

RED ACTION



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RACE ATTACK

EDITORIAL

Anti-fascism might best be described as a rearguard action 'until better times'. In previous phases of the post war struggle against fascism, from the 43 Group through to the 62 Group, to the original ANL, the accepted custom and practice of anti-fascism was to blunt fascist aggression - collect the plaudits, hastily wind up the organisation and retire. It was never the intention that the advantage should be pushed home. In the sense that having defeated fascism in working class areas, there is no real evidence of any ambition to politically replace them there. Ultimately this political shortsightedness guaranteed that the respite would be brief.

Consequently, having suffered substantial defeat in the late 40's, the far-right, reorganised by the late 50's. From taking a hammering in the early 60's it was on the threshold of mainstream breakthrough by the mid 70's. Electorally emasculated by Thatcher's 'swamping' speech in 1979, and despite splits, schisms and internal squabbles the NF could still mount a 2,000 strong march to the Cenotaph in 1986. By the early 1990's the vote for far-right parties (despite standing less candidates) had climbed by 600%.

The transition is still patchy, some when looking to the 'positive' objective, were understandably overawed by the size and nature of the task; others were reluctant to decommission their own ideologies

Military theorist Von Clausewitz, famous for the term 'war is politics by other means' stated that "if the defensive is the stronger form of conducting war (preservation being easier than acquisition) but has a negative object, it follows of itself that we must only make use of it so long as our weakness compels us to do so, and that we must give up that form as soon as we feel strong enough to aim at the positive object." The normal object of anti-fascist defence, is to preserve. Either an organisation or an area, or democracy itself depending on the stakes and the level of aggression. But as conditions change and become more favourable the negative, according to Von Clausewitz, must be jettisoned for a more positive objective. For previous generations of anti-fascists, the inability or lack of will to change from defensive, to the politically offensive meant their efforts were invariably wasted. Or to put it more accurately, 'if the natural course of war is to begin with the defensive and end with the offensive'; then despite their undoubted personal commitment - the job was always left half done.

'Leaving the job half done' is for this generation of anti-fascists is not even an option. Principally as the far-right, having staged a strategic withdrawal from the streets are far from destroyed. On the contrary intelligence indicates that not only are they using the time to develop a cogent infrastructure, but the BNP claim a 35% growth in membership in the last 12 months alone. Artificial though it maybe, but this then is our 'respite', our 'better times' and we must make the best of it. Otherwise there is a danger that this time around the job may be left, not half done, but undone. So for militant anti-fascism, the challenge as it has been since the BNP 'cried uncle' in 1994, is to move collectively from the defensive stance and negative objective, to an offensive and politically positive objective. Which means switching from a position of simply denying the far-right political and territorial acquisitions, to systematically working towards acquiring zones of political influence we can advance from, or retreat to, ourselves.

Despite various policy adoptions since early 1995, due to the stress always being firmly on the need to move *collectively* it was never going to be easy, and so it has proved. And for that same reason the transition is still patchy. Some when looking to the 'positive' objective, were understandably overawed by the size and nature of the task; others were reluctant to decommission their own ideologies. Meanwhile conservative elements; 'the Real AFA' appeared determined to reduce militant anti-fascism to a tactic of physical force - only. Encouraging signs from unconnected parts of the country suggest there is a growing recognition that with the Left decomposing, it is increasingly a matter of militants taking on the

responsibility or it not getting done. Yet for many, the hardest part is knowing where to start. Increasingly the medical profession argue that the key to a cure is 'to treat the patient rather than the disease.' Focus more on how your community might be helped, and less on how the far-right might be hindered, is that logic applied to the body politic. As Machievelli noted "political disorders can be quickly healed if seen in advance, when for lack of a diagnosis they are allowed to grow in such a way that everyone can recognise them, remedies are too late." Fortunately, anti-fascism has made it's diagnosis. And made it collectively. However for the impact to be felt, the remedy needs to be applied collectively as well.

MURDER AND THE FIRST MINISTER

For Sinn Fein's Republican News 'book of the year' is undoubtedly *The Committee* which is unavailable in all good bookshops, or indeed any bookshops in Britain and Ireland, mired as it is in legal battles.

This a result of exposing the complicity of leading politicians, businessmen, and the RUC with the running and control of the loyalist death squads. Collusion between death squads and the RUC; death squads and the British Army and between death squads and MI5 is well documented. Equally, few would deny that leading Unionist politicians have always enjoyed 'a nod and a wink' relationship with loyalist paramilitarism. What *The Committee* purports to show is both the scale and hands on role few suspected. We use the word 'purport' advisedly, for like RN, we 'do not claim all the assertions of author McPhilemy's main informant are correct'. Not all of them have to be. A mere percentage are enough to prove that mainstream Unionism is, in essence, reactionary, corrupt and irredeemably anti-democratic. The insight into the Unionist mindset, provided by the book gives lie to the notion that the crucial contributions to the peace process as reflected in the Nobel Prize awards, were from moderate unionism and constitutional nationalism. As with the war, the cutting edge and impetus for negotiations lie elsewhere; first and foremost with Irish republicanism, thereafter with the British establishment. And if the British establishment wants to painlessly extract itself from Ireland as the evidence indicates, then mainstream Unionism must be faced down. *Sunday Times* editorials which routinely proclaim "that those who want peace must remove it [Republicanism] from the equation" know that every conceivable variation of that formula applied against republicanism has failed. The only real option left as the *Sunday Times* peace lovers are aware, is to invert it, and do something that British policy have singularly avoided ever since the Curragh mutiny in 1912, which is to apply the formula to Unionism instead.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS STAYING FOCUSED

JUST BEFORE the seasonal holidays began I attended a public meeting organised by the local constituency Labour Party. Now and then I like to study the opposition at close quarters, it can often be quite revealing. This crowd were an interesting mixture of *Tribune*-reading, 'leftie' sandal-wearers; a few old-style trade union blue collars; the obligatory couple of geeky looking SWPers from the local University and a group, sitting conspicuously apart from the rest, of expensively tailored New Labour suits. Not what you'd call a sight to inspire anyone... except for myself of course, who felt greatly encouraged by the lack of calibre amongst our foe. Clearly there for the taking you'd think. Well, yes, away from Millbank's well-oiled spinning machine, Labour are a different proposition and on this viewing totally unsuited to pressing the flesh with the great unwashed; if you know what I mean. If this showing is anything to go by, it shouldn't be too long before our hard work shows signs of paying off.

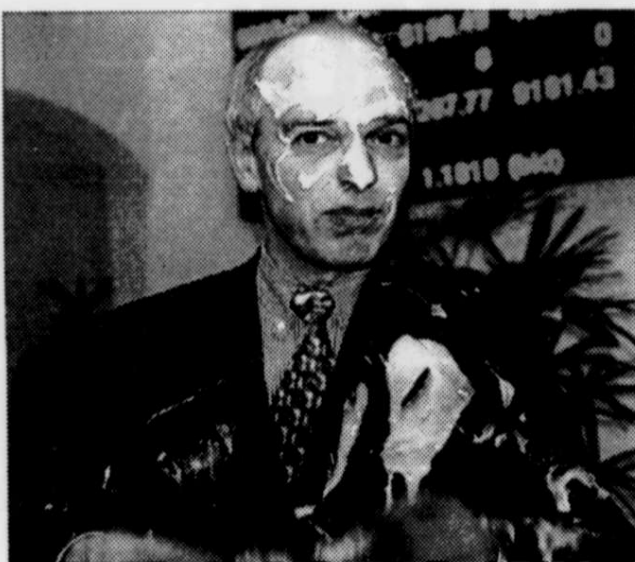
But nationally the Blair project, to transform capitalism, steams on largely unhindered at the moment. Ok, so we all had a chuckle when the oily Mandelson slipped on a banana skin and the freezer lorries stuffed full of the bodies of people's loved ones have caused New Labour a bit of embarrassment; but basically it's still 'steady as she goes.'

