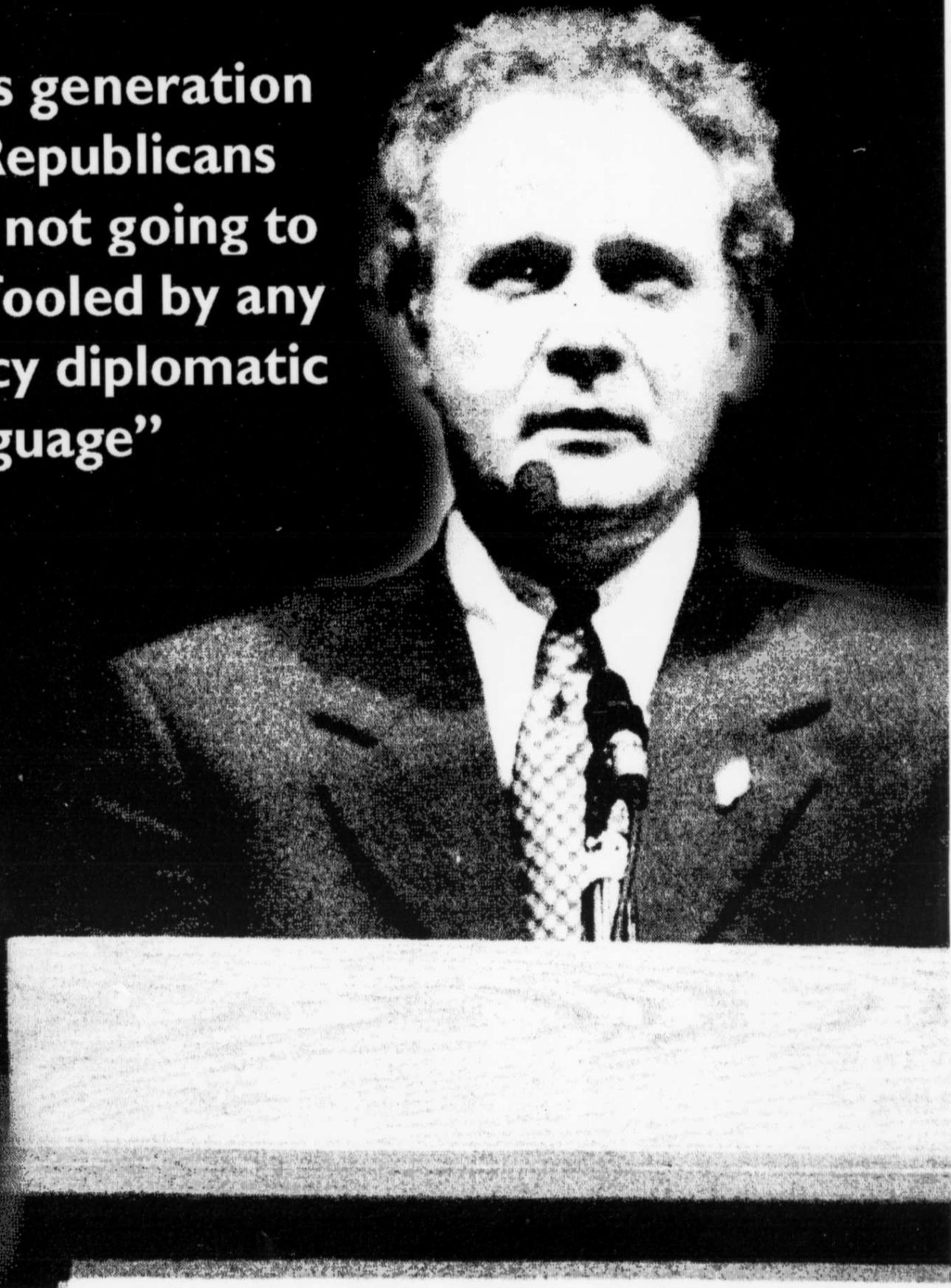


RED ACTION

The bi-monthly bulletin of the organisation Red Action • Price: 70p • Vol. 3 Issue. 1 • Jun/July 1998

**“This generation
of Republicans
are not going to
be fooled by any
fancy diplomatic
language”**



EDITORIAL

'Socialism is dead. If working class hegemony is the unchanging goal then our tactics and strategy are in need of serious revision.

If the battles for hearts and minds begins with the battle of ideas, then the issues and problems that need addressing are not of a working class victorious but the day to day conflict of a class betrayed, out flanked, politically destitute and oppressed.'

At the beginning of the year thousands of leaflets, containing this somewhat blunt message were distributed across the entire left. It was an open invitation, and indeed challenge to all who interpret the term, class struggle literally, to be involved from the very beginning in discussions around a new publication. On March 7, the first editorial discussions on the proposed *Cutting Edge* magazine took place in Conway Hall. While the meeting had been widely advertised throughout the left the attendance itself, was not in anyway representative, nor could it hope to be, as roughly, 85% of the misnamed revolutionary left still orientate toward, or identify with the right of centre party in power. A reasonable cross section of the remaining 15% were represented however, including tenants representatives, unaligned anarchists, militant anti-fascists, a prominent veteran of the Poll Tax struggle, and individuals from various groups and traditions.

At the end of the four hour meeting, while there was widespread agreement on the general thrust of the proposal, it was concluded that a further effort should be made to broaden the base. It was felt that the broader the participation in *Cutting Edge* at an editorial level from the beginning, the greater its appeal, and the less likely the prospect of it being still born as result of sectarianism.

"Given the current state of affairs politically, can we afford it?" was a question posed. "Given the current state of affairs can we afford not to" came the reply.

This caution is not unwarranted. With *Cutting Edge* still in the womb, genuine confusion mixed with malicious speculation is already rife in certain circles. Dismissing the declared objectives, *Open Polemic* have launched a 'slashing attack' on the entire project and in particular Red Action's support for it. On a similar vein some have added to the confusion by insisting it has something to do with the IWCA. Others have gone so far as to imply that what is really on the table is a new - organisation! One response commented "I showed the document to some people and we all ended up scratching our heads trying to understand what you are driving at." In Party Notes (*Weekly Worker* Jan 22) Mark Fischer for one, showed no such hesitation. The initiative was dismissed as "a product of profound defeat and the ignominious collapse of previous perspectives." More on that later.

Meanwhile, according to our old friends *Open Polemic* "addressing the contemporary problems of the working class" or even attempting "to provide progressive working class thinking with a strategical and theoretical cutting edge" is certainly counter productive if not counter-revolutionary. "Until we, the revolutionary section of the class are united

in the nucleus of a party we can offer little but pious rhetoric to the class as a whole." So pious rhetoric it is then. Have you ever heard such errant nonsense? *OP* argues that the working class "offers a home to all sorts of bourgeois prejudices, sectional one-sidedness and outright bigotry." Of course when the far-right dominate the politics of many countries in Europe it would be hard to argue otherwise. But in contrast to the "stultifying backwardness" of the mass of the working class, the most advanced sections internationally still "shine as a beacon for all humanity." Clearly for *OP* it is not the advanced sections; the 'beacons for all humanity' that have failed the working class, rather the reverse.

Nothing wrong with socialism then. Or indeed Soviet Communism. It's the working class that's got to change. And until they come to their senses they should be ignored. For real communists like *OP* the immediate aims, the enforcement of the momentary interests are of no concern. Fighting to achieve immediate results in the interests of the working class is merely pandering to existing prejudices: "RA doesn't fully realise the complexity of the class that it chooses to align with." It would be far more productive in the long run if all existing pro-active work ceased immediately and "the revolutionary working class leaders (RA included)" settled down to the political, philosophical and ideological debate with *OP* instead. Which is, we are informed at various times the real class struggle: "class struggle at it highest point" and "the essence of class struggle today."

