Trade Unionists
Solidarity Movement

Steven Small
Policy Studies Institute

Gail Lewis
NALGO

Mandy Snell
NALGO

K. Deonarine
GMBATU

John Billowin
CPSA

Frank Georges
NUPE

Amarjit Kochhar

M. Basna

A. M. Sabar

Pat Taplin
ASTMS

Lydia Correa
NUPE

John Jones
TASS

Jo Sinclair
GMBATU

Ken Phipp
Lambeth Councillor

Ann Field
SOGAT – Clerical Branch

Michael Medas
Community Activist

Gulam Mayet
Black Trade Unionists
Solidarity Movement

J. Kvevi
EEPTU

Bob Morrison
Liberation

R. Golding
TASS

I. Blondel
GMBATU

Danny Silverstone
NALGO

D. Burnett
NALGO

C. E. Henry
NUPE

D. Addo
GMBATU

Aboul Chowdry

Rashni Chopra

Peter Makula
Black Trade Unionists
Solidarity Movement

Appendix II

The following is a copy of the questionnaire that was sent out to trade unions. The original contained four pages with space for answers.

GLC Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Party

Trade union questionnaire

Please complete and return this questionnaire to Mr K Phipp, (Address) by *Monday 23rd April 1984*.

If there is not enough space in the sections provided please continue your answers on an additional piece of paper and attach it to the questionnaire. We would also welcome any additional information (copies of negotiators packs, report, advice sheets, etc,) which you can make available.

In answering questions please make clear whether the provisions to which you refer are organised at division/district levels, or at branch level; as opposed to those organised nationally in which you take part.

- 1 Have you adopted an anti-racist policy? If so, what form does it take and what measures exist to ensure implementation of the policy?
- 2 What provisions have been made by your union for combatting racism within your own internal organisation? (We are thinking here of officers appointed, race relations day-schools and seminars, handbooks, negotiators packs, advice sheets, etc).
- 3 Is there any information collected on the ethnic breakdown of your union's employees? If you do not have this information do you have any commitment to monitoring your workforce?
- 4 What steps has your union taken to implement an equal opportunities programme for your employees?
- 5 Have any persons been appointed with special responsibility for tackling racism and racial discrimination within your union? At what level is that appointment made and what other responsibilities does the person have?
- 6 Is there any information collected on the ethnic breakdown of your union's *membership*? If you do not have this information do you have any commitment to monitoring your membership?
- 7 In what ways is encouragement given to members of black and minority groups to:
 - a) participate actively in your union's activities?
 - b) play a leading role in your union?
- 8 We are particularly interested in problems faced by ethnic minority women. Do any provisions exist to take account of the particular problems they face.
- 9 Does your union offer advice facilities, guidelines, leaflets, etc, in languages other than English? Can you provide us with any examples.
- 10 Have any procedures been established for contact with black and minority group organisations?

We would like to come and spend a short time discussing some aspects of these provisions with some trade unions so could you tell us who would be the most appropriate person to see and how contact can be made?

We thank you for your support in completing and returning this questionnaire.

Appendix III

Letter to general secretaries, version one

Dear fellow trade unionists,

TRADE UNIONS AND ANTI-RACIST YEAR

As part of its commitment to designate 1984 as Anti-Racist the GLC has set up an Anti-Racist Programme Sub Committee made up of representatives of anti-racist organisations together with members of the Council.

This sub-committee is supported by 12 working groups. Each working group is chaired by a member of the sub-committee. The function of the working group is to discuss and work on specific proposals which could be pursued and/or implemented during and beyond Anti-Racist Year.

One of the working groups is concerned with anti-racist activities within London's trade union movement. The objectives of the group are to identify and promote anti-racist commitment within the trade union movement. It is for this reason that I am writing to you today.

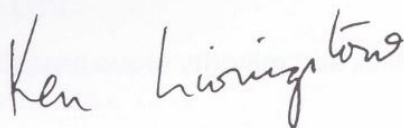
Firstly, I would like to invite you to provide us with information concerning any national policy statements that have been made by your union with regard to combatting racism and promoting equal opportunity, and any measures which have been taken to ensure implementation of such policies.

Secondly, I would like to invite your union to subscribe to the objectives of the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group and to nominate an official to attend meetings of the group, if this has not already been done.

