

Anti
FASCIST
ACTION

£1

An introduction to London AFA

This pamphlet is an introduction to London Anti-Fascist Action (AFA). We are aware that there are a number of areas relevant to anti-fascists that aren't covered in this pamphlet, such as attacks on Irish, Jewish and gay people, and the question of fascists in the trade unions. We hope to be able to increase our work in these areas in the future.

While this pamphlet represents the views and activities of London AFA we are interested in making contact with other groups of militant anti-fascists around the country in order to re-establish an effective national network. Shortly we will be producing a new anti-fascist magazine, which will incorporate *Cable St. Beat Review*, to give a voice to the militant anti-fascist movement.

While it isn't the intention of this pamphlet to give an in-depth analysis of what fascism is, it might be useful to give a rough idea of what we are against. Under fascism the State has absolute power, and the people who run the State are a self-appointed elite. There are no elections, people have no control over their own lives, mindless obedience is what is required. Progress is neither possible nor desirable, dissent is to be exterminated. Human life is entirely expendable. It is the worst form of dictatorship.

When parliamentary democracy is no longer able to defend the interests of the rich and powerful, fascism is unleashed to smash the progressive working class movement. Perhaps one of the most concise and accurate definitions of fascism was given by one of Franco's henchmen at the start of the Spanish Civil War:- "Long Live Death! Down With Intelligence!" (General Millan Astray).

The increase in support for fascism, not just in London but worldwide, means we cannot afford to be complacent. Fascism can only be defeated by organised opposition. To ignore it allows it to grow unhindered. Join AFA and help defeat the fascists.

March 1991

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relaunch in London

Anti-Fascist Action was originally formed in 1985. At that time there had been no co-ordinated opposition to the fascists since the collapse of the Anti-Nazi League in the early 1980's. While it is true their votes in elections had fallen considerably and their marches had become smaller, they had never gone away.

The number of racist attacks was rising dramatically and the lack of opposition encouraged them to attack left-wing activities. Militant opposition (often physical) was confined to black and Asian youth in areas like Bradford and Newham and a handful of small political groups.

Many left-wing groups argued that the election of a right-wing Tory government, in 1979, had successfully won most of the racist votes (true) and that the fascist groups had merely become an irrelevant distraction (untrue). The Tories didn't actually encourage people to go out and fire-bomb people's homes, start racist abuse on the football terraces, or physically attack political opponents. This is done by the fascists. And while it is true that the conditions which allow the fascists to grow (unemployment, bad housing, etc.) are caused by the government, it is of little use to tell an Asian family that is being systematically persecuted that "after the revolution" this won't happen. Action is needed now! It is wrong to argue that it is a question of *either* fighting the Tories *or* the fascists - you have to fight both.

The incident that brought matters to a head was the fascist attack on a massive GLC rally at County Hall, London, in 1984. Despite their small numbers (about 70) the Nazis managed to attack two bands on stage, the Redskins and Hank Wangford, and badly injured a number of people before a combination of striking miners, 'red' skins, and militant anti-fascists

managed to dispose of them. After this attack a number of organisations got together and set up AFA in the summer of 1985. The founding statement said that AFA would fight the fascists both physically and ideologically. This dual approach is very important. History shows us that fascists use violence to intimidate political opponents and gain control of the streets, which in turn creates an impression of strength and action, an image that can be attractive when people look around for radical alternatives when the system goes into economic decline and starts to ruin people's lives. The fact that fascism only offers more repression and dictatorship should never be forgotten. So, force must be met with force, there is no other way. The fascists sometimes whine about 'freedom of speech', but how much freedom of speech was there in Nazi Germany? Some young white working class people are drawn into fascist groups by the promise of a bit of excitement (some easy 'commie bashing' or 'paki bashing') but when the opposition hit back harder it's not so exciting and many drift away, isolating the hard core fascists.

The national AFA structure set up in 1985 included a wide range of political ideas/groups and after a while it became clear that it was not possible for all of these different approaches to anti-fascism to exist in one organisation and for it to still operate effectively. By 1988 AFA groups existed as independent regional organisations with occasional co-ordination with other groups. In London the disagreements were far-reaching and, after much discussion, this led to a 're-launching' in Autumn 1989.

Despite the internal disagreements AFA had many successes in the period 1985-1989. For example the NF (Flag Group) were physically stopped from marching in Stockport, and their

election meeting in Greenwich (1987) was successfully disrupted. The damage inflicted on the political soldier wing of the NF (now called The Third Way) when they tried to march in Bury St Edmunds (1986) directly led to the leadership of that organisation abandoning the tactic of marches.

AFA's opposition to the NF's Remembrance Sunday march in London shows the development (and problems) of London AFA. In 1985 AFA took over the fascist assembly point with 100 people, causing the NF much embarrassment at not being able to remove us and they had to form up elsewhere. In 1986 AFA organised the biggest anti-fascist demonstration since the 1970's when 2,000 people marched to the Cenotaph and laid wreaths on behalf of past and present victims of fascism. This even gained widespread media attention giving AFA useful publicity.

However it should be said that wreath laying at the Cenotaph is not a tactic we would encourage as we would want to distance ourselves from the warmongering hypocrites of the Establishment. These people are part of the problem, not the allies of anti-fascists.

1987 and 1988 saw similar AFA marches but with falling numbers and virtually no useful media coverage. The most effective aspect of these marches was taking militant anti-fascists back to Trafalgar Square afterwards to defend the anti-apartheid picket of South Africa House from attack by the fascists after their march.

In 1989 there was extensive discussion on the effectiveness of the AFA march. The different approaches to anti-fascism were coming to a head and the people around the present-day London AFA

relaunch in London



argued against repeating the AFA march year after year because, while it had achieved useful publicity the first year, it was not stopping the fascists from marching. In the end 500 militant anti-fascists took over the fascists' assembly point at Victoria and put considerable pressure on the fascists, so much so that their march was held up for nearly an hour and for the first time they didn't have the confidence to attack the anti-apartheid picket. Another 150 anti-fascists did hold a march to the Cenotaph and laid a wreath, but by 1990 this activity had stopped.

The re-launch of London AFA in 1989 was around the following strategy: to set up a democratic structure that can involve the growing number of militant anti-fascists supporting our activities; to make our activities as effective as possible; to involve ourselves in the fight against racist attacks; and to operate from a (working) class position. This last point needs some explaining. Firstly it means that AFA recognises that we are in a class society and that fascism has nothing to offer the working class. While AFA must be of, and for, the working class it is not our job to argue how progressive changes can

be won. But we don't believe that fascists are just 'nasty people'! We want to explain why fascism exists, whose interests it serves, and point people towards an alternative. AFA unites a number of progressive working class organisations under its banner in a united front in which individuals and groups fight together against fascism. Within AFA differences of strategy and tactics are argued and decisions reached democratically. AFA needs to restrict itself to a broad class-based position to make sure that unity exists and grows. AFA is not, and must never be a front for any one organisation. AFA's job is to remove the influence of fascist organisations from working class areas (communities, work places, trade unions, football grounds, schools etc.) to create the space for progressive ideas to gain a foothold. It is a grim reflection on the state of the left that the 1 in 8 vote for the BNP in the August 1990 by-election for the St. Peters ward (Tower Hamlets) represented, in a constituency evenly divided racially, some 25 per cent of the disillusioned white working class who saw the fascist BNP as the radical alternative.

