

Red Action

Issue No. 63

July/Aug 92 40p

FURY OVER AFA PROGRAMME

On a Monday the 18th of May Anti-Fascist Action made its authorised film debut on BBC2's public access programme 'Open Space'. Predictably it has aroused fierce controversy. The gnashing of teeth has resounded across the political spectrum from left to right and back again.

Fury erupted even before the programme was shown. One of a number of callers to the BBC claimed to be a spokesman from the Anti-Racist Alliance. He denounced the programme and insisted that, "AFA is an organisation that does more harm than good." He finished his twenty minute tirade by demanding a right to reply without going through the formality of seeing the programme first!

The Daily Mail was equally incensed while agreeing with ARA that, "A most serious error of judgement" had been made, it too demanded a

'right to reply', but for the BNP!

"A most serious error of judgement appears to have been made last night by the BBC, in offering air time to a group which quite unashamedly advocates the use of political violence. In presenting a national platform, to a group which looks suspiciously like left-wing fascists eager for a war with right wing fascists, the BBC was plainly not serving the interests of democracy. How can it with equity resist a demand by the BNP for the right to reply."

The Sun took up the same theme. This programme was further evidence of left wing bias at the BBC. Gary Bushell insisted that the Open Space slot, "had been given over to ugly red thugs who glory in violence". [Taking into account Bushell's current political playmates, the operative insult here must have been "red" rather than "ugly" or thug!]

Following The Sun's lead the BNP took the opportunity to laughably deny that "They ever advocate violence!"

On the issue of political violence and its uses, Republican News, not unexpectedly, proved to be equally partisan. It pointed out that while, "AFA confronts the fascists at every opportunity meeting force with force. It also organises street carnivals, public meetings, lectures, concerts etc, belying the thuggish image which some of its opponents would attempt to give it."

Republican News also zeroed in on another theme in the programme which proved equally controversial. The increasing visible co-operation between supporters of Loyalist paramilitary groups like the Ulster Volunteer Force and the neo-fascist British National Party, and the political and tactical implications for the left. While anti-immigration is the central policy of the BNP in England, north of the border the race issue is relegated in favour of hard-line Anti-Republicanism.

"In England the means used to attract support is racism, blaming immigration for unemployment and poverty and inciting vicious attacks on other ethnic groups. In Scotland where black people are not so numerous the sectarian card is played instead."

This tactical switch is made possible only because loyalism as an ideology is thoroughly reactionary and inherently anti working class; or as one of the anti-fascist activists described it, "a parochial version of fascism." Though loyalism is based like racism on bigotry it is one dimensional, a singular hatred for all things catholic,



instead of all things black. Primarily the task that the BNP have set themselves is "to broaden the horizons" of the loyalists, "to build on the bigotry" so that in the end the "Jewish conspiracy of the BNP transcends the "papish conspiracy" of the Orange Order!

It was precisely this analysis that is said to have infuriated Scottish Militant, not because of an untoward reverberation this analysis might have for anti-fascism generally, but for putting the spotlight on the compromises and contradictions that accompany its own political entanglements. While Militant's venomous response may neither be surprising or indeed unrepresentative of other left groups criticised, their particular position does warrant specific scrutiny.

As The Mail pointed out the "overall message" was that, "If you are not prepared to meet the physical force of the fascists with physical force you must retire from the political arena."

While people other than The Mail may have felt threatened by the message, The Mail felt equally threatened by the appearance of the messengers. Clearly aghast at the inference of cultural as well as political confrontation it rallied, with an instinctive display of middle class solidarity.

Various supporters of Anti Fascist Action were shown in silhouette, as they talked with relish of violent confrontations with the BNP....their main spokesman, a burly ruffian with a thick geordie accent, a leather jacket, and a woolly hat sneered at good old fashioned liberals and trendy lefties who would be wary of his message of violence."

In contrast Republican News again, felt it was "refreshing" to look at a radical organisation by the people involved in it." While Time Out stated that, "Mens's strong Geordie accent demands attention far more effectively than the usual BBC English". The Independent, which found the tone of the programme "uncompromising" and unrepentant, was itself uncompromising in its approval of "the woolly hat" which it went on to describe as "fetching!"

The uncompromising working class orientation also drew some fraternal criticism from 'Workers Power': "not enough voices of women and black people, and no mention at all of attacks on lesbians and gays." This may well be true, but of the people interviewed on screen in the 29 minute programme, 44% were either black or female.

CONTD. PAGE 2

CONNOLLY COMMEMORATION CRUSHED!

One of the highlights of the republican calendar in Scotland, the James Connolly Commemoration was banned by Lothian Council after representations were made by the police. They warned of violence if the march were allowed to go ahead and cited examples from last years march to support their action.