Thirdly, I want to inform you of a major initiative undertaken by the group to identify and stimulate action in combatting racism within trade unions. The group has begun an action research study of provisions for combatting racism within the internal organisation of London-based trade unions which involves the completion of a brief questionnaire and a series of interviews with key officials within the trade union movement. The work for this study is currently in progress and the group has written to the appropriate division/district committee of your union providing them with a questionnaire and inviting them to respond as soon as possible. Your union's involvement in the completion and return of the questionnaire is strongly welcomed and will significantly affect the impact of Anti-Racist Year.

I thank you for your continued support in our endeavours,

Yours sincerely



KEN LIVINGSTONE

Appendix IV

Letter to general secretaries, version two

Dear fellow trade unionist

TRADE UNIONS AND ANTI-RACIST YEAR

As part of its commitment to designate 1984 as Anti-Racist the GLC has set up an Anti-Racist Programme Sub-Committee made up of representatives of anti-racist organisations together with members of the Council.

The sub committee is supported by a number of working groups all made up of volunteers with interest and commitment in specific areas of anti-racist work. One of the working groups is concerned with anti-racist activities within London's trade unions. The objectives of the group are to identify and promote anti-racist commitment within the trade union movement.

I am now writing to you for three reasons:

Firstly, I would like to invite you to provide us with information concerning any national policy statements that have been made by your union with regard to combatting racism and promoting equal opportunity, and any measures which have been taken to ensure implementation of such policies.

Secondly, I would like to invite your union to subscribe to the objectives of the Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group and to nominate an official to attend meetings of the group, if this has not already been done.

Finally, I want to inform you of a major initiative undertaken by the group to identify and stimulate action in combatting racism with trade unions. The group has begun an action research study of provisions for combatting racism within the internal organisation of London-based trade unions which involves the completion of a brief questionnaire and a series of interviews with key officials. The work for this study is currently in progress. We know that the division/district committee of your union does not meet for some time so we are enclosing a copy of the questionnaire so that you may forward it to the appropriate office for completion.

The involvement of your trade union in the completion and return of the questionnaire is strongly welcomed and will significantly affect the impact of Anti-Racist Year.

I thank you for your continued support in our endeavours.

Yours sincerely



KEN LIVINGSTONE

Appendix V

Letter accompanying questionnaire

Dear fellow trade unionists

TRADE UNIONS AND ANTI-RACIST YEAR

As part of its commitment to designate 1984 as Anti-Racist Year the GLC has set up an Anti-Racist Sub Committee made up of representatives of anti-racist organisations together with members of the Council. This sub-committee is supported by 12 working groups.

One of the working groups is concerned with anti-racist activities within London's trade union movement. The objectives of the group are to identify and promote anti-racist commitment within the trade union movement.

As part of its work the group has begun an action research study which involves the completion of a brief questionnaire. Please find enclosed a copy of this questionnaire.

Ken Livingstone has written to your National Executive Committee informing them that we are sending questionnaires to you, and outlining our aims and objectives.

Your union's involvement in the completion and return of this questionnaire is strongly welcomed and will significantly affect the impact of Anti-Racist Year.

I thank you for your continued support in our endeavours.

Faternally

Secretary Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group

Appendix VI

Reminder Letter

To: ALL TRADE UNIONS

17th May 1984

From: GLC ANTI-RACIST TRADE UNION WORKING GROUP

If you consult your records you will find that we sent to you a questionnaire concerning provisions within your union for combatting racism within your own internal organisation. To date we have not received any reply and are taking the opportunity to remind you to complete and return the questionnaire. If you have recently despatched the questionnaire please disregard this reminder. If for some reason you did not receive the questionnaire please complete and return the questionnaire enclosed.

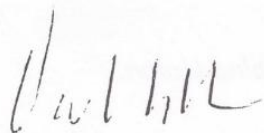
We do urge you that your cooperation in this exercise will greatly enhance our prospects in enabling trade union organisation to truly reflect its multi-racial composition.