In contrast to this lop-sided and hermetical delirium, the real objectives of *Cutting Edge* can

be summarised as follows. (a) To provide a sense of political direction to progressive working class thinking in regard to contemporary issues of universal concern. (Social, economic and political.) (b) To create and define independent working class perspectives in response to society's contradictions. (c) To prepare the ground tactically and strategically for the return of an independent working class to the political mainstream and real politics. So in one sense Mark Fischer is correct. *Cutting Edge* is the product of profound and ignominious defeat. But the defeat is not restricted to the sponsors as is implied. But is, as *Weekly Worker* has on occasion acknowledged, a political defeat currently being endured by the working class as a whole.

A substantial part of the discussions at the inaugural editorial meeting was in regard to marketing the magazine, in recognition, that at least initially *Cutting Edge* would have to be financially subsidised. "Given the current state of affairs politically, can we afford it?" was a question posed. "Given the current state of affairs can we afford not to" came the reply.

RED ACTION 'Volume 3'

When the very first edition of Red Action appeared in 1982, the political world it entered was very different to now. Labour and the TUC were broadly accepted as socialism's mainstream representatives, while Thatcherism was regarded as a blip. Possibly because of this complacency, Red Action saw the need from the beginning, to create fresh layers of working class activists by presenting basic socialist arguments in a jargon free style. It was a distinguishing feature.

However, by the late 1980's it was apparent that something was badly wrong with the 'socialist blueprint', and so again through the paper, we initiated a search for the faultline.

Red Action 'Volume 2' represented a complete reversal of previous custom and practice.

From an editorial position of refusing to mention, much less criticise other 'revolutionary' groups, now all organisations and ideologies, with the writings of Marx and Engels as a reference point, were brutally laid bare. The autopsy, which proved both hugely instructive and highly controversial, often inducing a spluttering rage amongst sects of all denominations was completed by the mid 1990's.

It was directly responsible for a fundamental change of direction, by Red Action at least..

Red Action Volume 3 will be produced on a regular bi-monthly basis, and will carry analysis, campaign and progress reports on the lessons learned.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

TOO GOOD TO GO DOWN?

Amongst the subjects for discussion at the last meeting of the RA National Council (NC) was the present condition of the left and the effect this may have on RA. In recent times we have seen the disappearance of the likes of Class War and the various factions that made up the remnants of the WRP. The Socialist Party (formerly Militant) look set to suffer an acrimonious split along national lines, with the Scottish section of the party about to declare U.D.I. and are also said to be down to 30-40 activists for the entire London area. A steady flow of resignations from Arthur Scargill's SLP have been the order of the day since the fanfare of publicity that heralded its launch; while Arthur tries to buy-up the *Morning Star* which is tearing itself apart in a dispute between workers and management. Even the self-styled 'hard-headed ideologues' of the CPGB have seen it's two Scottish organisers resign in apparent despondency. Surely it will not be too long either, before the SWP's continued electoral support for the viciously right-wing Blair government causes serious dissent within the ranks.

So where does this leave RA? Although, because of RA's long-standing rejection of conventional left ideology, RA has so-far suffered few resignations in what must be seen as a particularly harsh climate for those involved in revolutionary politics; it would be a grave mistake to think that we are somehow automatically immune from its effects. RA has no divine right to survive. To use football terminology, no one is necessarily 'too good to go down' in the present climate.

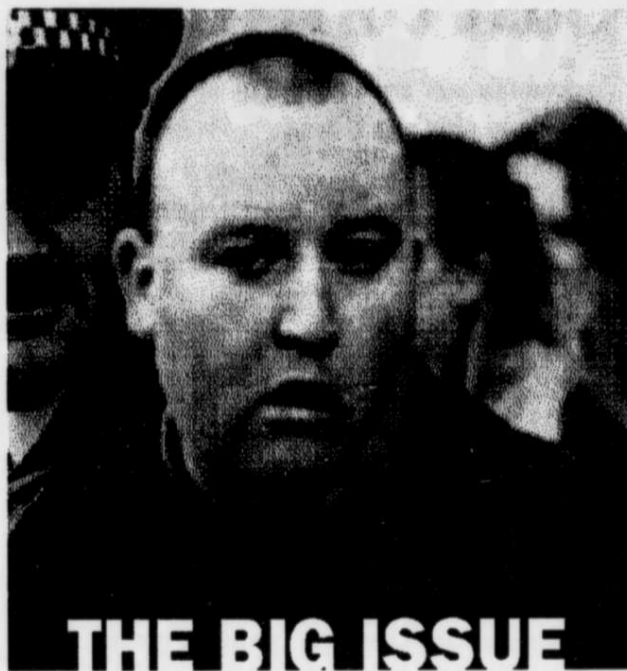
One aspect identified at the NC crucial to RA's long-term health is the tightening-up of our internal structures. There has certainly been a tendency in some areas to allow this area of work to drift. All organisers should ensure that Regional and Branch meetings are held on a regular basis and are well attended, that subs are paid on time, that the *Red Action* Bulletin is sold and the internal newsletters are distributed and contributed-to regularly.

It is essential that members who are often burrowing away on equally important but disparate projects do not become isolated from the rest of the organisation. Taking part in branch meetings gives all members an opportunity to gain an overview of the progress that RA is making in the various areas of its work throughout the regions, and to debate and shape short-term policy between annual conference; essential in ensuring internal democracy.

As we have previously identified, an explosion in growth for organisations such as RA is not on the cards for the foreseeable future. Instead we must apply ourselves to the various projects we have been painstakingly assembling over the past few years.

This has often been a frustrating period for some members who have not played a hands-on role in this process, however, now is the time for the talking to stop and the doing to begin. RA has equipped itself with a sound analysis, have been central in putting together a number of potentially ambitious and exciting projects and can look upon the coming period with some optimism. Success is not guaranteed though. These projects will need a solid core, and that core is RA. We must start by doing the basics and do them well.

Steve Potts



"Charlie Sargent, the former leader of Combat 18, now serving a life sentence for murder, worked as a paid informer for the Metropolitan police gathering intelligence on the Ulster Defence Association, which the security services had found difficult to penetrate. Combat 18's crimes went unpunished as Sargent provided information to Special Branch" according to an article by Henry McDonald in *The Observer* 5 April 1998.

However, only a week earlier the *Sunday Telegraph* had produced documentary evidence that showed that a UDA intelligence officer Brian Nelson had been the conduit through which the security forces passed on information to the UDA, "the better to target republican activists". Army intelligence ran more than 100 agents, of which less than a handful have come to light. Hard to believe Nelson was the only one in the UDA.

In the early '90's McDonald claimed that Red Action had been used by the security services to spy on the INLA. In 1995 former *Daily Mirror* Editor Roy Greenslade was one of a number of journalists who claimed that the "*Sunday Times* was planting false stories and was hell bent on derailing the peace process." McDonald is currently facing libel charges brought by a leading republican, as a result of a smear story written by him and printed by - the *Sunday Times*.



Bloody Sunday

Rumours circulating in far-right circles that a significant group of fascists and loyalists would be

coming into the N. London area to confront the annual Bloody Sunday march drew an impressive response from AFA militants. Equally impressive was the turn out of the 'Met' who placed one hundred of their finest in the Archway area at precisely 11am to coincide with AFA's arrival. The occasion was used to extend and update what must already be a formidable 'rogue's gallery'. It was made quite clear from the beginning that it was AFA, rather than the 'IRA' march or the NF counter demonstration (both of whom cooperated fully with the police) who were the primary target of the security operation. Significantly, when dusk fell and events were coordinated without the use of mobile phones police intelligence and bravado ebbed sharply. Consequently, on at least two occasions, fascists who should have known better loitered in the area and came close to having the frustration of the 100-strong AFA stewards group visited upon them.