To listen to the 'revolutionary left' though, you'd have to believe otherwise. According to the December edition of the *Socialist Review*, monthly magazine of the Socialist Workers Party, "the year is ending with the Labour Party in disarray," and we have already had the Revolutionary Communist Group declaring that "the entire capitalist system teeters on the edge of an abyss." Just enough time then to don the tin helmet and clamber behind the barricades. Perhaps in 1999 those who sniggered at Peter Taffe of the Socialist Party (formerly Militant) when he predicted the "red 90's" will all have to eat humble pie. But I don't think so.

The modus operandi of the left takes on a lot of similarities with the religious cult. By that I mean they are always predicting one big catastrophic event that will change everything and bring the powers that be to their knees. The day of reckoning is not far comrades, just sell a couple more papers and keep those noisy lobbies coming. No time to question where they are going, indeed no need. Involving themselves in any long term work is merely a distraction - talk of putting down roots in working class communities is to be sneered at. Of course, occasionally the establishment through it's arrogance might present us with an opportunity that can be easily exploited, like the Poll Tax. Labour's desire to 'modernise' the constitution for instance, means their agenda may inadvertently benefit our own; e.g. proportional representation.

For Red Action members though, it is important we begin the new year as we ended the last; that is, focussed on the long-term strategy agreed at the 1998 RA conference. To ensure we do so I would suggest all members and particularly all organisers, regularly fish-out the conference documents and give them the once-over. It will be by continuing the hard graft into '99 that will lay the foundations for a lasting independent working class opposition to Blair; not waiting for any false messiahs.

Steve Potts



THE BIG ISSUE

THOUGH euro notes and coins are not due to appear until 2002 the 'euro' has arrived. According to the *Economist* "it is arguably the most momentous innovation since the establishment of the United States dollar in 1792." (2.1.99) So how momentous is it. Well, if as it is argued that an army and currency are the two classical features of being an independent state - the monopoly of legal force and the monopoly of legal tender in a territory - then the states that have already signed up have surrendered one of the two features that made them sovereign and independent. Loss of sovereignty in turn may mean nothing less than the collapse of meaningful democracy, in that the peoples of the countries affected will no longer be able to determine key policy through their elected representatives. Instead major economic policy will be made by, and no doubt, in the interests of those controlling the European Central Bank. The euro is in other words very, very, big business indeed. While lacking popular legitimacy the 'European super state' is without doubt going to happen sooner rather than later. Within fortress Europe national borders will disappear and with their demise the raw points of conflict between countries. Instead national conflict will be replaced by the renewal of a more ancient hatred: naked and direct, international and indisguisable, continuous and simultaneous, between the haves and the have not's, the governors and the governed between - classes.

BIG ISSUE PREDICTION: class war



TAL film show

THE GLASGOW - based Republican

fanzine *Tiochfaidh ar la*, hosted the British premier of 'War and Peace in Ireland' at the Rio Cinema in East London on December 12. This excellent film was introduced by it's director Arthur MacCaig, having travelled from Europe especially for the occasion. Possibly because of being so close to Xmas, less than one hundred people saw the film. Nonetheless the occasion was useful in pulling parties interested in establishing a London branch of the TAL Supporters Club.

Newcastle... Engaging the Enemy

"**NO MORE** marches meetings punch-ups" is the BNP statement that heralded their new found direction. Except, someone obviously neglected to tell their Newcastle branch. So in December they turned

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NOT WAVING...

RED ACTION CONTINUES IT'S REGULAR LOOK AT THE BRITISH LEFT

THE SWP has a long tradition of creating new campaigns out of nothing in an attempt to recruit new members and convince the current ones that their organisation is 'involved in the struggle'. The impetus for the 'Action Programme', their current campaign, lies in Socialist Worker's analysis of the 1997 general election as a "class vote" which would create 'a crisis of expectations' when Labour didn't live up to their promises. There are two problems with this scenario, the first being that it was the middle classes who voted Blair into power, and those from the working class who did vote Labour, did it with no expectations. Secondly, Labour never promised anything but more of the same, which they have delivered. To bridge the real crisis of expectation amongst their own members who were expecting a 'fightback' against Labour, the SWP has been forced to create an issue around which they can recruit, which in turn will 'prove' they were right.

The 'Action Programme' that the SWP proposes is yet another rehash of that staple of reformism: 'The British Road to Socialism' devised by the Communist Party of the '60's, later by Militant in the '70's and more recently by Scargill's Socialist Labour Party.

"Stop all closures and nationalise companies. Create jobs by cutting hours-for a 35 hour week with no loss of pay. For wealth distribution to the poor-£4.61 per hour minimum wage. Tax the rich. Increase welfare spending-cut the arms bill. End the Tory policy of privatisation. Full union rights. State control of international trade and commerce to combat speculation. Work for all-create jobs on full pay," blah, blah, blah...

So ever since the election *Socialist Worker* has been vainly trying to conjure up the phantoms of resistance and anger to Labour but to no avail. It is true however that a lot of the 'left' in the Labour Party are peeved that Blair is doing exactly what he said would, when he was in opposition, and it is this layer that the SWP is aiming at:

"At the monthly meeting last night it was proposed and seconded that Hallwood branch Labour Party would support the demands of the 'Action Programme.' Our MP is aware of our decision and I should add that the resolution was passed unopposed. Fraternal greetings to our Socialist Workers Party comrades.' A letter from Ronnie Williams, chair of the Labour Party ward in Hallwood, Runcorn, Cheshire." (*Socialist Worker*, 10.12.98)

In essence the 'Action Programme' is pandering to the ideas of the old left. As Julie Waterson put it in *Socialist Worker*, (13.11.98), "The demands of the Action Programme connect with the 'Old Labour' ideas large numbers of workers already hold. One rail union rep in London said the 'Action Programme' was 'common sense.'" We may be on the verge of a new century but the SWP are still pushing the discredited ideas of the current one. If Labour won't keep the old policies going, then the SWP will shoulder the burden itself. Without a trace of irony, 'comrade Alastair' proudly stated at the recent SWP conference, "The first group of people I asked to sign [the Action Programme] was a group of pensioners. One said, 'That's what Labour used to argue in the 1950s.'" The aims of the 'Action Programme', though laudable in an abstract sense, are the epitome of the SWP's bankrupt politics and cynical recruitment techniques. In the SWP conference report, they say: "The Action Programme is about helping to build a climate which can lead to resistance to factory closures, to occupations and to a fightback against attacks on working class people." In the current situation where we have the lowest level of strikes this century, it is absurd to think that workers are going to spring into action when the SWP start waving their 1950's style Labour party programme at them. If anyone apart from Old Labourites does notice them, it will only be to confirm the view that they are a bunch of losers. But as long as they recruit enough new people to keep the show on the road, the SWP Central Committee will be happy. Despite the SWP's long history of making student campaigns out of nothing, because the working class will have to be involved this time, the smart money is on them making nothing out of this one.