Please return the questionnaire to:

Name

Address

Yours fraternally



DANIEL SILVERSTONE

Secretary, Anti-Racist Trade Union Working Group

Appendix VII

Trade unions included in the questionnaire survey

ABS	<i>Association of Broadcasting Staff</i>
ACTT	<i>Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians</i>
APAC	<i>Association of Patternmakers and Allied Craftsmen</i>
APEX	<i>Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff</i>
ASB	<i>Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers.</i>
ASLEF	<i>Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.</i>
ASTMS	<i>Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs.</i>
ASTMS (MPS)	<i>Medical Practitioners Section</i>
AUEW(ES)	<i>Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (Engineering Section).</i>
AUEW(CS)	<i>Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (Construction Section)</i>
AUEW-TASS	<i>Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Section</i>
AUT	<i>Association of University Teachers</i>
BIFU	<i>Banking, Insurance and Finance Union</i>
BU	<i>Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union</i>
COHSE	<i>Confederation of Health Service Employees.</i>
CPSA	<i>Civil and Public Services Association</i>
CSU	<i>Civil Service Union</i>
EETPU	<i>Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication and Plumbing Union.</i>
Equity	<i>British Actors' Equity Association</i>
FAA	<i>Film Artistes Association</i>
FBU	<i>Fire Brigades Union</i>
FTAT	<i>Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union</i>
GLCSA	<i>Greater London Council Staff Association</i>
GMWU	<i>General and Municipal Workers' Union</i>
HVA	<i>Health Visitor's Association</i>
IPCS	<i>Institution of Professional Civil Servants</i>
ISTC	<i>Iron and Steel Trades Confederation</i>
MU	<i>Musicians' Union</i>
NALGO	<i>National and Local Government Officers Association</i>
NALHM	<i>National Association of Licenced House Managers</i>
NAS/UWT	<i>National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers</i>
NATFHE	<i>National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education</i>
NATTKE	<i>National Association of Theatrical, Television and Kine Employees</i>
NGA	<i>National Graphical Association (1982)</i>

NLBD	<i>National League of the Blind and Disabled</i>
NSBGW	<i>National Society of Brushmakers and General Workers</i>
NSOPGMP	<i>National Society of Operative/Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel</i>
NUAAW	<i>National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers</i>
NUIW	<i>National Union of Insurance Workers</i>
NUJ	<i>National Union of Journalists</i>
NUM	<i>National Union of Miners</i>
NUPE	<i>National Union of Public Employees</i>
NUR	<i>National Union of Railwaymen</i>
NUS	<i>National Union of Seamen</i>
NUSMWC	<i>National Union of Sheet Metal Workers, Coppersmiths, Heating and Domestic Engineers</i>
NUT	<i>National Union of Teachers</i>
NUTGW	<i>National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers</i>
POEJ	<i>Posts Office Engineering Union</i>
SCPS	<i>Society of Civil and Public Servants</i>
SLADE	<i>Society of Lithographic Artists, Designers, Engravers and Process Workers</i>
SOGAT 1982	<i>Society of Graphical and Allied Trades 1982</i>
TGWU	<i>Transport and General Workers Union</i>
TSSA	<i>Transport Salaried Staffs' Association of Great Britain and Ireland</i>
TWU	<i>Tobacco Workers' Union</i>
UCATT	<i>Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians</i>
UCW	<i>Union of Communication Workers</i>
USDAW	<i>Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers</i>

Appendix VIII

Unions which returned questionnaires

An *denotes those that were interviewed

The figures in brackets represent the latest estimates of membership available from the TUC

ACTT*	(20,021)	<i>Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians</i>
ASTMS*	(427,500)	<i>Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs.</i>
AUEW (TASS)		<i>Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers – Technics/ Administrative and Supervisory Section.</i>
BU*	(40,0560)	<i>Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union</i>
CPSA*	(209,894)	<i>Civil and Public Services Association.</i>
FTAT	(392,293)	<i>Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union</i>
GMBATU	(840,704)	<i>General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union</i>
GMWU		<i>General and Municipal Workers Union</i>
MU	(40,056)	<i>Musicians Union</i>
NALGO*	(796,145)	<i>National and Local Government Officers Association</i>
NATFHE	(67,861)	<i>National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education</i>
NGA*	(136,384)	<i>National Graphical Association (1982)</i>
NUJ*	(32,643)	<i>National Union of Journalists</i>
NUPE*	(710,453)	<i>National Union of Public Employees</i>
NUR*	(160,000)	<i>National Union of Railwaymen</i>
NUT*	(262,825)	<i>National Union of Teachers</i>
NUTGW*	(218,998)	<i>National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers</i>
TGWU	(1,092,293)	<i>Trade and General Workers Union</i>
UCS*	(197,259)	<i>Union of Communication Workers</i>
UCATT	(299,490)	<i>Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians</i>

Total membership of all units that returned questionnaires – 5,945,379

Appendix IX

ANTI-RACIST PROGRAMME

Greater London Council
Director-General's Department
The County Hall, London SE1 7PB. Telephone 01-633 4270
Principal Race Relations Adviser: Herman Ouseley
Anti-Racist Programme Co-ordinator: Pamela Nanda



Dear Mr. Gill,

RE: Trade Unions Anti-Racist Working Group.