It follows from this that we do not believe the state has a positive role to play in the fight against fascism (we believe it is part of the

NF march on Remembrance Sunday

problem). Calling on bans on fascist activities is a mistake because repressive legislation such as the Public Order Act was initially brought in to be used against Mosley's British Union of Fascists in the 1930's but has, almost exclusively, been used against the left ever since. While obviously in the short term as isolated family that is the victim of racist attacks would welcome the intervention of the police (and courts etc) if it stopped them, we believe in the long term we can only rely on ourselves. As a tactic we sometimes have to use the system, but we have no illusions in it. Self organisation of the working class is the bottom line.

We don't claim to be *the* anti-fascist movement, we are part of it. We know there are people who do not agree with our analysis or tactics but around activities we will try to find common ground between us to maximise the effectiveness of the activity. Below we reprint the copy of a letter sent to many organisations after the BNP election meeting which illustrates this point. It is significant that we did not get a single response.

Anti FASCIST ACTION

On Sat. 21st April the British National Party held an election meeting in Weavers Field School in Bethnal Green, East London. The venue was only confirmed a few days beforehand making it harder to organise and it also meant the leaflet we had prepared in advance, using the information we had at the time, had the wrong details and so had to be scrapped. This didn't really matter because a number of other organisations (SWP, Labour Party, etc.) had produced their own leaflet which we used instead.

E.L.A.F.A. organised a *public* meeting on the 19th April to discuss and explain our tactics on the day. A number of organisations and individuals attended this meeting. It was decided, in line with our founding statement, to try to confront the fascists. Those individuals not confident about physical confrontation were encouraged to support the SWP/Labour Party demonstration in the park next to the school.

As a result of thorough reconnaissance and planning we were able to infiltrate a large group of fascists approaching the meeting and before they went inside managed to inflict some considerable damage on them. Unfortunately we suffered a number of arrests and others had to leave the area being chased by the police. So when a second group of fascists, their main 'firm', about 40 strong,

arrived our numbers were considerably weakened. The 150-200 'anti-fascists' in the park (safely behind a high fence) made no attempt to join us. The fascists attacked but we stood our ground and somewhat fortunately the fascists 'bottled' it. The police then intervened and escorted the fascists into the meeting. Had the people in the park joined us we could definitely have chased that group of nazis away from the meeting. The AFA contingent then managed to chase another group of fascists away from the meeting until they too got a police escort.

By now all the fascists were in the meeting. AFA then returned to the park where a delegation spoke to the people there saying we were leaving because we could make no further impact on the fascists - our tactics realising the best time to confront the fascists was when they were split up going to the meeting, and hopefully preventing them getting there. We advised people to leave with us, but apart from a few, most stayed. Why? What did they hope to achieve? What had they achieved all day?

Firstly, let us say we understand people's fear of physical confrontation - but that doesn't mean it is a wrong tactic. AFA managed to attack one group of fascists, another group ran at us but then stopped through lack of confidence, and a third group

scuttled away to the protection of the Old Bill. Hardly good for their morale! And obviously this sort of action challenges the macho, bully boy image the fascists promote, and is attractive to young whites in the area. Indeed a clash between the BNP and AFA, after their march in Bethnal Green a few weeks earlier, we know, made a considerable impact on these potential fascist recruits.

Ideally we would have liked to have stopped their meeting - we fully believe in 'no platform for the fascists'. They must be prevented from organising. Look what happened in France where the Left adopted an "I see no fascists" approach. However we are not strong enough at the moment so we consider what is the next best thing we can do now. How can we disrupt them the most? We find it hard to believe that 150 people standing in a park shouting abuse at them from behind the police *and* a high fence would really impress the fascists. It just shows the weakness of the Left.

We believe if anti-fascists start seriously thinking about what they are trying to achieve they will see the strength of AFA's tactics. We have set up a democratic branch structure in London, open to both individuals and organisations. And we are not just about physical confrontation. The anti-fascist movement is not the sole preserve of 'streetfighters' and we have never said that. But we do believe in effective tactics. Several days after the BNP meeting AFA leafleted some of the worst racist estates in Bethnal Green with a "Don't vote BNP" leaflet, taking the anti-fascist message to their potential recruits.

It has been reported to us that some groups have denounced our actions on the day as 'sectarian'. We hope you will print this letter to show we are not. Join with us to fight fascism.

Yours against Fascism
EAST LONDON ANTI-FASCIST
ACTION

BNP fuhrer Tyndall (centre) leads his cronies through the East End



cable street beat

Cable Street Beat (CSB) was founded in the summer of 1988. As we said at the time in the first issue of *Cable Street Beat Review*:

"Cable Street Beat is a new organisation set up to oppose the small but growing influence of Nazis in and around the music scene. We intend to use this fanzine to inform people about what the Nazis are doing without in any way wanting to exaggerate the size of the problem - but always bearing in mind that ignoring a problem doesn't make it go away.

Last year it is estimated there were 70,000 racist attacks in Britain, and while it is true that you can blame the Government for creating the conditions which lead to these attacks, the Government doesn't actually encourage people to go out petrol bombing and assaulting people in the street - but Nazi groups do.

And one area where dedicated Nazis are having some success is around the music scene. Back in the early 'eighties, impressed by the success of Rock Against Racism, the NF set up Rock Against Communism. However, the handful of bands who supported this were 'blacked' by the music press and promoters and they soon realised they would have to organise independently of the mainstream music business if they were going to survive. So they started organising gigs under false names advertised solely in pro-Nazi circles attracting a small hardcore Nazi following, mainly skins, producing records on sympathetic record labels (the German *Rock-O-Rama* and the French *Rebelles Europeens*) and distributing their own



magazines and fanzines (Offensive Weapon, 14 UP, White Noise, Blood and Honour etc.). Skrewdriver, the main Nazi band, split from the NF's White Noise Club and formed their own 'Blood and Honour' organisation, claiming the NF had ripped them off. 'Blood and Honour' now have extensive links in most European countries and America, and indeed have an American tour lined up with the help of organisations over there and the Ku Klux Klan.

By going 'underground' the Nazis withdrew from public attention but they never went away and so we are now faced with a fairly well organised music scene that is on the up. The evidence of this can be seen by the increasing number of bands identifying with them, the international links and the sickening sight of material on public sale in places like London's Carnaby St. Most of this merchandise (records, T-shirts, badges) is distributed by 'Blood and Honour'.

Because the Nazis haven't been challenged in these areas they are getting the confidence to attack gigs by bands opposed to fascism, for example the Pogues (Irish), Desmond Dekker (black) and the Upstarts (socialist). Again, this is something we are not prepared to accept. Whereas in the 1970's the Nazis tried to hide their racism to black people, they make no attempt to do this now. 'Blood and Honour' proudly describes itself as "the

National Socialist music paper" and the band No Remorse announce they "all dislike Jews, Blacks, Reds and Queers". Full blooded fascism, in other words.