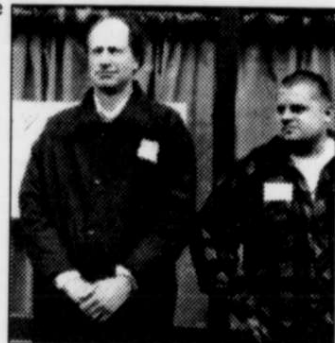
Colin O'Brien

up intent on disrupting a benefit organised by Newcastle AFA. Expecting it to be a surprise the 15 strong gang led by Simon Biggs were instead greeted at the gig's entrance by expectant AFA stewards. The initial exchange saw Biggs armed with a spring loaded cosh attempt a solo and near suicidal charge into AFA ranks. He managed to stay on his feet for approximately a full second and a half before going down under a welter of AFA blows. Meanwhile his cohorts,

(apart from the two armed with ammonia who advanced half way) stayed put threatening all sorts if only the force field preventing them advancing could be broken down. To the horror of the ammonia wielders, AFA then counter attacked, and the 'squeazy merchants', bottles now empty, fled along with the rest pleading "no weapons" (from what course on 'street-fighting ethics' are they graduates ?) Possibly the most dangerous moment for the stewards was 'trying to get back into the gig with dozens of skinheads eager to engage the attackers fighting to get out!' The rest of the evening went off without a hitch with 'Red London; Red Alert; and Running Riot' entertaining a large and enthusiastic crowd.

AFA addresses race seminar

IN DECEMBER an AFA representative addressed a day long seminar held on the Isle of Dogs east London on the issue of 'Racism and Race Attacks.' The seminar was attended by leading



Fascist 'hardman' Simon Biggs (right) pictured alongside BNP leader Richard Edmonds at Brick Lane, East London, 1993.

academics in the field, professional youth workers from east and south London, community activists from a far afield as Glasgow, and a delegate from a government sponsored national youth agency. Given the range of backgrounds and experiences it was striking how quickly an understanding was established. AFA's particular area of expertise was to explain the thinking behind the BNP's change of strategy, the reasons behind it and the possible consequences of it.

BACK ISSUES

THE LAST CRUSADE

ARE WE to agree that the purpose of the war is to displace Saddam's ruthless dictatorship with a democratic regime, as has been alleged by some apologists for the US/UK action? That at least, might be worth the sickening rhetoric about a 'just war' (in John Major's words) from the politicians responsible for having engineered the situation in which Saddam sat in command of one of the most formidable collections of military hardware in the world. Are the allies in the Gulf in defence therefore, of freedom and democracy, as Bush has maintained? Hardly. In fighting in defence of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the allies have shown themselves willing to risk thousands of lives in defence of regimes so repressive, dictatorial and intolerant, that the troops ready to die for them are forbidden to celebrate Christmas!

These sacrifices are supposedly being made so that 7% of the Kuwaiti population can continue to vote in meaningless elections to keep a family of obscenely wealthy bandits in power. They are being made so that the Saudi Royal family can continue to lop off the hands and heads of dissidents. The Arab ruling elite are not a pretty sight. One high Gulf official told the *Wall Street Journal* "with a chuckle" that his son would not have to die for Kuwait since, "We have our white slaves from America to do that".

Red Action, issue 58, Spring 1991



cont'd

RACE ATTACK

Born of the desire to combat communism, multiculturalism was conceived out of cynicism and embraced by the left out of defeatism. G. O'Halloran argues that by its betrayal of principle, it is a major propaganda gift to the far-right, as well as laying the foundations for the political extermination of the working class itself.

As the recently released 'Nixon tapes' demonstrate, Nixon was both an equal opportunities advocate - and - a convinced racist. Blacks according to Nixon were simply incompetent. But as he explained "you can usually settle for an incompetent, because there are just not enough competent ones, and so you put incompetents in and get along with them, because the symbolism is vitally important" (*Independent on Sunday* 28.12.98). The symbolism was important mainly for international rather than domestic considerations. A primary Cold War concern being that 'racism over here helps Communism everywhere.' Which is why the 1948 "master plan" of Field Marshall Montgomery, "to turn Africa into a 'white supremacist bulwark against communism' was rejected in favour of black self government." (*Guardian* 7.1.99)

"The deference liberals in the West have shown towards the various nationalisms of the Third World could be understood," according to Oxford academic John Casey "not as the application of high minded principle but as part of the Western and especially American strategy of wooing those who might otherwise succumb to communist blandishments. But, along with the collapse of Soviet communism the old colonial powers, along with America can now do what they like." With the communist spectre a distant nightmare, the impetus for post war race relations legislation is also redundant. Now that they 'can do what they like' the theories on race that led to the Holocaust which had common currency in establishment circles pre-war and were merely set aside, rather than intellectually demolished, are being dusted down.

within, rather than between races is still the rationalisation for our existing social, economic and political hierarchies. Which is why, as has been argued previously the strategy of multiculturalism designed to combat communist propaganda is both conservative in origin and reactionary in practice (See 'Branded' *Red Action* Aug/Sept 1998). Conservative, because it is based on the notion that existing society is almost perfect; the finished article, the occasional tweaking of the equal opportunities strategy apart. Reactionary, because it sees race as society's dynamic. That the fundamentals were sold and embraced by the entire liberal Left under the title 'progressive,' only underscores the schism between intellectual middle class priorities and working class reality. That it is from these same intellectual circles, that racism today is regarded, as essentially the preserve of the 'lower orders' is apt. Subsequently if police are racist it is because of the 'brutish class' from which they are recruited and so on. It is no secret that for many of the media covering the Lawrence inquiry, the term 'white working class' and racist thug are synonymous. Reflecting the climate, an anarchist magazine (once associated with AFA) felt the need in a recent editorial to rationalise 'inherent working class racism.' Not only an English disease either, this is a concept with international dimensions.

On November 9 *The Guardian* reported that in Germany 'the leader' of the Jewish community Ignatz Bubis, warned of a "new tide of right wing extremism, nationalism and anti-Semitism in Germany, saying that the new nationalism was now fashionable among the intellectual elite and not just in 'primitive circles.'"

Apart from the interesting observation that the new nationalism is as AFA has long argued, bottom up rather than top down, imagine for a moment the term 'primitive' applied to an ethnic minority and see how anti-racism seems to make it alright to hate 'the poor.' Ironical then, that it is the hatred and fear of the 'the dangerous classes' that has been the foundation both for racial science in the first place, and post-war, the Western powers vigorous sponsorship of equal opportunities and anti-racism.

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Racial science could not be totally repudiated, because the perception of difference



The governing classes regarded the negro just as they had, quite openly regarded their own labouring classes: as thoroughly undisciplined, consequently requiring to be kept in order by force, and by, occasional but severe flashes of violence

considered equivalent: primitives to Europeans; women to men; children to adults; the working class to the elite. The sense of racial superiority that European elite classes felt over non European society can best be understood by studying the social hierarchy at home.