NOT WAVING...

The *Guardian* (24 March) saw the Paul Foot column dominated by an account of a black woman teacher attacked on her way home from school and harassed ever since. 'NF' and swastikas were daubed on her kitchen door. Police are treating the campaign as racial harassment and have installed a panic button in her home. Paul the revolutionary asked Alison the teacher "what could be done." She suggested that more money should be spent on school security. "If there had been a surveillance camera outside that school building that night, the thugs would have been caught and locked up by now. Secondly: schools should spend more time and effort teaching people not to be bullies and not to be racists." She suggested that as "these young men must have been to school somewhere" and assuming the school implemented anti-racist policies, she concluded it was presumably because "their parents are racist." Paul of course, concurs. "This part of London harbours racist gangs, inspired by fascist propaganda, which glorifies bludgeoning and murdering people because of the colour of their skin. They represent a tiny minority, universally hated and despised. Perhaps the Stephen Lawrence inquiry should extend its terms of reference and make some practical recommendations about how these gangs can be identified, isolated and stopped." Theory: fascist propaganda makes racists. Racists make children, who make race attacks. The attackers are a tiny minority universally hated.

Solution: CCTV; intensive race awareness at a school; and a public inquiry to make some "practical recommendations" to stop them. Since 1986 a series of reports, often containing the very "practical solutions" Paul Foot believes in, came to some very different conclusions. They found that (1) The politically correct approach proved disastrous in working class areas. (2) Racial incidents are at an all time high and rising. (3) Race attackers often come from homes that are non-racist (4) Entire communities actively protect the perpetrators. (5) The BNP though not active in an area have an important symbolic significance. (6) Race awareness policies are themselves often the primary source of racism. (7) Local government policies buy into racialisation in a very visible way. (8) It is this creation of

Vidal Sassoon

difference that sets communities against each other.

For the last thirteen years, these devastating reports have all been systematically buried or binned. This is a major scandal. A knowing determination to address the symptom rather than the cause is not a sincere attempt to resolve the problem of racial violence but to perpetuate it. Paul Foot has a reputation for investigative reporting - well there's something to investigate Paul.

On April 22, a film dedicated to The 43 Group was shown at Hackney Town Hall. It told the story of 43 Jewish ex services personnel, 38 men and 5 women, who returned from WW2, to find London in particular, awash with an estimated 10,000 unrepentant and undefeated fascists. They decided something needed to be done, and formed the paramilitary 43 Group. Hundreds joined; the spearhead being formed by 300 former commandoes who took on the fascists with ill-disguised relish. Meetings and marches were smashed up at a rate of 3 or 4 a week. After 4 years of unremitting violence, Moseley's boys were on their knees. As Vidal Sassoon commented "we beat them because we hated, and were more ruthless." In discussions afterwards the consensus was that nowadays a combination of multi-ethnic coalitions, education and the Special Branch was the best solution. Militants should have the courage to stand back and let the future unfold we were told. The same political forces historically responsible for the Holocaust will concede, without another punch being thrown that 'the future belongs to us', apparently. Which is nice.

Andy Shaw

Dover March - 2

On 28.2.98 the NF held their second march in Dover against the presence of Romany asylum seekers. Over 300 Police were on hand to protect the 30 NF members who were bussed in. And after their stroll along the promenade bussed out. Given that everyone knew it would be a numbers game on the day the ANL turn-out comprised of little more than a few skinny students. This suggests that (a) they clearly weren't up for even formal demo's and/or (b) they exist on paper only.

Given that the police greatly outnumbered the 150-strong anti-fascists, the 20 arrests on the day were entirely gratuitous. In addition the occasion was once again used to mount a huge intelligence gathering operation.

Sectarian Attacks

Following a mass leaflet outside the ground of Glasgow Celtic FC, an organising meeting to discuss the appropriate response to loyalist inspired sectarian attacks was held. Despite an orchestrated campaign by sections of the media, Fergus McCann (Celtic Chairman) and the police to the effect that RA were operating to a "hidden agenda" over 80 Celtic supporters turned-out to discuss the campaign's next step. I warmly applaud an AFA spokesperson pointed out: "The press are rarely on the side of those who stand up to such hatred. The mere mention that people should be prepared to physically defend themselves is enough for the press to turn victims into aggressors, the architects of their own misfortune." It is expected a formal committee will be in place for next season.

Aston Villa FC

Red Action members are lending support to the 'Villa Fans Against Loyalism and Fascism' initiative. Matchday sales of the anti-fascist fanzine *Well Prepared* have been good and there's been an encouraging response from Villa supporters. (For the latest issue of *Well Prepared* see page 11).

BACK ISSUES

STATEMENT

"On Saturday the 19 February, a Red Action National Meeting took place at Caxton House in London. In line with our normal policy, the date and venue was publicised, in order that sympathisers that we are not in direct contact with may be encouraged to attend. We were aware that by publicising the meeting we did open it up to the risk of being attacked by political opponents, and the wisdom of doing so was seriously discussed, but the general feeling was (1) Attack was unlikely (2) We would be able to handle it, if it did happen. In fact a group of fascists, not great in number, but well armed, did turn up. Due to complacency and bad security arrangements on our part, they were able to get inside the building, before any of us knew about it, and very nearly had the opportunity to inflict damage upon some of those present. Fortunately the situation was very quickly brought under control, and it is unlikely that the intruders concerned, will be so keen to turn up to a Red Action meeting another time. However, we have to admit that we were very nearly caught napping. Our complacency was possibly based on the fact that in the past, we have never found the fascists too difficult to handle, and they have never before attacked a Red Action initiative. We are quick learners. We will not be found wanting in this respect again, and security will be much better organised at all future events. At the present it will still be our policy to advertise all of our political initiatives, and we are confident that we can handle any difficulties that arise. Hopefully, a greater security awareness will render the more "extreme" measures required in this case unnecessary in future. This situation will be kept under review as we don't particularly want to have to go through too much trouble when the meeting is the object of the exercise. We have no wish or desire to be drawn into any kind of running battle with the NF, or anyone else for that matter, as we have much better things to do with our time and energy. However we will do whatever we may have to do, to defend every single one of our members AT ALL TIMES".

Red Action, issue 17, April/May 1985



cont'd

Secrets & Lies

In a shock move the newly inaugurated National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC) of Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) suspended two of its branches. The NCC meeting which was held in February unanimously endorsed a motion from the Southern Region, to suspend both the Leeds and Huddersfield branches. The NCC also insisted that individuals belonging to those branches would be required to re-apply for membership through the National Office. In the interim a West Yorkshire branch has been set up.

Suspending a branch, or even an individual from AFA is not unique, hardly routine. There have of course been internal difficulties before. Indeed looking back on AFA's history, internal strife, with Searchlight often playing a leading part has rarely been absent since AFA's inception. In 1986 in less than a year after AFA was founded a Searchlight smear against Class War resulted in a walk-out at the annual conference by Class War, Direct Action and the 'anarchist haters' Red Action. In 1987 there was a concerted attempt to have Red Action itself expelled for "racism". In 1989 prior to the re-launch, the organisation was paralysed for two years, while the defacto leadership attempted to filibuster a Red Action proposal to democratise the organisation. Finally exhausted, the leadership, which had its base of support around the Newham Monitoring Project decamped, with the accounts, and the promise of a new organisation. And were never heard of again.