These Nazis are also involved in carrying out racist attacks. When 'Blood and Honour' started drinking around Kings Cross in London last year the number of racist attacks increased with a prominent anti-fascist's house petrol bombed and Asians stabbed in Euston Square and Drummond Street. An anti-fascist campaign removed them from the area for about 9 months, but now they are back. This has resulted in another knife attack outside a pub for which two members of Skrewdriver were arrested, but the case was thrown out of court due to bad preparation by the police, and the day the Nazis got off a women's disco in a nearby pub was turned over. Co-incidence? We think not.

We believe that because the Nazis haven't been confronted in these areas it has encouraged them and given them the confidence to build their own music 'scene', distribute their propaganda in new areas, and get more people actively involved in politics and racist attacks. And people shouldn't be complacent about fascism - it didn't die with the end of the Second World War. For anyone who doubts this, look at the recent growth of the French National Front and the four and a half million votes their leader (Le Pen) got in the presidential election. The Nazis are small now - but the level of racist attacks shows they are still dangerous - so we must confront them *now* to prevent them being able to grow if and when the political climate changes.

The disillusioned youth of today must be shown that fascism offers them no answers and no hope.

Anti FASCIST ACTION

CABLE STREET BEAT PRESENTS

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANTI-FASCIST VICTORY AT CABLE ST. ON 4TH OCT. 1936

THE MEN THEY COULDN'T HANG

•HOWLIN' WOLF AND THE VEEJAYS
•THE NEUROTICS
•ATILLA THE STOCKBROKER

SPECIAL GUEST: BATTLE OF CABLE ST. VETERAN
TUESDAY 4TH OCTOBER
ELECTRIC BALLROOM

184 CAMDEN HIGH ST
CAMDEN TOWN
DOORS OPEN 7.30
ONLY ON THE NIGHT!

TICKETS £3.50 (£4.50 UBAU) + ONLY ON THE NIGHT!

**1930'S THEY DID NOT PASS
1980'S THEY SHALL NOT PASS**



at the gigs which prevented any trouble. An anti-fascist success story.

Apart from the gigs we produced badges, T-shirts, videos, stickers and leaflets to spread the word and always made sure we had an anti-fascist speaker and bookstall at the gigs. We launched a magazine, *CSB Review*, which covered many aspects of anti-fascism, from music and cultural articles to interviews with veterans from the Spanish Civil War and Cable St. We reported on what the fascists were doing and what anti-fascists were doing to stop them. Although the magazine hasn't appeared for nearly a year we are in the process of relaunching it, with London AFA, to give an independent voice to the militant anti-fascist movement, initially in London, but hopefully it can go on to play a part in uniting sympathetic groups of anti-fascist around the country into an effective national network.

The extensive international links we have made must be maintained and developed, both to exchange information and where necessary co-ordinate activities. Over the last year or so there have been a series of anti-fascist gigs in Europe that CSB has helped organise and in January 1991 a tour of Germany was arranged to raise money for the Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign and the three AFA prisoners.

CSB was initially set up to counter the growth of a Nazi youth culture around 'Blood and Honour'. The success of that campaign, when they lost their shops, pubs and resident fuhrer (Ian Stuart moved out of London) and the 27th May rally was successfully disrupted, meant CSB lost some of its impetus and has had to adjust its strategy.

Although the number of gigs has fallen off over the last year we are working closely with London AFA and intend to increase our activities over the coming months. At present most of our work is in fund-raising for the AFA Welfare Fund. If you would like to get involved in CSB write to: CSB, BM 1734, London WC1N 3XX.

Introduction to London AFA **7**

We want to recreate the spirit of militant anti-fascism that prevented Mosley's Blackshirts from marching through London's East End on 4th October 1936 at the Battle of Cable Street."



Our first major activity was to pack out the Electric Ballroom for an Anniversary of the Battle of Cable St. gig in October 1988 and from then on we organised gigs all around the country to advertise anti-fascist activities and raise money for people arrested. This ranged from the 'Dance and Defend Tour' (see leaflets) to putting on the Angelic

Upstarts in London. The Upstarts gig was very significant because the fascists had smashed up their previous gig in London at the Astoria and said they would never play again. If the fascists had got away with this they would have started to attack more bands so, despite fascist threats, it was with great pleasure that we put them on at a well protected, trouble free gig in London in January 1989. Although the Upstarts have more or less 'retired' now, they did play several more times in London, always with a high-profile anti-fascist contingent

CABLE STREET BEAT PRESENTS

DANCE AND DEFEND

ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 1987. 30 ANTI-FASCISTS WERE ARRESTED REPELLING A NAZI ATTACK ON THE ANTI APARTHEID PICKET OF S.AFRICA HS. THEY NEED OUR SUPPORT

prisoners and welfare fund

Because AFA understands the need to confront the fascists physically and ideologically this inevitably brings people into conflict with the law. AFA's attitude is that having encouraged people to adopt this strategy we will certainly not abandon people if they get arrested. The Welfare Fund was set up to help people with legal costs, fines, and particularly people in prison.

In September three AFA supporters were jailed for a total of 11 years after an incident involving leading fascist organiser Nicky Crane in Kilburn after last year's Bloody Sunday commemoration. Crane was spotted in the vicinity as the march (often a target for fascists in the past) was breaking up. Suspecting some skulduggery he was challenged by anti-fascists. A fight broke out which resulted in Crane being knocked unconscious.

Crane's career as a neo-Nazi organiser stretches back to 1978 when he led an attack by 200 skinheads on the Asian community around Brick Lane. In 1980 Crane was branded "worse than an animal" by a judge at the Old Bailey when sentencing him to 12 months for an unprovoked attack with a bottle on a black family waiting at a bus stop. During the 1980's he did another four and a half years for politically motivated and violence related offences. In between prison terms he was a member of the British Movement's Leader Guard, an NF activist, and head of security for the neo-Nazi music organisation 'Blood and Honour'.

Nobody, least of all the prisoners, would deny that the offence was political - what is equally clear is that the verdict and particularly the sentence were political as well. Throughout history to be effective in fighting the fascists usually means breaking the law and always means rejecting the power and legitimacy of the forces of law and order. Thus the actions of the anti-fascist streetfighters will always be seen as dangerously radical in the eyes of the State, especially when it involves a form of behaviour - physical violence - which the dominant

culture condemns in everyday life on the part of everyone except the State itself. In her summing up the judge stated that in her opinion the actions of the anti-fascist defendants did most damage to the rule of law and as a consequence carried the greater threat to the status quo than the fascists.

There was no legal basis for appeal and because of the nature of the offence little likelihood of parole. The prisoners made no apology for their actions nor do they do so now. What they do need, and we on their behalf ask, is for your support - political, moral and financial. All donations to help them or their families are gratefully received. What is perhaps even more important in the long run, with fascists once again limbering up across Europe, is that they receive your political support, are seen to get it, and that you or your organisation are seen to be willing to give it.