"The English governing classes" in the 1860's Bernard Siemel observed "regarded the Irish and the non-European native just as they had, quite openly regarded their own labouring classes for many centuries: as thoroughly undisciplined, with a tendency to revert to bestial behaviour; consequently requiring to be kept in order by force, and by, occasional but severe flashes of violence; vicious sly, incapable of telling the truth, naturally lazy and unwilling to work unless under compulsion."

In 1865 a local uprising by peasantry in Jamaica was put down with the utmost ferocity by the island's governor. many of those who defended him did so by comparing the negro to the English worker. "The negro" observed Edwin Hood, "is in Jamaica as the costermonger is in Whitechapel; he is very likely often nearly savage, with the mind of a child." *The Saturday Review* suggested that the "negro is neither ferociously cruel nor habitually malignant. He often does cruel and barbarous things; but then so do our dray men and hackney-coachmen and grooms and farm servants, through want of either thought or power of thinking." For the Victorians then, race was very much a description of social distinctions not of colour.

Mid Victorian perceptions of colour and class are further illustrated by the debate on the relationship between American slavery and the English factory system. when it was published in 1852 the anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* caused considerable furore because of the comparison it drew between American slaves and English workers. An article in the *British Mothers Magazine* argued that though both American slaves and English paupers lived in a state of degradation, the slave's condition was an enforced one whereas the condition of the English poor was "to a large extent their own fault." Another writer just for good measure added, that if American slaves truly lived in the same conditions as English workers then slavery would be defensible. In his book *The Making of Race*, Keenan Malik argues that: "the idea of race emerged not so much with reference to populations which were external to Western society, populations which were exotic or distant or physically distinct but rather in relation to social gradations within European society. The racial categories developed in relation to differences within European societies were subsequently transposed to the

Practically from the beginning racial science agreed on a commonality between the 'lower orders' in European society and non-European peoples, and justified the inferiority of both. "The lowest strata of European societies" wrote French psychologist Gustav Le Bon "is homologous with primitive men." He added "that given sufficient time the superior grades of the population would be separated from the inferior grades by as great a distance as that which separates the white man from the negro or even the negro from the monkey." Of course in Victorian Britain when it was perfectly acceptable to hate, and, fear the poor, society's primary relationships were

non-European world." The debate around race arose out of perceived differences within European society and only later was it systematically applied to difference of skin colour. What we now consider class or social distinctions were then seen as racial ones - and possibly will be again.

That current American and British social policy is already based on the idea that the poor are locked into a 'dependency culture,' which while not of their creation, is still to a large extent 'their own fault' is an obvious echo. In January Blair finally revealed that the key to Labour's 'Third Way' is to "make more people middle class." In the same way that at the beginning of the century it was suggested 'the solution to racism was the gradual lightening-up of a socially inferior black population through an influx of white blood,' so Labour's solution to social exclusion at the end of the century is to acculturate the poor into middle-class values. This is simply the equal opportunities strategy, extended to the white working class to emasculate it directly. To fight racism it was necessary that a black middle class was created, and the 'white trash' be impregnated with middle class anti-racism. Expanded to fight crime, social injustice and future political disorder, the strategy requirement now demands that the working class is politically, socially and culturally exterminated (Incidentally, one of the key popularisers of the underclass theme was Charles Murray who some years later in *The Bell Curve* went a step further, when in returning to the pre-war ground of eugenics less than sensitively concluded that "the differences between blacks and whites was biological." This saw him denounced as 'a neo-Nazi.' Even conservatives, prefer their racism less crudely put). Nevertheless the political acceptance of the idea of the 'underclass as a race apart', has allowed the political establishment on both sides of the Atlantic to explain the growing inequality in a society formally committed to equality. And with as consequence society itself 'proved' nigh on perfect, the logical next step was to racialise the poor. With the 'dangerous classes' categorised, it then became apparent that in order for middle class society to feel at ease with itself, the 'threat' would in the mean time have to be substantially diminished ie the working class itself would need be politically presented as just another minority.

On cue, the British National Statistics Office has just unveiled eight tiers of social classifications based on occupation, the overwhelming majority presented as middle class. However, an ICM poll commissioned by Radio's 4's *Today* programme around the same time found that over half the respondents asked, saw themselves as 'traditional working class.' Shook, the *Daily Telegraph* dismissed the *Today* poll as "nonsense": "Can't everybody see, that there is nothing in the least bit admirable about idle remnants of the proletariat, that dwindling few with their hideous clothes, revolting food, trashy newspapers, filthy children, disgusting manners, vile wallpaper, and violent and dishonest dispositions?" it pleaded.

It might have added, had it not conflicted with it's own inner beliefs "their ignorant racism." Any decent liberal would have.

The point being that liberals view the world from much the same vantage point as conservatives. Both are agreed that the 'poor are different' and have always done so. Generally liberals would like a little more democracy conservatives a little less. The latter a little less taxation the former slightly greater wealth distribution. Longer sentences versus shorter sentences, carrot versus stick, nice cop nasty cop and so on. An adversarial arrangement that only works as long both parties agree on a shared objective. Invariably that objective is the strengthening and enhancement of the existing economic, social and political structures - by any means necessary.

Which is how, in less than a couple of decades, conservatives and liberals of the parliamentary democracies who had with different degrees of relish, in practically every country in Europe looked, on fascism as their 'insurance' against communism, just as quickly discovered the anti-racist within themselves. Encouraged, they then

Labour's solution to social exclusion at the end of the century is to acculturate the poor into middle-class values. This is simply the equal opportunities strategy, extended to the white working class

embraced multi-culturalism, even anti-colonialism for the same pragmatic reason, tactical prudence. It was in a Cold War scenario, clearly the lesser evil. But, and here's the rub, an evil none the less. If they support anti-racism now, it is only because it is perceived to work in their interests. If not, well, they can 'do what they like these days.' All bets are covered.

In a roughly similar timespan the revolutionary Left, emasculated by the realities of Soviet Russia, the failure of the student revolts in 1968, the collapse of both Stalinist and social democratic parties in the eighties, and the demise of the Third World Liberation movements, led to the belief that any progressive social transformation was an illusion. For many their greatest disappointment was in the working class itself 'who had not behaved as expected.' So the intelligentsia swallowed their pride and accommodated themselves to reality. Or putting it more simply, they switched en masse, to the winning side. Proving as Marx more than once observed "that intellectuals do not lead they follow."

Consider then that in the sixties and seventies the struggle for equal rights offered a clear cut crusade without caveat. This meant campaigns against segregation, immigration controls, or any forms of institutional control in which different races were treated differently. Today, without noticeable pause for breath, it means campaigns for segregation; separate schools, youth clubs, demands to use different languages, and an insistence on the maintenance and celebration of particular cultural practices. This 'celebration of diversity' [race, gender and sexuality] has become for many former radicals the principle dynamic in society today. "The emergence of new subjects, new genders, new ethnicities, new regions, new communities," claims *Marxism Today's* Stuart Hall, who exemplifies the renegade trend "has given hitherto invisible groups the means to speak for themselves for the first time." Translated, this hogwash means that 'we have tried and failed to change society so we must accommodate ourselves to it as it is.'