Then in the early 1990's there were further difficulties, most notably in London, with Workers Power and the Revolutionary Internationalist League. This coincided with the quiet resignation of about twenty unaligned members based in Hackney, who collectively lost their stomach for the fight after a particularly brutal clash with the BNP in south London. As if this was not bad enough it was followed later in the same day, by an equally brutal smashing up of a League of St George meeting in west London (It was the Kensington Library 'massacre' that gave birth to C 18). Even though the casualties in both encounters were all sustained by the far-right, with probably more than a dozen hospitalised, the intervention at the League of St George meeting led to seventeen arrests. "Too rich for my blood" was the immediate and instinctive reaction of some.

One, a professional Geordie in a bad case of funk, even confided to an RA member that 'a lot of people would be leaving if things didn't change'. To avoid such a scenario the required 'change' would mean the abandonment of the essence of AFA militancy. Of course when composure was recovered, the sudden crash of bottle was repackaged in leftspeak: 'the need for a united front' (i.e. an orientation to

Joe Reilly looks at the destructive role played by Searchlight entryists within AFA

the ANL); accusations of 'AFA being sectarian', of AFA not being 'lesbian friendly' and so on.

In Glasgow as well, there were celebrated shenanigans when some elements decided it would be nice to form a new AFA branch in the city, with the proviso that it be anarchist only. Here again, though there was a hidden agenda, the need for 'separate development' was at least partly motivated by the feeling that other AFA members regarded the routine engagements with the far-right at the time with a little too much relish. Not of course that it was ever presented so bluntly. Again a veritable web of dishonesty was spun.

This particular internal dispute even caught the eye of Searchlight, who publicly weighed in with the helpful suggestion that the quarrel was in reality Irish Republican related. Sectarian bigotry and all that. Allegations of bullying and racism were also thrown in for good measure. A mainstay of such controversies is the allegation of state involvement. Here, as is often the case, the one pointing the finger was himself cooperating with Special Branch on matters relating to hunt-sabbing (He left soon after for America). In all the cases mentioned having departed with as much dignity as could be mustered, the renegades insisted with much tub thumping that they intended to carry on the fight, invited with a nod and a wink, others to join them and promptly disappeared from sight. In 1993 following the arrest of the AFA London organiser and RA member on charges relating to an IRA campaign, there followed a suggestion from Searchlight, via a Leeds AFA delegate at a Northern Network (NN) meeting that Red Action and AFA should part company. It was proposed, for the purposes of public relations that the intended expulsion be presented as "a cosmetic split." Many of the same components, with a slightly different order and emphasis are evident in the recent bust-up.

But when the allegations and counter allegations are disentangled what it comes down to is this. Searchlight lackeys who have over a long period of time conducted an entryist operation within AFA, with at one stage, almost total control of the Yorkshire region, for once got careless and got caught out. Perhaps Leeds AFA organisers having learnt they had survived a previous inquiry, simply grew complacent thinking they were off the hook. But in hindsight, the 'not proven' outcome can be now seen more clearly as an order for more rope.

In any case, about twelve months ago a Manchester AFA organiser was contacted by the Leeds and de facto Northern Network organiser, in relation to a planned BNP activity in Leeds. "Four fascists from Manchester would be travelling over" he was offered as an enticement to become involved with a planned counter mobilisation. When he inquired as to the source, he was told that it was a "Glasgow based journalist". Instantly curious as to how someone in Glasgow would be either interested, or aware, of the movements of fascists who had no political profile, either in Manchester or nationally, he began asking a few questions and so the saga began. At the inaugural NNC meeting a

continued on page 9

...France... FN breakthrough...
centre cannot hold...

...‘VELVET COUNTER REVOLUTION BEGINS’

“Something has changed, changed utterly, a terrible nightmare is threatened. These elections have been a deck clearing exercise for a tougher, clearer, political conflict in France. If there is no centre, all that remains is the Left united with the far-Left and the Right refusing to deal with an extreme-Right. Jean Marie Le Pen and Bruno Megret have done well with their 15 per cent” was how an article in the *Sunday Telegraph* interpreted Front National (FN) political potency following the French regional elections.

These regional and county elections represent the second and third tier of government in France. In the elections held in mid-March, the Front increased its share of the vote by 2 % from 1992, giving it an extra 36 seats, which now come to 275 in total. This compares favourably with the governing Socialist Party's 396. The FN got over 30 % in some areas and is now the biggest overall party in Marseille. However the real crisis was provoked by the implosion of the constitutional right following a pact between them and the FN to deny the Socialists control in five regional assemblies. "For the first time since the war, the unspoken rule, against making any pact with the successors of the collaboration taboo has been broken" thundered the left-wing paper *Liberation*.

Former Foreign Minister Herve Le Charette said the alliances were as important as the May 1968 student riots, and added "those who have saved their seats by joining with the FN have done it by sacrificing the republic." However, 'the rule' against collaboration with the Front, has for some time, been far from 'unspoken'. And, precisely because of the open nature of the controversy, 'a deal' between the fascists and the constitutional Right has since then, been largely a matter of when, rather than if. Three years ago former Gaullist PM Alain Juppe warned off the constitutional Right against deals with the FN which he described as "viscerally racist, anti-Semitic and xenophobic". But as *Red Action* (issue 75) predicted "the dilemma" faced by the French Right "is exactly the same as faced by the parliamentary parties under political challenge from the Nazis in the Weimar republic in Germany in 1931. To compromise or not that will be the question. The significance is not in the answer but in the question posed. That will be the signal that the velvet counter revolution has begun." Of course the situation is not directly comparable, but as former Tory

Cabinet Minister Peter Bottomley observed recently "the arithmetic is the same."

Prior to this electoral watershed, the division was between the Front and the democrats. Now it lies simply between the Right and the Left. Or, if the trend of Right-wing constitutional emasculation continues; between the Front and the government. According to key FN strategist Bruno Megret this is already the case. "The right has exploded. Whenever the RPR and UDF play their strategy of aligning with neither the left nor the National Front, the left wins and the right disappears. The Front is now the true opposition."

While the press here heralded the latest FN breakthrough as a "threat to French democracy", the British Left's response was smugly serene. "France moves Left" in reference to the ruling Socialist Party 'victory' was a *Socialist Worker* headline. The significance of the capitulation of the constitutional right to the FN, barely rated a mention. While *The Socialist* (formerly *Militant*) felt the "most significant event" was the 700,000 votes for the Trotskyist Lutte Ouevrie. A comparable logic would be a headline that ran: 'Titanic sinks - 400 survive!' neglecting the fact that four times that number actually drowned. The following week the full extent of the "electoral breakthrough" of French Trotskyism's was breathlessly revealed: "The electoral breakthrough means that the LO has over 20 regional councillors in France and the LCR has two". Two!! Putting both the LO and the LCR together, the twin beacons of hope, are a mere 253 councillors shy of the FN total. "The FN need not be so cocky" according to the CPGB's *Weekly Worker*.

Overall the left press eulogy, is a diagnosis worthy of any self respecting ostrich. Less than twelve months ago, *Socialist Worker* was calling for mass confrontations against Le Pen. "It is important to demoralise the Nazis so that they can only meet behind police lines." As the FN are the biggest working class party in France "hide from who precisely?" was the question *RA* posed. Woeful as the SWP is, it, unlike its French counterpart, is prepared to pin the Nazi tail on the FN donkey. In contrast Lutte Ouevrie over the last 15 years have consistently refused to honestly address the threat from the far-right. The line is the FN are not fascists, but ordinary conservatives, so to confront them would be counter to democracy. 'Live and let live' is the real Lutte Ouevrie motto and it loses nothing in the translation. If

being yellow wasn't bad enough they are also hopeless syndicalists. Strikes will solve everything. It is hardly much of a gamble then, to say bluntly, that whatever the nature of France's next crisis, Trotskyism will have no answers.

