

[PTA wants to retain]

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Probation officers deride 'Moss Side mythology'

MANY BLACK YOUTHS 'REJECT WORK ETHIC'

THE residents of Moss Side were entitled to resent the "mythology" that had grown up about the area, the independent tribunal into last month's riots was told yesterday.

Three probation officers said in a written submission that Moss Side was not much more disadvantaged than any other area of Manchester.

The officers added: "The high unemployment rates among young West Indians represents not just a failure to find work, but in some cases a refusal to seek it."

"Among a significant proportion of black youth there is a rejection of many of the social values and aspirations. A reluctance to subscribe to the work ethic is one manifestation of this. They do not wish to be assimilated within white society nor to accept employment of a low pay and menial nature."

Mr JOHN CRAWFORTH, Mr ALEXANDER MURRAY and Mr RONALD TENCH, who described themselves as probation officers "working on the ground" said their paper was produced at the request of the chief probation officer.

Moss Side had acquired a worse reputation than it deserved, the officers said.

They claimed that when there was friction or trouble in Moss Side young people came from other areas for a "piece of the action."

There was no drugs problem in Moss Side, but people believed otherwise and came to the area to sell or buy drugs. The myths also applied to prostitution and late night drinking. It was a myth, too, that Moss Side's housing led to special problems.

'Get together'

Facilities for recreation were no worse than in other areas, schools were as good physically as anywhere else in the city and teaching was as good.

Earlier, Prof REGINALD EVANS, 75, a former Professor of industrial administration at Manchester University, submitted a paper "action learning and the inner city," which he said was

an attempt to get together people in adversity and trouble to learn with and from each other and by their own efforts to tackle their difficulties.

He said it had been adopted in America, Belgium and some hospitals for the mentally handicapped in Britain, but his ideas were rejected by Manchester City Council when he submitted them some years ago.

"I now have some allies, the rioters to reinforce what I said," said Prof Evans.

Mr BENET HYTNER Q.C., the chairman, said it would be necessary to hold further public sittings next week when Mr George Morton, Labour M P for Moss Side, some councillors and other witnesses wished to give evidence in public. The inquiry was adjourned until Tuesday.

THREE FACE BRIXTON RIOT CHARGES

Three residents of Brixton were accused yesterday at Bow Street on charges arising from a special police investigation into riot damage. They were remanded on bail to Sept. 25.

Owen Clive Lobban, 36, of Rattray Road, was charged with attempting to obtain £2,329 by deception from the receiver of the Metropolitan Police, and also with being in possession 260 milligrams of cannabis.

Jean Lowe, 21, unemployed, or Nursery Road, was charged with obtaining services by deception and possessing an offensive weapon and Martin Thomas, 19, unemployed, of Railton Road, was accused of dishonestly handling a television set.