Completing the circle some influential academics now go so far as to argue that 'discourses [which] state their opposition to racism, to totalitarianism, to Nazis, to fascism...do this is in the name of an axiomatic.' Meaning that to take a stand against racism or fascism is to adopt the totalitarian outlook of the racist or the fascist. Consequently, if being white working class is in itself considered the equivalent of being racist; it follows that being a white working class anti-fascist, leads automatically to the familiar anti-AFA charges 'of sinking to their level; of being anti-fascist fascists, of actually being worse than the fascists' and so on.

Of course "it's not uncommon in middle class circles" as Andrew Anthony points out (*Observer* 13.12.98) "to hear attacks on the racism of their little Englanders. It's true that the working class makes less effort than the middle classes to hide its racism, but it's also true that no other social group has dealt with any genuine form of racial integration - if you want to see mixed marriages and kids of different races hanging out together, go to the inner cities". However this mutual assimilation owes nothing to, and has nothing in common with multiculturalism. It is despite, rather than because of it. Recent evidence, saw Birmingham Council condemned by its own race equality officer for "bad practice" for awarding apprenticeships to "Pakistanis only" (*Evening Mail* 20.11.98). Unsurprisingly, a study conducted in Birmingham by the Commission for Racial Equality around the same time found "racist views were widespread." Still in November a London *Evening Standard* editorial, in reference to an independent inquiry into the running of Tower Hamlets, commented "Amongst the welter of serious allegations, racism is the most disturbing. It takes some doing to be suspected of being anti-Bengali by the Bengali residents and anti-white by the whites, but the council seems to have managed it. No, doubt it will claim that it is the councillors attempts to be even handed that have led to the criticisms from both sides, but the form of the complaints suggests that it is more a matter of bias-or-worse in one direction or the other." (7.11.98)

Additional allegations, by a former CRE commissioner who claimed the Commission for Racial Equality was "itself both self serving and riven with ethnic tensions and rivalry, with a corro-



Right-wing Hollywood actor Charlton Heston (left) and friends 'spreading the word' on the picket line 1960.

“Can't everybody see, that there is nothing in the least bit admirable about idle remnants of the proletariat, that dwindling few with their hideous clothes, revolting food, trashy newspapers, filthy children, disgusting manners, vile wallpaper, and violent and dishonest dispositions?”

been challenged by the right, the most likely political beneficiaries are all too easily identifiable.

Since the '80's the far-right throughout Europe, a) have successfully attacked the multi cultural concept on traditional grounds b) appropriated the arguments of cultural diversity and separatist logic to suit its own agenda and c) used this 'common sense' approach to devastating effect in a host of countries across Europe to appeal to working class communities abandoned by both the mainstream politicians and the Left. As we have seen the 'celebration of diversity' was born not of high principle, but conceived in cynicism and embraced out of defeatism; it is theoretically wrong headed, has misread it's own origins, is both politically divisive and strategically counter productive. As a major propaganda gift for the far-right it works against its own principle, and through this process is laying the foundation for an even more fundamental defeat. In short 'multiculturalism over here helps fascism everywhere'. That many will shrink from such a conclusion, finding it heretical if not reasonable, is precisely why militant anti-fascism must not. For the simple reason that at the moment this is where the buck rests. And while there is an opportunity to seize the initiative, failure to deal positively with it, means deliberately passing the buck, knowing full well the identity and malign intentions of the lurking recipient. Either we accept the political risks of addressing it now, or risk the consequences of the far-right capitalising at their leisure later. There is of course no guarantee that we can beat them to the punch, but it is absolutely essential that we try.

sive hostility between Asian and West Indian staff', surfaced in December. In calling for the CRE to be wound up academic Paul Barker argued "that with this being England race has become entangled with class. If, for example, young black men in south London are angry, unemployed and disenfranchised how exactly do their feelings and their position differ from those of a young miserably workless young white man in a collapsed mining village in County Durham?" While 'race and class were always entangled' an ideological construct like multiculturalism which owes its existence these days to its association with good manners rather than political need, is in the long run unsustainable, and may, one way or the other be nearing crisis point. Recent controversies regarding adoption, in particular the case of the adoption of a 'black child' being rejected on the grounds of 'incompatibility' because the prospective parents were merely 'light skinned' is not only perverse, but provides a pervading sense of an ideology devouring itself. Having only ever

Community Resistance

MANCHESTER WhalleyRange Orange out of order

"OUR KIDS should not be used as guinea pigs" was the message delivered to the governor of the Whalley Range school just before Christmas. The dispute arose following the installation of an Orange cellular transmitter on the roof of the inner city primary school in Manchester.

The city council had taken on the contract from Orange on being offered £5,000 pa for the rent of the roof space. A meeting organised by parents was well attended. There an Orange spokesman gave an impression that they didn't "give a toss for the children" and weren't even prepared to acknowledge the dangers of continuous low levels emissions. These transmitters give off a low level micro wave radiation and there is enough doubt as to their safety that many countries have banned their use in the proximity of people considered vulnerable, such as children. Following the meeting, the head teacher agreed that the transmitter would be switched off, but Orange held the school to it's contractual obligation.

As the area is socially mixed, to avert the obvious risk of the campaign being run by and for the middle classes, a second public meeting is being planned: a) to draw back in

the working class families who had drifted and b) outline a strategy and secure a public mandate for the future activities of the campaign. IWCA supporters have agreed to offer assistance with door to door leafleting and campaigning.

SCOTLAND Glasgow

Tenants Challenge Labour

"NO DOUBT we will be expelled from the Labour party for what we are doing. We are angry, frustrated and very bitter at the way that the Labour party is working against the interests of council tenants." These were the words of George Mckie, publicity officer for the Scottish Tenants Campaign Group.

The Scottish Tenants Organisation has decided to fight next May's elections in as many areas as possible. Candidates may stand under the Scottish Tenants Organisation Party (STOP) banner. They will concentrate on areas with large concentrations of council housing. STOP candidates will call for an end to stock transfer and the right to buy, secure tenancies for private tenants and the write off of all housing capital debt.

EAST LONDON Hackney fighting 'Canalside'

IWCA ACTIVISTS in Hackney, East London, have been supporting the Haggerston Tenants Association (TA) in their battle with the council and property developers. Haggerston is less than a mile from the City of London and runs alongside the Grand Union Canal. The area has seen a large number of luxury apartments for City workers, built or converted recently and now

developers are keen to get their hands on the council stock as well. A 'Private Finance Initiative' will effect 400 tenants on Haggerston West and neighbouring estates. Without a vote, the council will move the tenants out, knock their homes down and hand over the land to the 'Canalside Partnership (CP)'. While the CP is made up of two major housing associations, only 51% of the new housing built need be of affordable rents. The developers chosen name, 'Canalside,' says it all.

The TA has been fighting these proposals for three years using a variety of tactics, ensuring at all times that while they have been putting across consistent arguments against privatisation they are not seen as in any way defending the outrageous conduct of Hackney council, who have allowed the homes to fall into such a terrible condition.

IWCA members have supported a number of canvassing sessions on the estate as well as protests outside Canalside's offices. It's clear that the quality of Haggerston TA's work has paid off, with tenants seeing through the council's glossy propaganda and have realised that the council plans to betray them. In Haggerston, community resistance is very much inevidence.