For at least a quarter of a century the Left in Western Europe has been on the defensive. Constantly redrawing new lines of defence and adapting to the new realities. All the time hoping to consolidate and failing. Following every rout, comes the false confidence that the downward spiral has now bottomed out. That from now on the only way is up. Then after each false dawn, a fresh crisis. And a new map. Then a fresh bout of activism. A type of activism that pays no heed to previous strategical cul-de-sacs merely serves to make a compound muddle. For the party leadership, the bustle of activity serves the purpose of disguising a fatally flawed mindset; and the absence of any plan. Frenetic striving in pursuit of a diminishing return staves off the question of a diagnosis, which in turn conceals an absolute lack of ambition. And so increasingly over the years the Trotskyist Left has been forced to come to terms with its vocation which is, when boiled down all about defending, ineptly of course, the political and social status quo. With the result that in a present day European context, it is the far-right rather than the far-left who give the appearance of being the political radicals.

Fifteen years ago the FN had only recently acquired its first council seat. Now they have political control of five of France's 22 regional councils. Are they happy to conserve? No. Instead what they promise is revolution. The FN leader in Montpellier promises a crack-down on what he calls "the cultural dictatorship of the Left". "We are the masters of the game in this region. They, the liberals, attack or try to undermine our ideas which encourage creative activity for French people by French people. Our opponents cannot be allowed to carry on working against a majority of the electorate with impunity. I will see to it that they can no longer spit in the soup".

As Bruno Mégret (RA issue 75) warned: "We aim not to protest but to govern." The emergence of extreme far-right parties across Europe display similar ambition. "People are coming to us because we go to them, we are there on the landings of the tower blocks. People see we don't have horns. They see their ideas are our ideas. And they don't see the other parties at all." A pattern where the main constitutional parties are ceding their grass roots organisation is a recognisable pattern in Britain as well as in mainland Europe.

What the FN transitional victory demonstrates, is that it is overwhelmingly a particular political modus operandi aligned with genuine revolutionary ambition, rather than a specific brand or message which is the key to a successful transformation from, if you like, mad dog to top dog. This is the vital lesson of France. In 1983 Sinn Féin as well, committed itself to a wide range of political activity at working class community level. "In the Thatcher era, with its emasculation of trade union movement, its sell off of public utilities and the demolition of the welfare state, for me these campaigns were the only significant working class victories of the period," is the frank assessment of SF president Gerry Adams. It is of course the working class community approach that laid the basis for Sinn Féin's subsequent electoral triumphs. From having not a single councillor in 1981, SF is now the biggest party in Belfast and is widely expected in the not too distant future to overhaul the SDLP as the main representative of nationalist opinion. In comparable terms it is a climb as spectacular as that of the FN.

Like all great ideas the tactic that have brought them their success is simple. It is a tactic with a universal truth and a universal application. The tactic is not about programmes, party structures, party building, party promotion, polemics with the competition or paper selling. It is about activists on a day to day basis fighting for the attainment of immediate results in the interests of their constituency, articulating the concerns, bringing to the fore and putting into effect the transitory demands of their electorate, while at the same time never once losing sight of the long term objective, which is the conquest of political power, as a means of reorganising society.

In 1997, as part of an IWCA experiment in Hertfordshire local activists adopted phase one of that strategy in contesting three different wards in successive elections, beginning with the district Council elections in May. This was followed by two successive by-elections shortly afterwards. In total, the IWCA experiment cost Labour two council seats with their vote almost totally collapsing in working class areas as a direct result of the IWCA campaign. From comfortable Labour majorities two out of the three seats went to the Tories without an increase in their vote. But despite taking almost 50% of the Labour vote in one ward, the IWCA campaign was on a single issue; and as such always vulnerable to Labour ploys and machinations. Nonetheless arterial blood was drawn. What the various studies prove is that confronted with sharply-focused campaigns at working class community level the centre cannot hold. This is now the weakest link in the establishment chain.



FN deputy leader Bruno Mégret

And it does not matter whether the political challenge is fascist, republican or communist. Method is everything. There is a way - if - there is a will.

In this country the far-right are now fully committed to implementing the Euro Nationalist technique that has brought success to their counterparts on the continent. "The local elections are still two months away but already knives are being sharpened. And it comes as no surprise that the British National Party are first off the mark. The first election leaflets that drop through the local letterboxes are full of the usual bile, but it would be a grave mistake to dismiss them that lightly. The people who peddle this sick propaganda are not the average skinhead thickos you see ranting and raving at demonstrations. These are people who can write in highly seductive ways and who use words with great skill." (Editorial, Recorder 4.3.98)

In 1994 on the Isle of Dogs, in addition to heavy canvassing, the BNP put four different leaflets through every door in the contested wards in the run up to the election, and, another congratulatory one through every door afterwards. It is primarily because of this attention to detail that they confidently expect to make a breakthrough at a ground level in the near future, and then like their FN counterparts will begin their attempt on the long climb to the summit. After a ritualistic bout of useless lamentations it can be anticipated that the conservative Left will react by accommodating them. So what do the rest of us do?

The choice is quite straightforward. We can follow the exhortations of the conservative Left and hide behind a comfort quilt of patchwork defences, mindlessly mouthing sectarian socialist mantras in a vain effort to protect the existing social and political order - or we can counter attack. But counter attack how? Its quite simple. Accept the far-right have hit on a winning formula; mimic it, and begin the climb to the summit ourselves. Once the commitment to the long haul is confirmed, and the mountain climbing begins the primary question is not: 'Do they have a head for heights - but do we?'

G O'Halloran

Community Resistance

Newtown diary of resistance

1) Blanket ban of Newtown Independent Residents Association (NIRA) enforced at the end of April '97, blamed on skirmish at public meeting, at the Holte Centre, between muggers and residents association stewards. Ban went beyond council premises, as other independent venues also went on to refuse NIRA bookings. Real reason for police and council intervention being the militancy and effectiveness of NIRA work against street gangs, and the corruption and negligence of the Labour led local authority. Finally one venue, a local church, did stand against the ban, but the Holte ban was still a point of principle within the community.

2) September - number of police stationed at Bridge Street station rises from 3 to 38, including 8 senior officers. Police make frank public admission that "it is recognised that the improvements of the last 6 months (since NIRA's inception) can do nothing to erase the experiences of the last ten to twenty years." Council also attempt to take public credit for "feelgood factor" for which NIRA was directly responsible, by claiming NIRA initiatives as their own. Labour call for a community conference on crime, apparently unaware that NIRA had already held several in their absence. Such superficial sloganeering and half-baked lies hold no sway with the community.

3) 500 NIRA supporters signed a petition

calling for Labour to lift the ban. NIRA delegates, dismissed as 'National Front' provocateurs, stage walk-out from ward sub-committee meeting when demands are ignored.

4) December - woman Judge is "carjacked" outside the showpiece "City Challenge" shopping complex. Also a blind woman and her guide dog are badly beaten for £2, outside the same shopping centre. The council scrap main bus route to the city markets and the relatively safe Perry Barr shopping centre, in a cynical attempt to force residents to use the new shopping centre. Council begin to flood media, claiming that Newtown is not the "little Beirut" it once was. Privately they capitulate to NIRA and finally lift the ban, with the proviso that NIRA is prepared to make representations directly to the council, in order to try and avoid further public embarrassment.

5) Newtown Labour Councillor suspended for benefit fraud, to the tune of nineteen grand. NIRA public meeting agrees unanimously that Labour should be opposed on every level.