Eleven arrests (which they omitted to mention were all from the 300 strong loyalist/fascist counter-demo.); IRA songs (on a republican march, would you believe

it!?!); bands wearing paramilitary uniforms! and pit-bull terriers (they didn't say whether they were loyalist or republican, what songs they were singing, or if they were in uniform!).

Despite the opposition of the state, the Commemoration Committee and the Republican Bands Alliance resolved that the march would take place and called for their supporters to assemble in Edinburgh on 30th May. The police

CONTD. PAGE 2

FIGHTING TALK

"AFA HAVE BEEN WAGING A WAR ON THE STREETS"

Radio Times
"HARD HITTING DOCUMENTARY THAT PULLS NO PUNCHES"

TIME OUT
"ANTI-FASCIST ACTION DO NOT BELIEVE IN NAMBY-PAMBY SOFT LIBERAL CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL DISCUSSION"

THE INDEPENDENT
"IT WAS A SERIOUS ERROR OF JUDGEMENT BY THE BBC. A PLATFORM FOR THUGGERY"... "HOW CAN IT RESIST A DEMAND FOR THE BNP TO REPLY?"

Daily Mail

"REFRESHING-MORE OF THE SAME"
An Phoblacht/Republican News

"EXTREMIST"
FINANCIAL TIMES

"GLORIES IN VIOLENCE"
THE SUN

"PUTS THE CASE FOR CONFRONTING MODERN FASCISM WITH VIOLENCE"
New Musical Express

"AFA IS A RACIST ORGANISATION".
Lee Jasper - Anti Racist Alliance.

"THE BNP DOES NOT ADVOCATE VIOLENCE, UNLIKE MENSI AND HIS PALS".
Bill Owen - South Shields BNP.

DESPERADOS OUT GUNNED

HERTS AFA (a coalition of all anti-fascist elements in the area willing to implement a policy of ideological and physical confrontation) has recently been involved in a campaign concerning a vicious attack by BNP members on local restaurant workers in Buntingford, Herts. Pursuing a lead, subversive elements attended a preliminary hearing at Hertford Magistrates Court attended by Milton Keynes fascists and Blood and Honour promoters Neil and Paul Parish. Neil Parish has featured with a number of other misfits in front page articles in the Milton Keynes press as a member of a BNP vigilante group claiming to represent 'law and order'! At the end of the hearing, chubby, baby-faced Neil attempted to draw the attention of any court official who would listen to the presence in the street outside of two persons he appeared to imagine were threatening him! A number of photographs were indeed taken of the baby-faced bandit showing him hiding in the corner of the court with his jacket pulled over his head. His missus finally pulled up outside the court in the family motor and Neil ran outside in this frankly ridiculous posture and hid in the back seat of the car - still with the jacket over his head! Driving away,

his missus shouted, in a rather futile gesture, "It's not my car!". Parish's lawyer has subsequently complained on his client's behalf about intimidation!!

The second hearing, an old-style committal, was set for



Neil 'Baby Face' Parish

Monday April 13, and around 40 people turned up at 9.00 am to picket Hertford Magistrates Court, distribute leaflets and generally to harass the 8 fascist defendants. Foolishly as it turned out, a group of 3 BNP early-birds arrived before the court was open. One gangling village idiot type immediately disappeared back round the

CONTD. BACK PAGE

CONTENTS

SCOTLAND OUT OF BRITAIN

EUSKADI INTERVIEW

LEFT VS RED ACTION



(left) 'Sun' columnist, Gary Bushell.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF MILITANT

It is probably fair to say, that Militant's position with regard to republicanism and loyalism has always been an ambiguous, but unconvincing "plague on both your houses", a policy which is governed overall, by political opportunism. They seek to accommodate themselves, to vulgar reality, rather than struggle to change it. In areas of Glasgow where loyalism is in the ascendancy, they will be fiercely Anti-Republican. In a constituency where republicanism has influence a Militant councillor might be seen queuing for a Wolfe Tone concert resplendent in an Irish rugby top!

This explains their attitude both to AFA and the BNP. While the BNP are vociferous and pursue a hardline loyalist image, Militant are forced to

CONTD. BACK PAGE

SCOTLAND OUT OF BRITAIN!

THE SENSE OF BITTERNESS AND INJUSTICE FELT IN SCOTLAND AT THE RE-ELECTION OF ANOTHER TORY GOVERNMENT HAS MANIFESTED ITSELF IN THE SHAPE OF THE NATIONALISTIC CAMPAIGN OF SCOTLAND UNITED. INSPIRED BY POP STARS AND POLITICIANS, THIS CAMPAIGN HAS SUCCESSFULLY MOBILISED THOUSANDS TO SEVERAL RALLIES SINCE THE ELECTION RESULT

The bitter feeling has been replaced with a growing nationalism which is essentially anti-Tory in nature. This is because despite returning a solid majority of Labour votes, Scotland is effectively governed by 11 Tory MPs (out of a total of 72) and a handful of arse licking Scottish lords, un-elected and helibent on implementing Tory policies on Health, Education and the Poll Tax.