As one of the prisoners writes: "As a person currently serving a four year prison sentence for anti-fascist activity, I would like to let people know the need and importance of an effective support group. People who suffer at the hands of the courts, whether in the form of a fine or imprisonment, must be supported with both moral and financial support. From personal experience I can let people know how important this support is to those who find themselves imprisoned. Support comes in many forms, through the letters and cards sent in support,

through the financial support which allows me prison luxuries such as radio, books, daily newspapers and toiletries. It may not sound like a lot to someone who has never served a prison sentence but to a prisoner it makes life bearable. So I would like to thank those who have shown support for me in whatever form. I would also like to appeal to people to help the support group in whatever way they can. Not just for me, but for anybody who comes before the courts through anti-fascist activities."
(Tony. Blundeston Prison.)

The day to day running of the Welfare Fund is carried out by the Welfare Officer, who explains the nature of the job for anyone interested in helping: "The job involves primarily acting as a link between the prisoners and the outside world. I receive their Visiting Orders and then organise people to go on the visits. Constantly hassling people on the phone is a job requisite! I also find out if the prisoners need anything, and help to sort out their affairs on the outside if necessary. AFA undertakes to provide the prisoners with essential items like radios, newspapers, and anything that can make prison life more bearable. Prisoners are also sent an amount of money monthly which covers the small amount of private spends they are allowed inside. The money for all these things comes from the various fund-raisers we have organised since the imprisonment of the three lads, these have ranged from discos to myself jumping out

AFA supporters beat off a Nazi attack in Trafalgar Square after a Remembrance Sunday demonstration



Anti FASCIST ACTION

football



An example of the Anti-Fascist propaganda produced by German football fans

of an aeroplane!!!"

The importance of this job is underlined by another prisoner: "Hi, my name is David Phelan, and I've been imprisoned for three years for anti-fascist activity. The reason I'm writing these few lines is to emphasise just how important it really is to have a Welfare Officer to look after all external affairs for a prisoner. The list of things a Welfare Officer has to do is extensive, ranging from getting our names in as many magazines and papers as possible, so that we receive letters and postcards from all around the world. I myself have received letters from over ten different countries. Not once in my five months (already served at the time of writing) have I been let down for a visit, daily papers are organised from outside and we are sent private spending money every month. Our Welfare Officer is involved in the raising of funds not only for the above reasons but also for the little extras like books, tapes, clothes and games. These can only be obtained through the Welfare Officer's help. Life in here wasn't meant to be easy but with the help we receive from outside it becomes that bit more bearable." (David. Bisley Prison.)

David Phelan
NT 1337
Bisley Prison
Woking
Surrey GU24 9EX

3 years
Birthday 28th Jan.

Tony David
NT 1338
Blundeston Prison
Lowestoft
Suffolk NR 5RG

4 years
Birthday 13th April

Mark
c/o AFA
BM 1734
London WC1N 3XX

Birthday 7th Dec.

For many years the football authorities, the police, the government, supporters clubs, and even the players' own union, the PFA, have remained silent about the activities of groups such as the NF and the BNP at football grounds. They have thus conspired to make racism and fascism acceptable at many grounds. As a result black players can expect to hear 'monkey chants' directed at them and sometimes have bananas thrown at them.

Often racism is 'hidden' and only surfaces when a black player commits a bad foul or scores a goal. For example at the Hartlepool match against Chesterfield in September 1990 the abuse reached its peak after Morris scored a great goal for the away team. The cries of "National Front, National Front" and "there ain't no black in the Union Jack" gave a glimpse of the hatred that simmers below the surface. It's very unlikely that the Hartlepool fans involved are members of the NF, or even read their paper, but the fact that they shouted such abuse is not "just a laugh" as my mate suggested, but a

menacing threat for those that believe black players and fans should be welcome at every ground. Black supporters remain a very small percentage of those who attend matches.

There are some grounds where racism is organised by the fascists. For example, the Chelsea Headhunters are a group with a distinct fascist ideology and they have attacked the picket outside South Africa House on Remembrance Sunday on several occasions. They have established links with Ulster Loyalist supporters at Glasgow Rangers and Linfield. The fanzine *The Blues Brothers* is assisting in developing these links. One of the priorities of fascist parties, as we have noted elsewhere, is to develop links with the paramilitary UDA.

For years the NF in its youth paper *Bulldog* ran a 'league of louts' for those fans who are most racist. Not surprising groups such as Chelsea, Leeds, West Ham, Millwall and Newcastle were regular

'winners'. Fascist groups are especially prominent at England away matches. At the 1988 European Championships in W. Germany the NF leafleted England fans as they got off their trains in Dusseldorf prior to the Holland match.

The planned first all-German international match in Berlin was cancelled after riots took place between neo-Nazis and anti-fascists. One person was killed. The match later took place in Stuttgart with Germany beating Switzerland 4-0. At the forefront of opposing fascists in Germany have been the football supporters club at St. Pauli in Hamburg. Their fanzine *The Millertor Roar* is full of anti-fascist material and many supporters wear anti-fascist badges and patches. The small compact ground is usually full to capacity at 25,000, with many of the local Turkish and Kurdish community also attending.

About four years ago Leeds AFA and the local Trades Union Council began to counter the activities of the fascists at Elland Rd. AFA began by producing documented evidence of fascist activities at Elland Rd. and then attempted to mobilise ordinary fans to stop the fascists selling and distributing their propaganda outside the ground. The club joined in the campaign and carried articles in the home programme denouncing the fascists. Tyne and Wear AFA started similar activities at Newcastle's ground. Elsewhere AFA members have leafleted matches at Orient, Sunderland, Crystal Palace, Swindon, Leicester, Gillingham and Exeter.

However it has been AFA's good relationship with the thriving alternative fanzine network which has produced the most results. AFA articles have appeared in fanzines throughout the country including: Orient, Arsenal, West Ham, Chelsea, Notts County, Everton, York, Birmingham, Sunderland, Dulwich Hamlet, Gillingham, Man City, Hibernian, Rangers, Crystal Palace, Swindon, QPR and Leeds.

AFA believes the racists must be confronted and isolated at football matches to cut off this source of recruits to the fascist gangs operating on the streets. We would welcome any information on fascist activities on any football grounds - such as paper sales, leaflets, and the pubs they use.

blood and honour

Examples of Nazi literature on sale in Carnaby St.



IT SEEMS, by recent media accounts, that Linda Bellos, the black daughter of a Polish Jewish family, who controls a department of Lambeth council, thinks that within seven to ten years under Tory government Britain will have gas chambers for lesbians, gay men, blacks and socialists.

Of course, we as Nationalists wouldn't need this kind of barbarity to deal with our problems. For a start there wouldn't be any black people here, lesbians and gays would crawl back into the sordid holes they crawled out of, and the sensible socialists would see the wisdom of Nationalism.