6) NIRA committee currently engaged in canvassing work, assessing matters of concern in the community. NIRA has also thrown it's weight behind the campaign to reinstate the original bus service for the benefit of the large number in the community that are angry that their choice has been taken from them. A local election boycott is also being organised by NIRA throughout Newtown.

Islington up and running

The Islington branch of the IWCA set up at the end of 1997 began work in earnest at the beginning of the year putting out a leaflet on working class estates targeted by Labour for privatisation. Outraged calls to the national number, denouncing the leaflet for 'frightening

people', followed by inquiries from the local paper in regard to standing candidates was confirmation to IWCA activists that its message had struck home.

Largely on the back of this initial leafletting a meeting was arranged with other working class activists in the area opposed to Labour's plans, following discussions a campaigning group Fight Against Council Tenancy Sell-offs (FACTS) came into being.

This was the first time that Labour's propaganda was directly confronted across the borough and the response was electric. Within a matter of weeks a meeting called by FACTS for the TA's in the borough saw sixty delegates turn up.

As part of the IWCA's ongoing work in the area and as a direct response to the gentrification of both Labour and the borough, 20,000 copies of the IWCA's newsletter the *Islington Independent* have been delivered door-to-door on estates. So far a very positive response has been reported by local activists.

Hackney against the sell-offs

The Haggerston Tenants Association and the Federation of Hackney Tenants and Residents Associations have taken the initiative and called a National Gathering against Transfers of Council Housing to Housing Associations. The gathering took place on 22-23 May in Hackney. The accompanying literature for the gathering points to the "lack of national networking and sharing of information" and the need to "build a credible alternative to New Labour's 'old Tory policies'". Despite IWCA warnings the initiative instantly fell victim to the usual SWP rule or ruin strategy.

So ruin it is then...

Back to the drawing board.

Now & Then

A secret unit of the British Army directed loyalist death squad attacks against Irish republicans and nationalists in what the the British media have dubbed 'assassination by proxy'.

In an exclusive, Britain's *Sunday Telegraph* reporters John Ware and Geoff Steed assert: "we have seen secret files that for the first time provide evidence that the British Army's Force Research Unit, a branch of Military Intelligence responsible for running agents in Northern Ireland was complicit in a series of murders carried out by the UDA between 1987 and 1990". Systematic British collusion in covert murder campaigns against their political opponents in the Six Counties has been alleged for over 20 years.

Last weekend, what republicans knew and nationalist Ireland long suspected, became a matter of public record with the publication of the "first documentary evidence to suggest that an army unit practiced "assassination by proxy."

'British Army ran UDA death squads'
Republican News - 2 April 1998

A detailed view of the SAS general duties can be found in the Army's Land Operations Manual (a) The collection of information on the location and movement of insurgent forces. (b) The ambush and harassment of insurgents. (c) Infiltration, sabotage assassination and demolition parties into insurgent held areas. (e) Limited community relations (f) Liaison with organisations, training and control of friendly guerrilla forces operating against the common enemy. In a lengthy article in the *Guardian* in September it admits "that the SAS and the police units they have trained have carried out precisely these functions, with the exception of community relations."

Further down the page it explains, "for friendly guerrilla forces read informers". This interpretation is a complete whitewash: the reporters rule out (e) so they can explain (f). In the clandestine world of the SAS: "community relations" can only mean making contact with and running informers inside the community. Equally logic demands that friendly guerrilla forces - must read - UVF and UFF. In other words the SAS on the instructions of the government are operating South American style 'death squads'.

'The SAS and the Death Squads'

Red Action - Issue 46 - October 1998

Secrets & Lies

It may even have been Lowles himself who in 1993 smuggled the concealed camera into the Leeds AFA meeting as part of the attempt by *World in Action* to pin the blame on AFA/Red Action for the police riot in Welling.

continued from page 5

month later, the suspicions that the 'Glasgow journalist' was a Searchlight spook were put to both delegates from Leeds and Huddersfield face to face. Vehement denials ensued.

Within days a hue and cry went up that "anarchists", not Searchlight, were the real targets of the investigation. At the same time those responsible for this bit of fog-making were already preparing to cut and run. The talk, at at least one branch meeting shortly afterwards, was of 'UDI and going their own way'. In a last throw of the dice, and with an energy and commitment markedly absent in regard to their responsibilities to AFA's NN (a new group in the north-east were not contacted for nine months and there had only been two NN meetings since 1995) the conspirators began to network through national AFA in order to muster support - or - alternatively create as much damage as they could on the way out. In any case the 'Anarchist Card' was played for all it was worth. Some might say over played. Patriotism being the last refuge; regional differences were also milked. These efforts culminated in them setting up their own inquiry, allowing national delegates only a couple of days notice. One national delegate did manage to attend though more in the role of observer.

By holding their own inquiry and bringing in a not guilty verdict, it was hoped this would preempt the real AFA inquiry. In a kangaroo court, where the kangaroo is defendant, prosecutor, star witness, judge, jury and executioner a 'result' for the kangaroo was never in doubt. Of course at the real inquiry conducted under the auspices of the NCC held less than a month later, the Searchlight mole was caught out in lie after lie. After having a variety of denials/explanations thrown back in his face: 'the source he refused to name for security reasons', 'his friend whose trust he could not not betray', 'the Sheffield anti-fascist he could vouch for', 'the guy that only took a couple of photos for Searchlight', 'the Glasgow based journalist working undercover with loyalists' all led to the eventual assembling of a jigsaw which revealed the Glasgow based journalist to be none other than a professional journalist and leading member of the 'Searchlight Team' - Nick Lowles.

Lowles (or Knowles) had indeed been 'active' in anti-fascist circles in the Yorkshire area in the early 1990's as alleged. However following a public confrontation with an AFA organiser over tactics, which to his evident chagrin he lost, he named and identified the organiser as a fascist in an article in Searchlight and slipped away in the night. Fittingly the anarchist victim of the Searchlight 'bad jacketing' was the one that joined all the dots, and the one who at the NCC inquiry, personally confronted the mole with it. Before he could be pushed the Leeds organiser resigned from AFA in ignominy and scuttled from the meeting.

Now, no longer able to credibly distance themselves from Lowles, the cabal formerly known as Leeds AFA changed tack and instead sought to distance Lowles from Searchlight. Suggesting through the grapevine for instance, that Lowles had only ever played a minor role, and even if he had

a more senior role this was news to them, and was certainly prior to his attempted manipulation of AFA and so on. Happily for AFA a lie easily nailed. Without going into the detail, AFA are aware that in the last eighteen months, Lowles, posing as a 'football fan' travelled to an Ultra conference in Italy. During his three days there he constantly sought out the company of leading German anti-fascists, without once revealing he was either a professional journalist or part of the Searchlight team. It was in that dual capacity that he collaborated on the Searchlight inspired Roger Cook fiasco involving Nick Griffin. In the March issue of Searchlight magazine he is named as a leading speaker at a seminar organised by Gable. While we are at it, he was also credited with involvement in the Dispatches programme which zeroed in on the situation in Leeds in 1994. A situation it can be now assumed was primarily of Searchlight's creation.

It may even have been Lowles himself who in 1993 smuggled the concealed camera into the Leeds AFA meeting as part of the attempt by *World in Action* to pin the blame on AFA /Red Action for the police riot in Welling. People always wondered how they did that. Another former AFA member and Searchlight agent was the prime suspect. Now everybody knows it was with the cooperation of the organisers of the meeting themselves; with undoubtedly some if not all of those currently suspended being central to the plot. Incidentally, the bit of the film broadcast by *World in Action* was of a Leeds AFA member conveniently discussing the use of "petrol bombs." And of course it was the events at Welling that marked the very public state campaign to render effective anti-fascism redundant. It was only then that the media demonisation and the de facto, if not de jure criminalisation, of militant anti-fascism began. And as night follows day the destabilising techniques employed against the fascists with such devastating success over the years, were now to be employed just as ruthlessly against the states opponents at the other end of the political spectrum - AFA.