It may have come to your attention that the GLC, as part of its anti-racist programme, has set up a number of working groups dealing with racism. One of these is the TUARWG which is currently producing a report on racism within the Trade Unions.

I have been asked as a TASS representative on the group to put the following question to you, concerning TUC policy:

In view of the Equal Opportunities Model Statement, the 1980(?) Survey and the 1981 Black Workers Charter, what lead has the TUC since given to the progress of anti-racist policies within the Unions?

We understand that, since the final draught will be discussed on August 15th, you may well be unable to reply within the time given and apologise for not having put this question to you earlier. However, both the group and myself felt that it was an important question from the point of view of the report and that, being in the best position to answer such a question, you should have the opportunity to do so.

Yours Sincerely,

R. GOLDING (TUARWG/TASS No. 24 DC).

71a Broxholm Rd,
LONDON SE27 OBJ.

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

Mr. Richard Golding,
31a, Boxholm Road,
London SE27

20th August 1984

Dear Richard,

You wrote to me asking what initiatives the TUC has done on race relations issues over the recent period.

The biggest challenge facing the TUC's Race Relations Advisory Committee is how to translate the trade union movement's commitment to equal opportunities into a reality in terms of its structures and procedures and its collective bargaining objectives.

The TUC's position on the need to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms is unequivocal, and the trade union movement has campaigned persistently on issues such as the regeneration of the inner cities, positive Government action to overcome racial disadvantage, a fairer deal for black youngsters in education and employment, and the reform of nationality and immigration laws. The Race Relations Advisory Committee's work on all these fronts continues, and details can be found in the General Council's reports to annual Congresses.

But as trade unionists, we have a special responsibility for equal opportunities at work and within the trade union movement. A major part of the Committee's work is therefore to stimulate positive steps by affiliated unions to put TUC policies into practice and to raise awareness among members about race issues.

The Committee is constantly looking for ways of effectively promoting the TUC's race relations policies. In past years a range of practical initiatives have been undertaken such as the TUC equal opportunities clause and the black workers charter, a note on which is attached.

During the last Congress year (1983–84) the Committee have continued to impress upon unions that the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by black workers needs to be positively tackled by unions at every level on the basis of the programme of action set out in the black workers charter.

On the positive side, there has certainly been an increased awareness in the trade union movement in recent years of the distinctive interests of ethnic minority members. Recruitment among black workers has been relatively successful – with the organised proportion of black workers being higher than that of the working population as a whole.

Increasingly, a number of unions are establishing equal opportunities committees of working parties, and holding conferences on issues of special concern to black workers. More unions are appointing officials with special responsibility for equal rights. There are difficulties. Trade union structures and rules are not quickly or easily changed and when they are changed this is invariably after persistent campaigning. Unions face the perpetual problems of conflicting priorities and lack of resources which all organisations face. There is often a contradiction between democratic rule and positive action which cannot easily be resolved. But it is imperative that black members have proper representation within their unions and that unions respond positively to the aspirations of their black membership.

So the Race Relations Advisory Committee earlier this year re-emphasised the need for those unions which have not already done so to examine their own structures and procedures, in accordance with the TUC black workers charter, in order to improve equal opportunities within their organisations and encourage the greater involvement of ethnic minority members in union activities.

/Continued.....

GLC

1981-1986

Working for London

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In addition TUC regional councils are undertaking a programme of regional conferences to raise awareness within the movement about race relations issues.

Following this, the General Council intend to hold a further national conference to review the progress made by the trade union movement in implementing effective equal opportunities policies, and to examine the scope for further and more detailed guidance in this area based on unions' experiences so far.