- FLAGS**
- 1) Union Jack
 - 2) Swastika
 - 3) Black with White Celtic Cross
 - 4) Confederate Flag - The South will rise again
- All Flags - £6.50 inc. p&p (£7.00 from Europe) from Skrewdriver Services
BM Skrewdriver, London WC1N 3XX.

Nor will we allow them to destroy the destiny of Blood and Honour. We will follow the example of the one uncorruptable ideal - National Socialism, and its great martyr Adolf Hitler. Victory will be ours.

Racial Regards - The Editor.

WHITE
Whispers

Fight won to close Jew's Nazi shop

by Mira Bar-Hillel

DR MICHAEL COIGLEY, who witnessed the full horrors of Nazism when he was among the first liberators to enter the Bergen Belsen death camp at the end of the Second World War, has won a court battle to prevent a shop he owns in the West End of London being used as a base for self-avowed neo-nazis.

On the other side in the case was Mr Andrew Benjamin, a 24-year-old Londoner, many members of whose Jewish family perished in the Treblinka death camp. Last Monday they faced each other in Bloomsbury County Court.

A few months earlier Dr Coigley was shocked to discover that the shop was being used by Mr Benjamin for the sale of Nazi regalia and Nazi records, tee-shirts and videos.

Dr Coigley sought the court's help in evicting Mr Benjamin from 40 Riding House Street for breach of a covenant in his lease which debarred the leaseholder from causing "annoyance, nuisance, disturbance, damage or injury" to the landlord or his neighbours.

For Dr Coigley's son James, who runs a small building and plumbing business round the corner, the judgment ended a 10-week nightmare. It began when Sunlight Laundries gave the premises in favour of what was introduced to the Coigleys by their estate agents as a "music retail outlet". They were not to know that the music was by neo-nazi bands like Skrewdriver. Brutal Attack and No Remorse with albums called "You Nigger Loving White Slag".

By March, James Coigley was encountering what

described as "heavy skinheads and intimidating types" near the store, which had added the name "Cutdown" under the plastic Sunlight sign. Some, he later found, were thugs with prison records. Then came anti-fascist demonstrators and police with barriers.

On April 11 he went to a public meeting of the local residents' association. At first he encountered anger and persecution. By the end of the evening he had turned his anger into sympathy with the plight — and realised that action against Cutdown was "down to me".

Since then he has done no plumbing or carpentry. Having consulted solicitors and discovered that the covenant was his only chance of getting rid of Mr Benjamin, he spent every hour of every day preparing hundreds of photographs and interviewed dozens of people of whom he had to subpoena.

On May 27 Cutdown became a gathering point for dozens of skinheads and neo-nazis from all over the world heading for an international concert in Gravesend. That night the shop was attacked by anti-fascists with sledgehammers. After a second attack on June 10, Mr Coigley's insurance company said his cover would be revoked unless he installed a watchman at a cost of £100 a day.

In granting the Coigleys' claim, Judge Martin QC said there could be no doubt that Mr Benjamin was selling goods "designed for people of the neo-nazi type and designed

to whip up Nazi feelings" and that skinheads were attracted to the premises. He pointed out the proximity of the Polytechnic of Central London which has many students from ethnic minorities. "One can imagine their feelings when they see skinheads with Nazi emblems".

Witnesses included a couple who were harassed as they walked by the man being called "race traitor" and the girl abused. Two girls working at ITN, only 50 yards away, were followed by intimidating drunken skinheads.

Granting possession to the Coigleys and demanding the premises be vacated by noon the next day, the judge said he considered the selling of Cutdown's material in modern Britain to be a very grave matter.

The Coigleys have won but questions remain in their minds. Why has it taken a determined landlord, willing to spend more than £10,000 and risk months pursuing a civil matter in the county court? And what is there to stop Mr Benjamin opening up elsewhere?

Mr Coigley regards Mr Benjamin as "a sick man". Certainly his family have suffered greatly and publicly disowned him. But he is not the issue, says Mr Coigley, who is not a political activist of any hue.

"There ought to be a way of stopping this kind of abuse, and it goes beyond the law. People must assume personal responsibility as well."

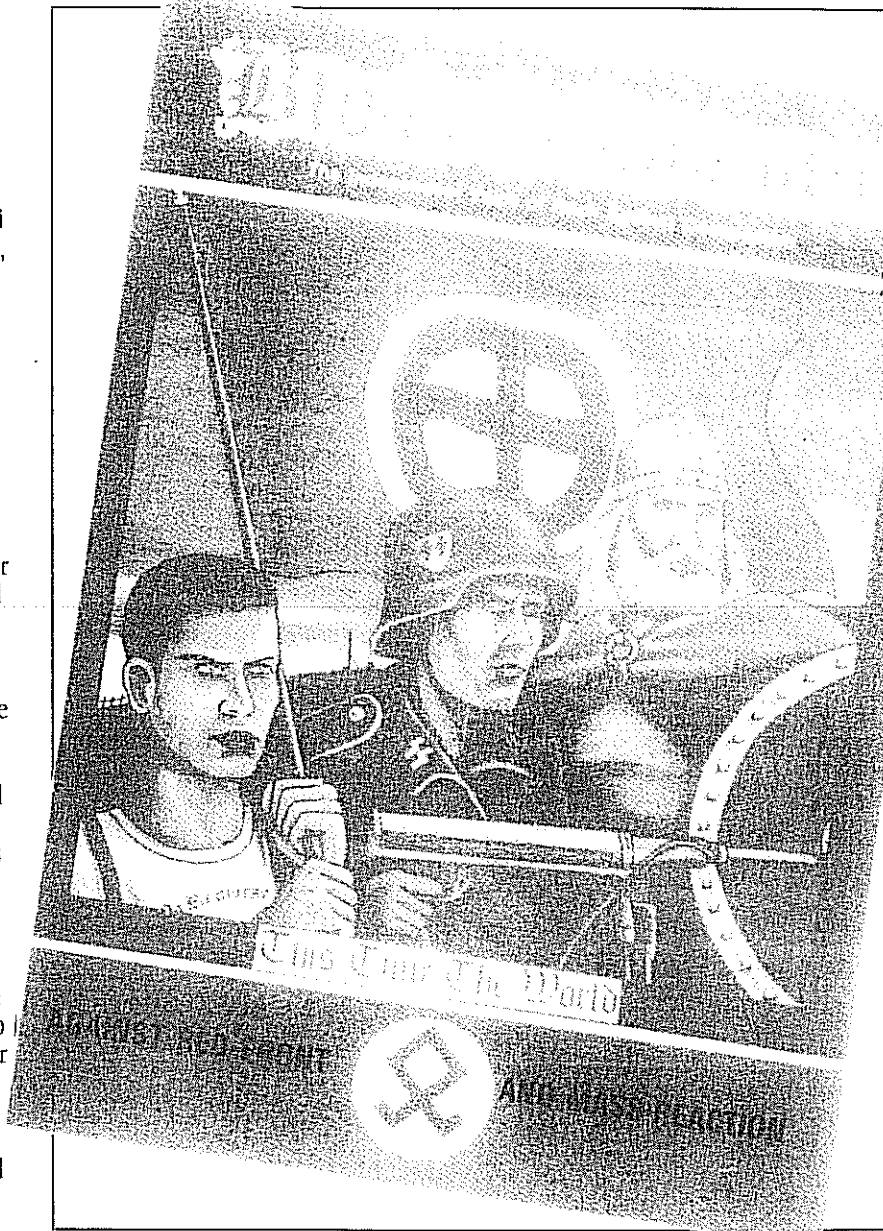
As he has? "Well, yes." And, if he could turn the clock back to March, would he go through it all again? "And again, and again, and again."