Tenants picket Canalside's offices. A spokesperson said "What's being proposed is a land-grab for 'yuppie-style' housing, which will mean fewer affordable homes for returning tenants."



Now & Then

Although the Runcimann Commission mooted this, they also conceded that the overwhelming results of all research demonstrated that the public preferred jury trial because they regarded it as fairer. Furthermore the roots of jury trial dating back to the Magna Carta and landmark trials of William Penn, Pointing and Randle & Pottle demonstrate not only the essentially democratic element but also the conscientious approach. As EP Thompson eloquently expressed it: "The English common law rests upon a bargain between the law and the people. The jury box is where the people come into the court. The judge watches them and the jury watches back."

A jury is the place where the bargain is struck. A jury attends in judgement not only upon the accused but also upon the justice and humanity in the law. Jack Straw, in opposition said the plan was "unfair short-sighted and likely to prove ineffective," and the then shadow Attorney General proclaimed that the "right to trial by jury must be kept it is cardinal." Barely one year later - volte face.

Michael Mansfield QC, *Guardian*, November 1998

The law says you are presumed innocent until proven guilty, but now in the absence of real evidence you are obliged to incriminate yourself. Your silence will be taken as evidence of guilt. That line of thought makes two assumptions, the first is that the police never lie or invent statements, they never fabricate evidence, they never threaten or intimidate, that people in custody know their rights, that they have access to a solicitor, are neither frightened nor intimidated, are not subject to undue pressure, would not wrongly incriminate themselves or others. It is in recognition that these things have happened, do happen, and will always happen that feudal barons not the National Council for Civil Liberties, made King John sign the Magna Carta. If this is an attempt to secure more convictions it will be of little help. Statistics show that of those charged 96% make statements anyway. However the acquittal rate is as high as 52% in some London crown courts. The real weak link in the system is obviously the jury system. Juries are obviously unrepresentative of the fair-minded people who support Mr Hurd. Expect changes in that direction shortly.

Red Action, issue 47, November 1988

The Committee

Sensational claims in 'The Committee - political assassination in Northern Ireland,' that the murder of political opponents were ordered by prominent members of the Unionist establishment led to the book being banned. With the current crisis in the peace process, Lee Stephens highlights the 'inextricable links' between David Trimble and the accused.

David Trimble knew King Rat. They were on speaking terms. Maybe not bosom buddies but certainly closer than in December 1992 when in the House of Commons Trimble described him "as a gentleman known as Billy Wright... who... I am told is a gangster." The LVF leader was one of Trimble's Portadown constituents, and so the intimate tete a tete witnessed by the BBC's Peter Taylor in the midst of the 1996 Drumcree standoff might have been considered by many typical of a social encounter between a high profile powerful politician and an unemployed working class man with limited formal education.

Except that while one was assured and confident and the other eager to please and uncomfortable, it was Trimble who was sweating.

Wright was named in McPhilemy's book as a prominent member of 'The Ulster Loyalist Central Co-ordinating Committee' who with others, including a senior Ulster Bank executive; a Presbyterian minister; a prominent solicitor, a staff member at Queen's University and an Ulster Independence Committee member conspired to with RUC/UDR 'inner force' connivance to murder their political opponents. Those listed above were six of the two dozen committee members named by McPhilemy, and Nobel Peace prize winner David Trimble has a direct political connection with all of them. When David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party accepted the Nobel Peace Prize, the world held its breath, as he proceeded to address his audience with perhaps the most ungracious acceptance speech in the prize's history. Trimble's speech was a concerted attack upon the Republican Movement and a return to the largely irrelevant issue of decommissioning as part of the Unionist's attempt to wreck the peace process from within.

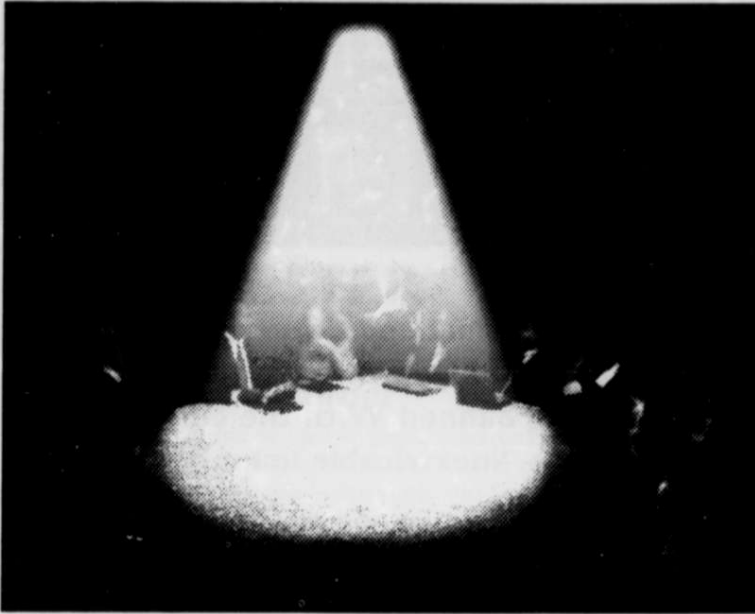
For some time now the Unionist/Loyalist side in the process has required the input of their political equivalent to South Africa's F.W. De Klerk. Someone who recognises that the "jig is up" and who is prepared to negotiate the best possible deal available to that community. Instead they have their own P.W. Botha in the shape of Trimble, stalling and filibustering the entire peace process in order to maintain the status quo.

An analysis of Trimble's political background reveals however that he is pursuing a political line that in his own terms is at least a consistent one. In February 1988, as a law lecturer at Queens University and before commencing his parliamentary career, William David Trimble penned a pamphlet entitled, "What Choice For Ulster". In it Trimble argued that the Anglo Irish Agreement had signalled Britain's intention to withdraw the birthrights of the "Ulster British" and he presented the case for an 'Independent Ulster' as an alternative. Indeed his stated views on the subject have become the 'blue print' for the most extreme elements of the loyalist community, whose object is to regain exclusive control of the government of the six counties. The establishment of a pro-Independent Ulster bloc in the loyalist community also mirrored the sharp increase in loyalist paramilitary terror attacks carried out against the nationalist community in general and republicans in particular.

This group who saw the Anglo-Irish Accord of 1985 as the final straw in Britain's attempt to sell their birthrights to Dublin, once organised, became increasingly influential in every area of Unionist and Loyalist life. They promoted the idea of a "Doomsday Scenario" where Ulster would be sold out by the British and that it would therefore be up to the Ulster (Protestant) people to go it alone. Their aim was in effect to create a "junta in waiting" ready to assume leadership of the 'Ulster Nation' when the need arose. In the short term their aim was to deal with the "enemy within," nationalism and republicanism. Their first step was to reorganise the forces of reaction, the loyalist death squads, the RUC and the UDR, into a co-operative unit which colluded and implemented a military campaign of terror against the Catholic Community. According to James Sands, former member of the 'committee' and chief source of Sean McPhilemy's book: "Before then, Ulster people on the loyalist side were never really organised. There was wee small groups in various towns done their own thing But because of the signing of the agreement in 1985, which brought a lot of middle upper classes into Ulster Loyalism, that these men have, these people have seen that there is a British withdrawal, gradual, but still a withdrawal. And from a business point of view, they want to look after themselves. They don 't want to be left high and dry with the British withdrawal. And they're putting their business expertise, their business knowledge to the good of Ulster."