The current major review of TUC strategy also focusses on how unions can do more to advance the interests of ethnic minority members, including positive action where there is a high percentage of ethnic minority workers but few black officials or workplace representatives.

The TUC has also urged affiliated unions to make full use of the CRE's new Code of Practice in negotiating comprehensive equal opportunities policies, taking up the grievances of ethnic minority members, and tackling racial discrimination. Unions have been advised to ascertain from the employers with whom they deal what steps are being taken to implement the Code's recommendations, and to seek agreement through the appropriate negotiating machinery on comprehensive equal opportunities policies.

The TUC also draws unions' attention to the implications of the reports of CRE formal investigations which have highlighted the discriminatory effects of certain employment policies and practices.

Finally, an important and ongoing means of raising awareness within the movement about equal opportunities issues is the work of the TUC Education Service which accords a high priority to educational work to build race equality at work and within the union. The TUC has adopted a three-pronged approach in this area:

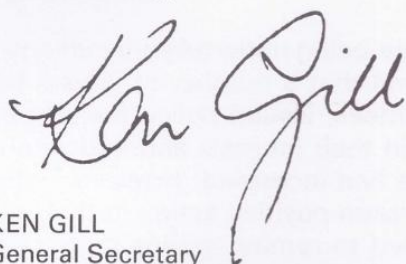
- equal opportunities and racism form a major component of basic courses for union reps, reflecting the fact that such issues are central to trade union work;
- a range of special courses on equal opportunities matters have been developed; and
- special courses are provided to help boost participation by ethnic minority members in unions, at present concentrating mainly on the problems faced by Asian trade unionists who often face difficulties coping with the English language on top of a possible lack of experience of the way unions work.

During the last Congress year, the TUC has also published its widely-welcomed 'TUC Workbook on Racism' for use on TUC and union courses and to help in running workshop or branch discussions on racism at work.

I hope you find this information useful.

Best regards,

Yours sincerely,



KEN GILL
General Secretary

Appendix X

TUC EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES CLAUSE AND BLACK WORKERS CHARTER

The TUC equal opportunities clause was circulated to all affiliated unions in 1975, and unions were asked to make a determined and sustained effort to include such a clause in all appropriate collective agreements.

The TUC subsequently conducted a *review* of the progress made by unions in implementing the model clause. In February 1979, the General Council considered a report based on information submitted by unions, the general conclusion of which was that, although a number of unions in both the public and private sectors had negotiated the inclusion of the clause in their collective agreements, other unions needed to do more to pursue effective equal opportunities policies at work. The General Council therefore decided to convene a *conference* of unions to reinforce the importance of unions taking action on the issues highlighted in the model clause. The conference was held on July 17, 1979. The TUC also published a *bulletin* for distribution throughout the trade union movement which contained articles about equal opportunities at work and other race relations matters.

The *black workers charter* was published in June 1981. Intended to develop the trade union movement's responsiveness to the problems of black workers, the charter contained recommendations for active steps by unions to improve equal opportunities at work and within unions and overcome the disadvantages experienced by black workers.

Before it was issued, drafts of the charter were discussed extensively with a range of ethnic minority organisations.

As part of the follow-up to the publication of the black workers charter, the TUC held a national *conference* on race relations at work in May 1982. Conference workshops considered the following issues: equality within unions, the role of positive action in promoting equal opportunities at work, unions and the black community, and black young people. A report of the conference was circulated to all affiliated unions. To coincide with the conference, the TUC published a further *bulletin* concentrating on TUC policies and activities in the race relations field. Copies of this publication were circulated widely to unions, trades councils, TUC centres for the unemployed and other interested organisations including the CRE and ethnic minority groups.

The TUC also undertook a *survey* to assess what activities were being undertaken by unions in the field of equal opportunities for black workers. This showed that a number of unions had held race relations conferences, established advisory committees, issued policy statements, and given fuller consideration to equal opportunities issues in their journals and educational material, and that generally the level of activity on this issue had increased. However, while there was a core of a dozen or so major affiliates which had taken positive action in this area, others had taken little action, and this demonstrated the need to remind unions that it was crucial that the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by black workers was positively tackled by unions at every level on the basis of the programme of action set out in the charter.

As a result, in May 1983, a further *circular* was issued to unions again urging those unions which had not already done so to take the necessary steps within their own organisations to increase awareness of the need to promote equal opportunities for black workers.