Anti FASCIST ACTION

1989 was an active year for AFA in London, and in many ways a successful one. The first half of the year saw a major campaign against the growth of a Nazi youth culture around the 'Blood and Honour' organisation. In particular we campaigned to stop the sale of Nazi propaganda in two West End shops, *Merc M* and *Cutdown*.

After five months campaigning we had closed down one of the shops and the other one withdrew the offending material. The campaign used a wide variety of tactics which led to a successful conclusion. During the campaign we held a Press Conference in the House of Commons with Jeremy Corbyn MP, the leader of the Labour group on Westminster Council, and representatives from Stoppa Racismen (Swedish anti-racist group), *Searchlight*, the Angelic Upstarts, AFA and Cable St. Beat. We had questions asked in Parliament, it was discussed by Westminster Council, we picketed the shops and the pubs they met in nearby, we spoke with local residents, workers and students, we held demonstrations, got petitions signed, got on TV and radio, and generally put pressure on the fascists in any way we could. In the end the owner of the building, who didn't like fascists and whose father had been one of the first British soldiers to enter the extermination camps after the war, got them thrown out in court, but that would never have happened without the campaign. We had no intention of relying on the courts and had plans to continue, and increase, the campaign if necessary.

The result of the campaign was the virtual collapse of 'Blood and Honour' in London. Ian Stuart moved to Derbyshire, their magazine folded, and their international links were disrupted. We know the problem hasn't disappeared and apparently their mail order business is flourishing - but we have driven them underground when they were starting to gain acceptability above ground. We have also set a precedent for money grabbing



businessmen who want to make money out of fascism - there is a price to pay.

In May 1989 'Blood and Honour' tried to stage a major rally in London to show their supporters, especially from overseas, how strong they were becoming. AFA found out they had booked Camden Town Hall under a false name and got it cancelled. We then mobilised 500 people to take over the Nazis' re-direction point in Hyde Park and prevented 500 Nazis from ever finding out where the rearranged venue was, in Gravesend in Kent. Of

the fascists who did get to Gravesend half of them couldn't get in to the gig because the venue was too small. So all in all their plans (and many of *them*) were badly damaged.

These activities showed us the potential support for militant anti-fascism and when London AFA was relaunched later that year we set up a structure that meant people could join and become part of the movement, something which had been lacking before.

the East London campaign

On Sunday October 5th 1990 a contingent from AFA arrived at the corner of Brick Lane and Bethnal Green Road at 9.30 am. A leaflet was distributed announcing an AFA public meeting in the area in response to the high profile adopted by the BNP in the area. At approximately 11.30 fascists who had been dispersed by the arrival of the anti-fascists launched an attack. Four anti-fascists and three members of the BNP, including Richard Edmonds and Tony 'cucumber' Lecomber, were arrested and charged with affray.

At the public meeting former Dockers' leader Micky Fenn pointed out that the only way to stop the BNP was "to fight fire with fire". Labour M.P. Mildred Gordon pointed out that the 12.8 per cent of the vote achieved by the BNP in the St Peters ward was deceptive. In fact, as the composition of the area was roughly 50 per cent white and 50 per cent Asian, the BNP vote in reality represented one in four of the white working class vote.

The following statement from AFA was read out at the meeting: "Anti-Fascist Action was founded in 1985. The founding statement was a promise to confront the fascists 'ideologically and physically on the streets'. Despite many problems and a chequered history, we believe that AFA has made a difference and that we have remained true to our promise.

In 1986 in the small market town of Bury St. Edmunds, a National Front march was so publicly humiliated, its organisers so discredited, that it provoked a split in the National Front itself. The Albert Mariner march through central London was abandoned for similar reasons in 1987. During 1988-89 the fascists had been allowed to turn Carnaby Street into a cultural centre for European fascism. Within six months of initiating a campaign, AFA had closed their shops and forced them to abandon their bierkellers. The neo-Nazi music group 'Blood and Honour', who had confidently

booked Camden Town Hall to host an international ticket-only concert, selling over 1,000 in advance, were crushed in a single day on May 27 1989. Similarly, due to a variety of tactics adopted by AFA since 1985, the annual fascist parade to the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day has been reduced to a squalid 250 by 1990 - a fraction of its size in 1985.

The lesson for us at least is clear - the fascists only gain influence and support among white working class youth only where there is no alternative argument being consistently and forcefully projected.

While congratulations are due, we recognise that the fascist marches and rallies represent only a symptom of the problem. What is now required is that AFA address itself to the source of the problem, racism, reflected in the huge increase in race attacks and intimidation which some estimates put in the region of 20,000 in the Metropolitan area of London alone.

The Borough of Tower Hamlets has the highest concentration of race attacks in the country. Even police statistics demonstrate that the level of attacks is rising unabated year by year.

To help stem this tide is now AFA's priority. We also recognise that little progress on this issue in this area will be made by restricting our response to fascist initiatives: we accept that we must set our own agenda.

This is the first time in well over a decade that such a project -

wrestling the initiative from the fascists and race-attackers, of challenging them on their own doorstep and in the process cutting off their supply line of recruits at its source - has even been suggested. The purpose of AFA's strategy is to make relevant to and directly involve those sections of the community under attack.

The participation and support of individuals and groups from the Asian and Black community in the Borough is vital, as they must be persuaded over a period of time to see AFA as much theirs as it is now ours.

Over the last decade the issue of race attacks has effectively been ignored by both the media and the left. As a result the situation has seriously deteriorated with many in the Asian community now living under a state of siege. They are trapped between the 'respectable' racism of the Liberal 'Focus' group, the lurking terrorism of the fascists, and the indifference or hostility of the police.