So hiding behind the cloak of respectability, some of Northern Ireland's most prominent businessmen, politicians, policemen, lawyers and clergy became directly involved in the loyalist assassination campaign. Their involvement was to provide the loyalists with the money, arms and political direction that they had previously lacked. Loyalist assassins like Billy "King Rat" Wright and Robin "The Jackal" Jackson and their gangs were the hired guns of The Committee, whose access to detailed official files and information, as well as their ability to provide the hands-on involvement of RUC units in death squad murders, was to make them seem virtually untouchable. The conspiracy however goes much deeper than simply providing loyalist nutters with gear and security files. According to McPhilemy's book, the conspiracy goes to the very heart of the Unionist Establishment and involves a secret "inner force" within the RUC, which in turn is run by a core leadership known as the Inner Circle. The Inner Force within the RUC is organised from a divisional level right down to a station by station "cell" structure. McPhilemy also contends that the overall commander of this secret grouping is the ex- Head of RUC Special Branch.

continued on page 10



The Committee: Murder Inc.

As a result of similar allegations made by McPhilemy in a Channel Four documentary broadcast October 2 1991, a Presbyterian Minister appeared on *Right to Reply* three days later to refute unfair inferences he believed were contained in the programme. He was accompanied by his MP, David Trimble who forcefully and repeatedly insisted thereafter that it was all a "hoax and republican propaganda." (When the *Sunday Express* repeated the hoax accusations outside of Parliament it would eventually cost them a cool £500,000 in damages and costs as a result of losing a libel action brought by McPhilemy in 1996)

That the loyalist assassins became better armed and better informed during the late 1980's and early 1990's cannot be denied. There have always been claims made by the nationalist community that there has been widespread collusion between the state forces and the death squads throughout the present period of conflict. You only have to look at the long list of RUC and UDR/RIR personnel convicted of loyalist terrorist offences to put paid to the lie that the forces of law and order are policing the six counties impartially. Father Raymond Murray's book, *The SAS In Ireland*, documents the collusion with, and direction of, the loyalist death squads by the British Army's most elite units.

Robin Jackson was one of those so directed. A seasoned 'terrorist' in the true sense and meaning of the word. He was recruited by British Army Intelligence in 1974. They facilitated his activities and, according to McPhilemy's sources, "...trained him in the assassin's art." The former British Intelligence officer, Captain Fred Holroyd, who was himself based in Portadown between 1973 and 1975 has no doubt that Robin Jackson was a "licensed killer" for the "security services." Jackson and Wright were in effect the Committee's hired help, contracted to carry out operations on its behalf. Jackson's career as a hit-man for the RUC and Army made him an obvious choice to carry out the Committee's "dirty work." Both men enjoyed co-operation from their police and army counterparts and immunity from prosecution. Indeed, not only did they escape prosecution, they could also rely upon the direct involvement of RUC officers in certain operations. In one example, McPhilemy alleges that two on-duty RUC officers belonging to the 'Inner Force' acting on instructions from the Committee, selected a victim by checking the license plate of his car through the RUC computer in order to establish whether he was a Catholic. The two officers then arranged to meet Billy Wright and guide him into the lover's lane where he and his girlfriend had parked the car. This murder, of the young Catholic man, Denis Carville, was a so-called 'revenge attack' for the IRA killing of UDR soldier, Colin McCullough at the same spot. As Jim Sands stated: "They wanted someone who was in the same situation, a young man sitting with his girlfriend in the car." In light of the sectarian murder of a constituent by Billy Wright, the comment by the local MP for the area, that "some idiot had taken the law into his own hands" was both bizarre and politically loaded. That MP was David Trimble.

Another of the Committee's victims was the leading nationalist defence solicitor in the north of Ireland, Patrick Finucane. The RUC, in particular, deemed that Finucane was basically "a Provo" because he was prepared to act as legal counsel to members of the republican movement. Thus, in February, 1989, Pat Finucane also became a victim of the Committee. Following the C4 screening of *The Committee* a prominent loyalist solicitor launched proceedings of criminal libel against McPhilemy in December 1992. He sued McPhilemy, claiming that because he could be recognised from the programmes description, he was in a fact being set up for assassination "and had been placed in a similar

position to Pat Finucane." Precisely because he was personally present in the Finagh Orange Hall in January 1989 when the murder of Finucane was commissioned, this typical display of "chutzpah" according to McPhilemy, drew particular admiration from his loyalist co-conspirators. The claim that he was indeed recognisable was supported by two sponsors: another solicitor, and David Trimble who swore an affidavit stating that he was in "absolutely no doubt" that his friend and had been the solicitor identified. The fellow solicitor, who backed up Trimble, happens to be in legal practice with, according to information supplied to McPhilemy by an informer in 1991, yet another member of 'The Committee.' It also turns out, that this is the same partnership that looks after Trimble's legal affairs.

Sometimes in the past evidence of collusion was dismissed as being carried out by rogue elements among the security forces. But, as Sean McPhilemy points out the conspiracy is deep and wide. As well as a former Asst. Chief Constable and the ex-head of RUC Special Branch, McPhilemy names five other senior RUC officers with links to 'The Committee,' plus two Army Majors still serving in the UDR/RIR. Unionist councillors, Presbyterian Ministers, Queen's University academics and a number of solicitors, lawyers and businessmen are also alleged to be full participants in the conspiracy. Unsurprisingly, their influence within the constituency of unionism is pervasive.

In particular the political hand of 'the Committee' can be seen especially around the issue of Drumcree where it has been their political influence, in their own heartland of Portadown, that has been the driving force behind the intransigent position adopted by the local Orangemen. It may have been as a result of the influence of 'the Committee,' along with a mistrust of the local RUC's ability to maintain order, that convinced British direct ruler, Mo Mowlam to call in the Parachute Regiment to bolster the lines at Drumcree last year. Trimble is after all the MP whose constituency takes in Drumcree and the town of Portadown. Portadown is the town at the heart of the Committee's "murder triangle" and Drumcree has become a symbol for the most sectarian Orange elements. Anyone who crossed such individuals may well be taking their own life into their hands - if, that is, they genuinely disagreed politically with The Committee. Trimble's own political background would suggest however that any differences that might exist between him and the members of the Committee is as likely to be one of emphasis and presentation, rather than the ultimate objective. Trimble is, after all, a published exponent of the Committee's preference for an Independent Ulster. In addition when a member of the faculty staff at Queens University in the late '80's, both he and another faculty member sat on the executive of the extreme loyalist Ulster Clubs. The latter would later join the Committee. And when another fellow executive, and uncompromising Loyalist was shot dead by the IRA in 1988, his brother a leading Bank executive, and ex RUC officer, responded by drawing together the Loyalist coalition that would become the The Committee.

In 1991, the former RUC officer, apparently for his own amusement posed as "driver" for the extremely shadowy Ulster Resistance when escorting a Channel Four reporter to an interview.