If it was ever a case of only one worm in the Leeds apple, then once the organiser was expelled in July 1997, that would have been that. But ominously, during that NCC inquiry yet another former Leeds organiser admitted under cross examination that he too was also a long time Searchlight intimate, who on one occasion in 1993 had deliberately misled - that is lied to - an 80 strong national AFA stewards group on the whereabouts of the BNP. He, and the entire Leeds scouting outfit, deliberately directed AFA to the opposite side of the city centre on Searchlight instructions.

And so it would appear that Leeds AFA has over the years been nothing less than a Searchlight dynasty. With each organiser grooming his successor. Since the early 90's four have operated in that particular organising capacity.

continued on page 10

Secrets & Lies

For the first time, in thirteen years all Gable's known minions will all be outside AFA pissing in rather than inside pissing AFA intelligence, credibility and resources out.

continued from page 9

So despite the forced resignation at the NCC inquiry in June, by the time of the next NCC meeting in September it was apparent that nothing had changed. Searchlight was still the spectre at the feast. It was business as usual. For the first time branch suspension was openly discussed as an option. Meanwhile, demands from the NCC and AFA loyalists inside Leeds and Huddersfield that the intelligence documents be handed over were studiously ignored. The claim at one stage was that the format was "incompatible" with other computers! And so the farce went on. Also missing by now was the Huddersfield and NN organiser who was refusing to answer calls for months at a time. A decision that he be stood down in his absence was carried and minuted at a joint Leeds/Huddersfield meeting. The decision was never implemented. This failure possibly more than nay other exposed the existence of a state within the state in the Yorkshire region.

In January 1998 there was yet another tip off from a journalist to Leeds AFA. A casual inquiry as regards source with the Leeds branch resulted in yet another Leeds organiser being caught out in a lie to his own organisation. In mitigation he said the deceit was necessary to "avoid accusations of collusion with Searchlight!!" The same individual had also been responsible at the end of the year for spreading a story that the SB were attempting to link AFA to the IRA's bombing of the M62 motorway. A separate distraction that a prominent AFA member was a police informer also found no takers.

At the NCC meeting in February both branches were suspended. Recognising the gig was up, the bluff and bluster, undying commitment to militant anti-fascism, the determination to carry on, the invitation for others to join them, the refusal to surrender the AFA working title, the promise to work with non sectarian elements regardless, was, given past experiences, a familiar script.

An almost identical proclamation was issued in 1996 when there was an attempt to privatise the AFA Man Utd fanzine *Red Attitude*. Then, as now, the individuals involved were being manipulated by Searchlight who assured them they were untouchable. However within a short time everything had been surrendered and the editorial board disbanded. A little later the former editor fled the city. Followed shortly afterwards by a prominent supporter who went one better and actually fled the country (a trip funded incidentally in part by money stolen from the Manchester Socialist Labour Party). Once again, it seems we are dealing with people of the highest political and personal integrity!

In their closing address AFA members are warned by the entryists against "the tactics of whisper campaigns, smear, innuendo." They refer to the NCC inquiry as a campaign that "has been waged beneath the integrity and honesty of anti-fascism." They admonish the investigators for "seeking to split the anti-fascist movement for narrow sectarian gain" And to "consider whose interests such activity really serves." It ends with the usual "come what may we will continue our anti-fascist activity ...blah,

blah." Hilarious really, considering their entire involvement with militant anti-fascism, before and since their exposure has been based entirely on secrets and lies. When disgraced Jonathan Aitken was accused of "pimping for the Saudis" he insisted in similarly blowzy rhetoric that he would use the "simple sword of truth and the trusty shield of British fair play" to clear his name. Not long afterwards he was arrested for perjury and perverting the course of justice. If convicted he faces jail. In political terms the activities of the Searchlight entryists within AFA has been no less corrupt and corrupting. But like their disreputable predecessors, they will probably escape sanction; political oblivion being the only likely consequence of their chicanery.

For genuine victims, unwitting dupes, or those filed under the 'useful idiot' index there is solace and a quality of mitigation in the knowledge that the architect and leading string puller behind the scenes is something of a Machiavellian master of intrigue. Within Searchlight itself, GG knows everything while his underlings, are happy to know only what they are told. Leeds AFA, York and the shortlived Lancaster, were constructed on the same classic 'leaders and led' lines. Despite the 'outing' of Searchlight in the Northern Network this capacity and ambition to manipulate, destabilise and subvert while diminished, is far from extinct. Which is why in order to protect its political and operational sovereignty, AFA also had Searchlight proscribed. This proscription will operate on the principle of shooting the messenger in that anybody bringing information into AFA will be obliged to reveal the source. For the first time, in thirteen years all Gable's known minions will all be outside AFA pissing in rather than inside pissing AFA intelligence, credibility and resources out. The consequence being that AFA will have a conventional up front relationship with Searchlight or there simply won't be one. Far better to have them out in the open as acknowledged adversaries than tolerated on the inside as treacherous auxiliaries: whatever the short term political cost.

SUBSCRIBE TO FIGHTING TALK

The quarterly magazine for militant anti-fascists



Subscription rates (for 4 issues):

England, Scotland & Wales:
Individuals - £8
Institutions/Organisations - £14
Overseas: Individuals - £10
Institutions/Organisations - £17
Cheques made payable to
'Anti-Fascist Action' and sent to
the address below

INDIVIDUAL AND
BULK ORDERS

AVAILABLE FROM LONDON AFA - £1.50.
BULK ORDERS £11.25 PER EACH 10 COPIES.
BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE AT £1.50 EACH

ANTI-FASCIST ACTION

BM 1734, LONDON WC1N 3XX
AFA NATIONAL PHONE NUMBER 0976 406 870
INTERNET: [HTTP://WWW.FOOBAR.CO.UK/USERS/ANKH/AFA](http://www.foobar.co.uk/users/ANKH/AFA)

Subscribe to Red Attitude



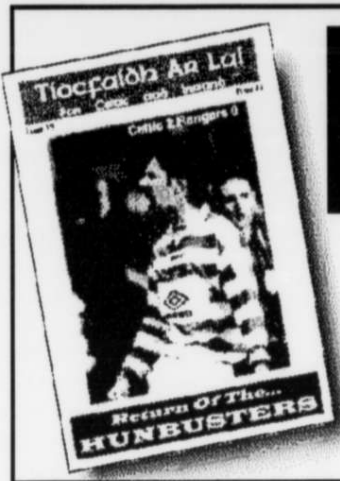
Manchester
United's
Independent
Anti-Fascist
Fanzine



• £1.20 per issue inc P&P - UK
• £1.35 per issue inc P&P - Eire • £1.60 per issue inc P&P - Elsewhere



RETURN TO: RED ATTITUDE PO Box 83 SWDO
OLD TRAFFORD MANCHESTER M15 5NJ



TIOCFADH AR LA!