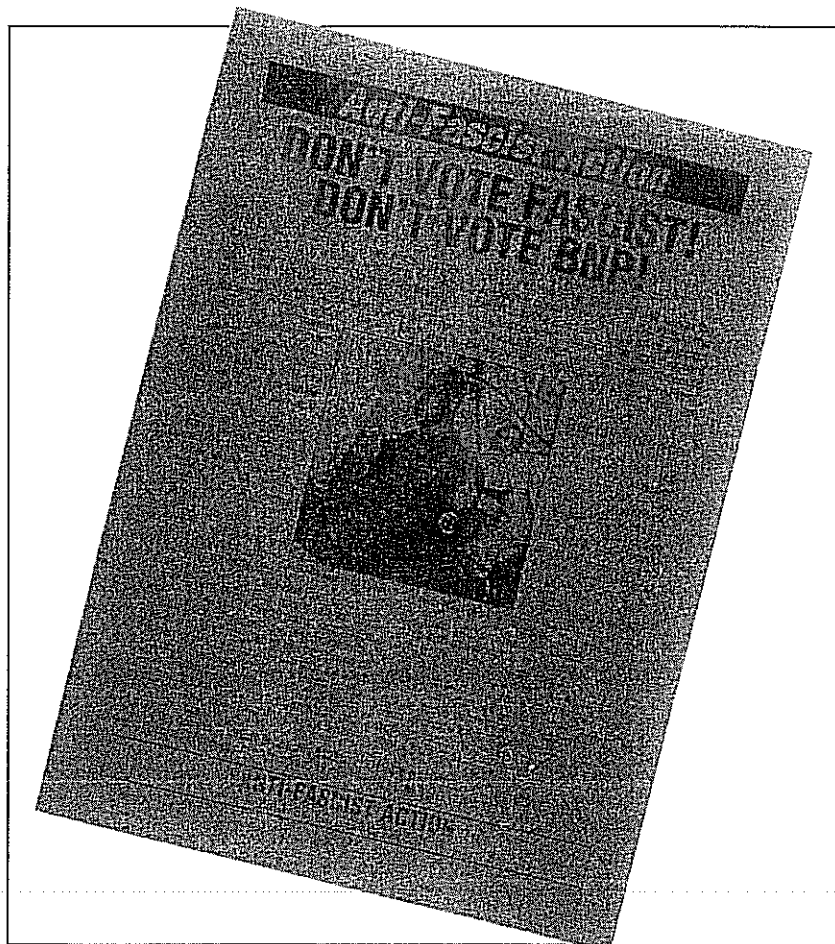
In the face of increasing aggression from the right and the corresponding apathy of the left, Asian youth have been forced back on the defensive. The only permissible tactic is to circle the wagons, while for isolated families it is a case of doing nothing and waiting for the cavalry that never comes. AFA's first job must be to lift the siege.

At the moment, racist and fascist gangs can mount assaults confident in the knowledge that once the

BNP and NF about to launch an unsuccessful attack on AFA supporters at Brick Lane



Anti FASCIST ACTION



must first destroy the conditions and climate in which they prosper by polarising the entire community on political lines.

Therefore our first job is not to unite people but to divide them, not on racial lines between black and white or between the left and the right but between fascist and anti-fascist, racist and non-racist, militant and moderate, the passive and the active.

It is our intention to smash the existing status quo, so it is not to coalitions that we look but to co-insurgents.

We must attempt to polarise the whole of the working-class, Asian, Black and White, on central issues of race, class justice and equality. To first identify and then isolate the fascists and their fellow travellers, we must divide and sub-divide again until only two visible political camps are left – one racist/fascist, and the other anti-racist and anti-fascist.

Inevitably AFA will be accused by our political opponents of provoking the fascists etc. In our experience confronting the fascists physically and politically does not provoke an escalation of violence – rather the reverse. While they are dealing with us they will not find time or enthusiasm for harassing anybody else.

In any case, we are not aware that the policy of appeasement, turning the other cheek, keeping your head down etc, advocated by the police, some left-wing groups and conservative elements in the Asian community has proved such a spectacular success.

Tower Hamlets has the highest ratio of race attacks in a country where it is estimated that an attack occurs every 26-and-a-half minutes. It is only in this area of London that the BNP/NF are allowed to operate openly. It is not a coincidence.

It is AFA's first task to highlight this hidden epidemic and then with your help to co-ordinate an effective response. While it is certainly true that the BNP/NF members do not initiate all the

mission is completed, they need only scuttle back to base, the sanctuary of any white working class area, where they feel invulnerable from attack or retribution.

To discourage these hit and run attacks some among the Asian youth have abandoned the defensive mentality of the siege, and instead adopted an aggressive policy of 'hot pursuit'.

To complement them, AFA must be prepared to go in to encourage more of the Asian youth to come out. In single minded fashion we must undermine the confidence of neo-Nazis from within, challenge their paper sales, put pressure on those that provide them with facilities, harass their leading activists and thoroughly erode the sense of security that allows them to act freely without sanction or restraint.

There is no doubt that Tower Hamlets is a solid working class area. In the council elections the 12 Tory candidates amassed less than 500 votes between them. The BNP are increasingly seen as the only radical alternative to the Labour and Liberal parties, and in some wards are now the third party. Any advance by the right on this territory represents a dangerous retreat by the left. The working class is the natural

constituency of socialism, not fascism. Racism and socialism are incompatible. One only exists at the expense of the other. The 'success' of the far right is due to the fact that the far left are not seen as a credible option. AFA are committed to creating the space in which one can develop. Through our actions and propaganda it must be made perfectly clear that racial terrorism is no longer an acceptable part of the hidden agenda. In future there will be a price to pay. There will be no appeasement of fascist gangs.

History has demonstrated that on the issue of fascism there can be no neutrality. Either you are pro-fascist or anti-fascist. There is no middle ground. And in future none will be accepted.

In the non-fascist rather than the vigorously anti-fascist corner, the problem appears to be the exact opposite – massive on the surface but like an inverted iceberg, nine-tenths above the surface with nothing of substance underneath.

AFA must be the catalyst for real change. We must, through our activities, force people to ask which side they are on.

At the moment many areas of Tower Hamlets are divided along racial lines. To transform this situation and isolate the BNP, we

East London campaign

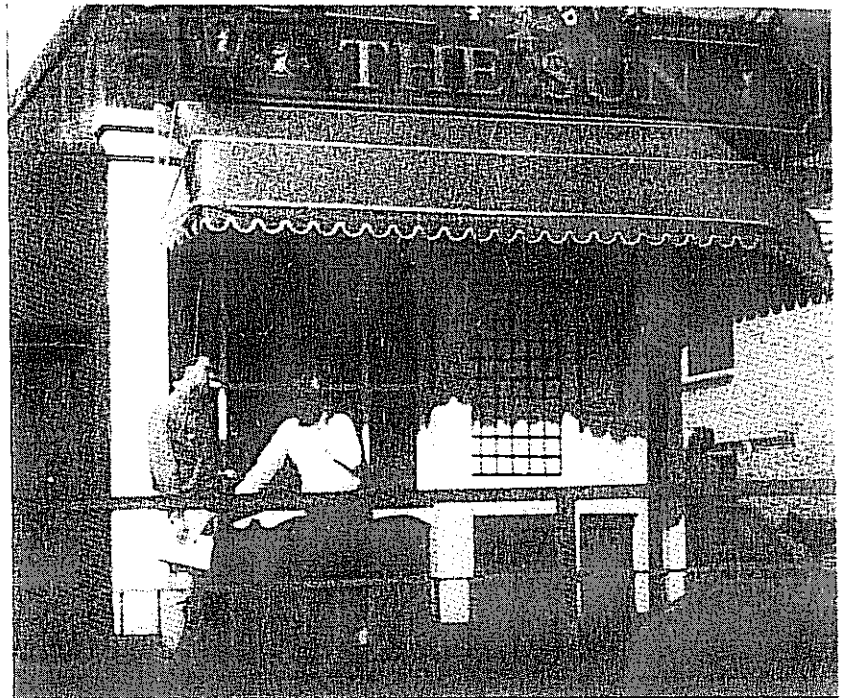
attacks, racial terrorism is the logical complement to a policy of forced repatriation. They encourage, justify and exploit race hatred and race violence. Their function is that of a lightning conductor. They are channel for aggression.