On the way, the researcher became aware that the driver was being waved through RUC road blocks by officers who appeared deferential towards him. Laughing, the driver turned to the researcher and said: "It makes you wonder who runs this place, doesn't it?" By his stance on decommissioning, and the tenor of his Oslo acceptance speech, Trimble made it clear that if he wasn't exactly speaking for the people 'who run the place,' he was certainly still speaking to them.

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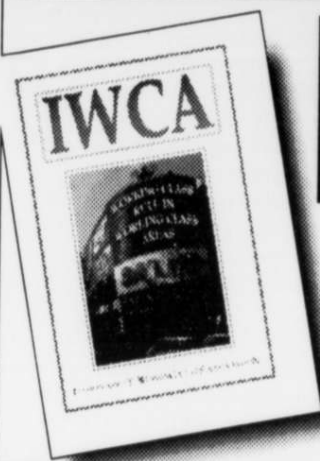
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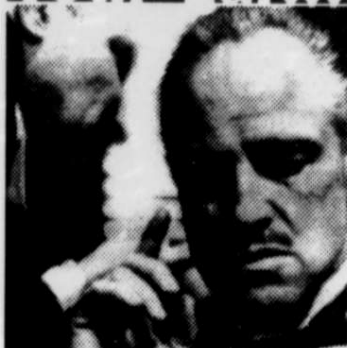
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A Word In Your Ear...



THERE'S NOWT QUEERER THAN FOLK

ANOTHER ONE'S gone; another's one's gone, another Trot bites the dust. The most recent volunteer for the long walk on the end of a short plank, was the Workers International League or WIL. Cited in dispatches for this act of mercy was one Steve Myers. At the beginning of the '90's this character had become involved in AFA through Workers Power. For the usual reasons he abandoned them for another Trot outfit, the 'Revolutionary' version (as it's members saw it) of the WIL - RIL. As Workers Power reached the end of its positive existence within AFA, it sought to strengthen it's own hand, by bringing in the RIL.

As like attracts like, they in turn sought membership for the

WIL. Working for a time on the assumption that the WIL was merely the product of a pronounced lisp, AFA members were alarmed discover there was in a fact an entirely different group. While fully sensitive to the charge of homophobia the fact remains that the majority, if not the entire membership of the RIL were either proud to be gay, or failing that, for reasons best know to themselves, sought to convey the impression that they were.

This was borne out by Myers himself, who on one notable occasion challenged the legitimacy of AFA's 'security stewards,' on the grounds that all in it were obviously practicing heterosexuals. On it being pointed out to him, that he himself to all appearances was straight, he countered that he was at that "very moment in the process of questioning his sexuality". Our 34 year old adolescent then repeated the charge that the stewards group needed to be reorganised because 'no gays were involved'. At that 6ft '4, 17 stone rugby player got to his feet, walked quietly over to where Myer's was sitting, put a hand on each shoulder and leaning forward whispered "And how would you know?" Witnesses swear they watched the hair on the back of his neck rise. Anyway, who knows what damage was done. Some time later he left the RIL and joined the WIL. Where in 1997 he found himself accused of 'sexual abuse by a female member' and suspended for six months. He immediately formed an internal faction which led quickly to WIL's demise. He is now the proud leader of a three man Worker's Fight. As William Hague might say 'there's nowt queerer than folk.'

DEJA VU

BROWSING THROUGH the December edition of the state-friendly magazine, *Searchlight*, a small piece under their 'News from the sewers' column caught my eye. It refers to an incident involving National Democrat's leader, Ian Anderson.

It read: "Searchlight has on file a wonderful piece of archive video tape of Anderson during an election campaign at a school in the home counties rushing out to greet what he took to be a group of fellow fascists arriving, leaving his fairly substantial team of minders behind. The minders included Mattie and the notorious street fighter and Ulster Loyalist, Eddie Whicker, who made no move to follow Anderson. The newly arrived group grabbed Anderson by the hand, shook it, patted him on the back and then knocked the living daylight out of him, much to the surprise of the constabulary and the mirth of his minders."

Not bad, but like a lot of remakes not half as good as the original: "A forty strong group of 'late arrivals' arrogantly swept past the official picket and the police cordon to cries of 'scum! scum! scum!' Both surprised and delighted Anderson stepped forward. A familiar figure amongst the sea of smiling faces greeted him. 'Hello Ian, just like old times!' Anderson responded warmly. 'How very nice to see you again!'" A photo then showed "the scene outside the school, seconds after Anderson had been trampled into the school geraniums." *Red Action*, June/July 1991.

Obviously there are interesting (i.e. we can reveal that Whicker was the only one present with a camera) and important (i.e. what are *Searchlight* doing still in possession of footage allegedly showing militant anti-fascists involved in an affray) questions to be answered here, but as any regular reader of this column could tell you, that's not it's purpose.

As in *Searchlight's* new pamphlet *White Noise* (which deals with Waterloo, etc - reviewed next issue) it's impossible to get the story entirely accurate if you weren't actually there. However if the 'Searchlight Team' intend packing-out their CV with eight year old anecdotes from *Red Action* we suggest:

a) They acquaint themselves with the copyright laws and b) get a fact checker!

A BRIDGE TOO FAR - THE SEQUEL

AND WHILE we're on the *Searchlight* theme they had a typical po-faced dig at militant anti-fascists a couple of months ago for slapping a few paras "just because they had short hair." As it happens the principal protagonist had no hair! Which again goes to show it's impossible to get the story entirely accurate if you weren't actually there. Anyway, they'll be delighted to hear that the little 'confusion' over the loyalist insignia is in the process of being amicably sorted out. Using AFA as an intermediary, proximity talks have been suggested between RA readers at Chelsea barracks and the editor of 'WIYE.' Sadly he'll be getting his hair cut on the day (probably), so if anyone out there would like to deputise please call: Mike, 2 PARA, Chelsea Barracks, London, 0171 930 4466. Oh yes, and if your surname happens to start with O' it might be prudent to press 141 before dialling.

Something We Said!?

He is picking up the tab bequeathed to him by a generation of Unionist leaders who just said no. Unlike Adams, who spent more than a decade preparing his party for compromise, neither Trimble nor his predecessors did the necessary groundwork...

If he presses [the destruct button], if he allows the assembly to fall, he and the people whose interests he has been elected to protect will be the ultimate losers, not Sinn Fein.

Ronan Bennett, *Observer*, 31.1.99

Open Polemic's concern is the confused state of the working class and the disintegration of it's scientific communist leadership. That is the predicament for Open Polemic and that of course does not concern Red Action because it operates on a different wavelength.

Open Polemic, no.10, Oct/Nov 1998

But, at the risk of sounding like a bearded polytechnic lecturer, there is a working class in this country and it is in danger of being removed from the mainstream of political and cultural life than at any time this century.

Andrew Anthony, *Observer*, 13.12.98

In Jack Straw's Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the commission achieved one of its final ambitions. Sections 28 to 32 create new offences of racially aggravated assault criminal damage, public order offences and harassment.

These carry higher maximum penalties than equivalent offences which are not thought to be racially motivated. I have to say I doubt how effective this will be. The odds are that this will remain a largely symbolic gesture.

Paul Barker calling for the disbandment of the Commission for Racial Equality on the grounds of incompetence.

Evening Standard, 15.12.98