Anti-Fascist
Celtic magazine
Available from
TAL • PO Box 266
Glasgow • G42 8EA

Cheques payable to "TAL"
£1 each, or £5 for 4 issues
(£8 overseas)

WELL PREPARED

Anti-Fascist
Aston Villa Fanzine
Available from
Well Prepared • PO Box 331
Birmingham • B13 0RZ

Cheques payable to "Well Prepared"
£1 each, or £5 for 4 issues
(£8 overseas)



JOIN RED ACTION + CONTACT RED ACTION +
RED ACTION + CONTACT RED ACTION + JOIN
ACTION + CONTACT RED ACTION + JOIN RED

SOUTHERN REGION

BM BOX 37, LONDON, WC1N 3XX

MIDLANDS REGION

PO BOX 3311, 25 HOWARD ROAD EAST,
BIRMINGHAM, B13 0RZ

NORTHERN REGION

PO BOX 83, SOUTHWEST DO,
MANCHESTER, M15 5NJ

SCOTLAND

PO BOX 266, GLASGOW, G42 8EA

Full RA membership:

contact appropriate address above.

Supporting RA membership:

Supporting membership for a year is £5.
Make cheque/p.o. out to RA. You will receive a
subscription to the bulletin, a regular newsletter and
notification of RA activities.

SUBSCRIBE TO RED ACTION

A New Format for R.A.

In future Red Action will be appearing in
this new more convenient format which
replaces the previous A3 paper. It will
appear regularly on a bi-monthly basis.

Subscription rates are as follows:

Britain and Ireland:

6 issues will cost £5 inc P&P

The rest of Europe:

6 issues will cost £7.50 inc P&P

USA and Elsewhere:

6 issues will cost £10 inc P&P

(Make cheques and P.O.'s payable to Red
Action in pounds sterling, no foreign
currency please)

MAKING CONTACT

Independent Working Class Association

BM Box IWCA, London, WC1N 3XX

Tel: 0345 585 485

Anti-Fascist Action

BM Box 1734, London, WC1N 3XX

Tel: 0976 406 870

A Word In Your Ear...



ON THE RECORD

Now it would be fair to say that as supporters of Irish republicanism and militant anti-fascism our rapport with the media has long been mutually regarded, as akin to approaching a rattler with a forked stick. With suspicion and paranoia being the order of the day there have naturally enough, over the years been a few...well...unfortunate incidents. The relationship is best explained by recalling the occasion when a Red Action member rang up the *World in Action* office in London, introduced himself and asked for leading investigative reporter Quentin McDermott. On being put through by the receptionist the brief exchange ran along the following lines: "Quentin McDermott? My name is Joe and I am ringing

on behalf of Red Action..." Before he could continue he was interrupted by a quavering voice: "How did you get my number"? (You'd think a journalist would know better than to believe all he reads in the papers.)

Anyway, bad as things were then, it seems we have slipped another link in the food chain. Having courteously granted an interview at short notice recently, an AFA press officer, found himself instantly embroiled in an extremely heated exchange. Despite intense provocation he remained reasonably calm, (for him anyway) but was genuinely taken aback when in a complete role reversal, the Jeremy Paxman wannabe lost the head completely and began swearing at him! On a separate occasion recently a journalist was approached on leaving a meeting by a Red Action member (admittedly in an alley) took one look and with a despairing cry over his shoulder, dived headlong into the oncoming traffic. A couple of weeks ago the *Daily Records'* chief reporter fresh from an interview with the LVF rang the AFA national office demanding an explanation for the simple appearance of her name in Celtic's *TAL*. Without awaiting a reply she launched into a furious tirade: claiming among other things that the person who passed on her address "would be dealt with," that she had "spent more time in Northern Ireland" than the *TAL* editor and printing her name "was a silly move as he will find out." She finished by shouting that the people who produce *TAL* and "everybody that buys it, are completely bonkers!" Bonkers? Probably.

A DAY AT THE OPERA

Commiserations to the soprano who was draped in full skinhead garb for a modern opera production at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre recently. Whilst 'taking five' around town he was accosted by two black blokes, who did the decent thing and sternly questioned his commitment to militant anti-fascism. His protests of innocence were dismissed until he fearfully agreed to do a turn of 'Puccini' in the street, to prove his story and save his skin! A case of sing if you wanna' chew your supper... nice one lads!

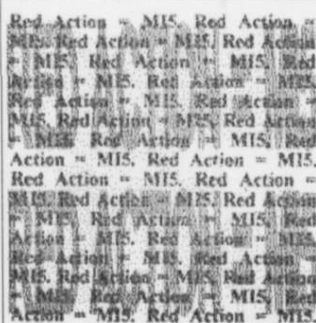
RED ACTION = MIS

A couple of years ago there was a rash of RA=MIS stickers around Dublin. The one displayed at the bottom of the page (a tasteful red on a black and white background) was retrieved from outside West Ham FC. Initially, the thing that strikes you first is that the sticker is anonymous. Designed, to avoid the any possible retribution, as well as, being suitable for fascist and anti-fascist 'Red Action haters' alike presumably. Only a more thoughtful appraisal, reveals the subliminal and wholly subversive message: Red Action=MIS. Think about it for a moment. It doesn't for instance say Red Action is 'run' by MIS, instead we have = meaning equal. Clearly this is intended to imply to some sort of partnership: peas in the same pod; the flip side of the same coin, Sinn Fein/IRA, Red Action/MIS and so forth. Cowardly, malicious and without foundation it may be, but it is also it seems, extremely irresponsible. I bet for instance the people behind it, have never once considered the irreparable damage that might be done to the morale of the security services, if such a sticker fell into the wrong hands.

OUT OF THE MAZE

As a couple of close associates of the infamous Celtic fanzine *Tiochaidh Ar La* were leaving Long Kesh after visiting some prisoners on Easter Saturday they were greeted by a bank of cameramen representing countries from all over the world desperate for any soundbite from inside. A brief discussion followed on the merits and pitfalls of talking to the press. Opinion was sharply divided, until a Danish camera crew was spotted.

"There you are, perfect, we can do the interview with the crew from Denmark and if its shite no one will see it anyway" was the enticing compromise offered up. But even then, the wiser and greyer head shook his head in vehement disagreement. However, convinced by his own logic, *TAL's* war correspondent strode over and confidently confronted the nation of Denmark. A little later while regaling the reluctant one with the merits of his contribution to the Danes' understanding of the complexities of 'The Agreement', he froze in horror as, over the jingle for the BBC *News at Six* he heard an extremely familiar Glasgow accent say...



Sticker found outside West Ham FC

Something We Said!?!

"Once again Red Action are seeking to convince their audience that they, and only they, are in contact with the 'real working class'. Once again, Red Action imagine that they and only they 'interpret the class struggle literally'. Only Red Action, according to Red Action, are in contact with the working class communities of resistance... RA's proposed periodical, *Cutting Edge*, suggests that it still doesn't fully recognise the complexity of the class that it chooses to align with. Until we, the revolutionary section of the class are united in the nucleus of a party, we can offer little but pious rhetoric to the class as a whole".

**Open Polemic Number 4
January '98**

"The ANL and other lefties don't bother us, but that fucking Red Action, they terrify us."

A former Bellshill loyalist and C18 supporter giving his reasons for taking early political retirement from the struggle to establish a Fourth Reich.

"Terror cops probe IRA link to Celtic fans"

Daily Record headline in response to leaflet by Celtic Fans Against Fascism leaflet

"Celtic hardliners are planning hitlist of Rangers fans who have attacked Celtic fans in Glasgow's Bridgeton Cross area."

Journalist Anna Smith's translation of a leaflet from anti-fascists drawing attention to a concerted loyalist campaign against football fans in that area which have resulted in maimings and murder.

Daily Record 20.1.98

The reds were going around and they were beating the daylight out of the right wing. They were kicking in doors, petrol bombing people, and beating old men with hammers. Red Action were absolutely battering the right" recalled Charlie "we decided we weren't having that and we thought we would do something about it. Which means we battered them when we met until there was no fucker left standing"

Charlie Sargent founder member C18 Independent on Sunday 1.2.98