It should be understood that there is no time limit on this campaign so perhaps stamina will prove our greatest asset. It should be understood also that there is no limit on our ambition to help deliver a lasting solution."

Ever since the 1930's the fascists have been active in the East End and sadly that situation remains the same today. Tower Hamlets has the highest level of racist attacks in the country and when young Asians have fought back the BNP have been quick to exploit it. When a 17 year old white schoolboy was stabbed in February 1990 the BNP launched their 'Rights for Whites Campaign' and have now made their work in Tower Hamlets a national priority.

After the second Rights for Whites march there was a clash between AFA and the fascists outside Bethnal Green tube. The majority of the BNP ran and the ones that stood their ground got whacked. The importance of confronting the fascists on the streets was endorsed by a local teacher who told us later that the effect on the onlookers, some his own pupils, was electric - they talked of little else all week. The so-called 'hard men' had been run, effortlessly. They couldn't believe it, they had evidently never seen that happen before. In the battle for 'hearts and minds' we had obviously scored an important point in the propaganda war.

In May 1990 the BNP stood four candidates in the local elections in Tower Hamlets (and beat the Tories into third place). AFA went onto the white estates and distributed thousands of leaflets - getting our message across to the potential recruits of the fascists, emphasising the point that AFA refuses to accept



Convicted Nazi bomber Lecomber (left) outside The Sun after the Sunday paper sale

that any estate in any working class area is the 'natural constituency' of the fascists. However, we did hear that one of the BNP leafleting teams ran into a small problem and thousands of stirring, patriotic leaflets went for a swim in the canal!

The BNP held an election meeting in Weavers Field school which AFA had some success in disrupting (see East London AFA letter earlier in pamphlet) and four months later in August, when they held another election meeting in the same place, using exactly the same tactic we managed to inflict further damage on the fascists.

Because AFA realises the importance of setting our own agenda - not always responding to the fascists - we initiated a number of activities. The first thing we did was take over the BNP and NF paper sale at the corner of Brick Lane and Bethnal Green Road in October 1990. The fascists have sold here unopposed for the last ten years, and unlike their occasional marches and meetings this is a weekly focus for their supporters in this area and a weekly encouragement to maintain the high level of racist and fascist violence in the area. After their Sunday paper sales a number of local pubs welcome the fascists and these pubs are used as meeting places to plan further attacks and maintain their contacts in the area.

The Sunday we took over their paper sale was the day after the BNP national rally (which sadly had to be rearranged after the two original venues were informed as to the real identity of the Chesterton Society!)

and the London BNP activists looked mighty peeved when they were unable to remove the anti-fascists from their pitch - in front of their 'racial comrades' from up north. While the police seem prepared to tolerate the fascist presence and their campaign of racist terror against the Asian population, they took a very aggressive attitude against us, arresting four anti-fascists.

In November we held a public meeting in Whitechapel to try and draw in more local people. The meeting was obviously well protected but five fascists, coming through an estate at the back of the hall, threw a home-made explosive device which fortunately didn't get over the wall. In the build-up to the meeting we distributed thousands of leaflets explaining AFA's strategy, so by spreading our message and showing our commitment in practice we plan to gradually build a locally-based opposition to the fascists.

In March 1991 we called a demonstration against the fascist paper sale at Brick Lane and then successfully blockaded *The Sun* pub to prevent the BNP from using their usual watering hole. The 250 anti-fascists easily outnumbered the 50-odd (very odd) fascists the BNP managed to mobilise, including people from as far away as Leicester. East London AFA has also spoken at a number of Trades Councils and union branch meetings, as well as student unions and youth groups, to build support for the campaign.

getting involved in AFA

Anti FASCIST ACTION

Anti-Fascist Action has from its conception stated the importance of confronting fascist activity both verbally and physically wherever and whenever it is possible to do so. Such a non-negotiable stand has brought AFA somewhat predictable criticism from certain groupings and individuals, said criticism ranging from 'naive political understanding' to outright 'unacceptable macho behaviour', with intimations that anyone joining AFA will be judged only on their ability to physically fight fascists and only given any credence or kudos on the basis of their 'performance' on the street.

On a more realistic level there are however people who are genuinely interested in AFA who agree with our aims and objectives but are worried as to what they will be expected to contribute to the organisation especially if they have little or limited experience of street activity or even if they do not have the inclination for it.

It has to be stated here and now that AFA's policy of confrontational politics (although it is the absolute foundation stone of the organisation) is not all consuming. Like any other political organisation there is a wealth of alternative activities available to anyone wishing to involve themselves in AFA.

Myself and other women have been involved in AFA since the beginning. We have played an active and vital part in AFA activities. We recognise the fact that in confrontational situations only people who are confident of their own abilities should be involved in actual physical activity. This is for obvious reasons - any physical action against the fascists is planned to cause as much damage to their numbers, confidence and organising ability as possible and as little damage and loss of liberty to us.

Physical confrontation is only

part of AFA's objectives, open to men and women who wish to volunteer for it (and it is best to be honest if this is not the area of work you feel best suited to). There is a wealth of other activities for members to involve themselves in which are as important, if not more important, because quite simply in order for AFA to be effective and successful as regards its strategy towards fascist activity, it must have a competent and well organised membership able to carry out such far-ranging tasks as:

- a) co-ordination work between branches
- b) communication work; contacting people for meetings and mobilisations
- c) written and verbal contact with individual supporters and interested parties
- d) organising fundraising events for AFA's Welfare Fund as well as maintaining contact with people in jail connected with AFA
- e) collation of publications and general info of local fascist activity for discussion at branch level
- f) discussion with local trade union branches with a view to their affiliating to AFA or lending a basic support (motions at branch level etc)
- g) surveillance work which has been absolutely vital to any campaign initiated by AFA
- h) attending protests and pickets on a non-combatant level.

The list is endless, so please, if you have attended any AFA activity and are contemplating becoming involved on any level, remember that every single person in AFA has a role to play in making AFA a future force to be reckoned with. As with any organisation we will only reap the benefits on the strength of the work we put in, whatever form this work may take. So if you are interested, join us and GO FOR IT!

AFA, BM 1734, LONDON WC1N 3XX

JOIN AFA

Anti-Fascist Action is a democratic and non-sectarian organisation, dedicated to fighting fascism. We welcome affiliations from labour movement organisations and individuals committed to taking part in that struggle. If you or your organisation would like to become a member or affiliate of Anti-Fascist Action, and be informed of future meetings and activities, please fill in the form which is inside this magazine or if it has already been used, write to: AFA, BM 1734, London WC1N 3XX.

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