Whilst the constitutional question has dominated since the election, it was an issue which was largely brought to the fore by the Tories themselves in order to create confusion and to divert attention away from their decimation of Scottish industry and towards a debate between Labour's "devolutionist" arguments and the SNP position of "independence in Europe." Proof of manipulation of these arguments by the Tories, came when the Scottish edition of the SUN declared itself in favour of independence with the headline "Rise now and be a nation again." This making it the only newspaper that supports the SAS and the SNP!

From a position of being faced with a total wipe-out, the anti-Tory vote was successfully split and the Conservatives actually gained two seats! However, this result should be borne in proportion - the Tories still only represent 25% of the electorate, which is hardly a mandate to carry on regardless!

However, the constitutional question has not receded after the election and it continues to gain ground. The isolation that was felt by working class people in Scotland when the Poll Tax was implemented a year in advance to its introduction in England and Wales has returned. It has broadened into a developing nationalism which has been led by Scotland United.



This cross-class alliance like many other campaigns which attempt to unite people at the lowest common denominator (ie ANL, ARA etc) is high on glossy leaflets and badges but low on a strategy to achieve its objective of a Scottish parliament.

There is much emphasis on large scale rallies and pop concerts but a growing reluctance to organise local campaigns and resistance to the Tories in working class schemes.

This is because Scotland United resembles very closely the safe 'Stop It' campaign that was organised by Labour and Trade Union bureaucrats against the Poll Tax. It later became known as the 'Pay It' campaign amongst anti-Poll Tax activists!

Scotland United's unwillingness to campaign amongst the working class appears to stem from a paranoia about being

"infiltrated by Trots and the SNP!" In other words, Scotland United, if the Labour leadership have their way, will be about absorbing energy rather than achieving

independence or devolution.

Their main demand for a multi-option referendum on Scotland's future could itself prove to be a gift to the Tories. What if the outcome were to be inconclusive which is highly likely based on the proposed three way question on independence, devolution or the status quo?

What other options does the campaign have?

The only real question that needs to be answered is whether a Scottish parliament should be a devolved assembly which retained links with Westminster or a completely independent parliament.

Red Action members in Scotland are in favour of an

independent Scottish parliament as opposed to the Labourite position of devolution. The last thing that we need in Scotland is another tier of local government. Labour is already the establishment in Scotland, and has done absolutely nothing to resist the Tories so why should their devolved assembly be any different?

Predictably, pro-Labour lefties like Militant and the SWP have backed the devolutionist position "in the interests of working class unity"! Both the SWP and Militant are tied hand and fast to the British state because they are tied politically to the British Labour Party (Militant don't have enough feet to put in their various camps; Labour, Scottish Militant Labour; Independent Labour). Their thinking is dominated not by their own self-interest but by their own self-interest and romanticism. Both groups have argued that to break completely from the British state would put at risk working class unity, built over generations! Since when has the unity of the working class depended upon the constitutional arrangements of the ruling class?

During the miners strike, the strikers were able to enlist support and solidarity from other workers around the world. National boundaries don't stop the capitalists from

organising multinational companies so why should an independent Scotland make it any less likely that workers in

Glasgow and Edinburgh would support those in London or Liverpool fighting the same boss?

Working class unity isn't some romantic ideal that exists only in the heads of a few lefty "revolutionaries", it becomes a reality as a result of struggle. Scottish, English, and Welsh workers can still unite to fight the common enemy!

Rather than break down any unity that exists, an independent Scotland could actually signal the break-up of the UK state and the defeat of the British ruling class. The false unity, represented by the British state, represents only the interests of Capitalism and Imperialism.

Significantly, Scottish independence could also mean the beginning of the end for British imperialism in Ireland. The opening up of a second front could seriously undermine Britain's interests in Ireland and inadvertently aid the Republican cause.

In the process, the ideological twins of Loyalism and Unionism: a distinction shared only by the Tories and the BNP in Scotland-would have to be taken on and smashed.

If the British ruling class can use "divide and rule" in Ireland, then it can be used against them and their sacred 'United Kingdom'!

Obviously, the 'second front' in Scotland would have to determine its own methods and tactics to achieve its goals, but at the moment, a campaign of direct action and civil disobedience rather than the armed struggle are the appropriate methods. Whilst some starry eyed tartan romantics might favour the latter, it is necessary to establish working class support for independence. There have been moves to emulate the armed struggle before which have invariably failed because of a lack of community support, state infiltration and outright sabotage. Any moves to form "Tartan armies" would be extremely premature, if not suspect!

Red Action in Scotland has already produced a leaflet which proposed direct action and community organisation which goes well beyond the rhetoric of the left and Scotland United. We have already received favourable

responses and three public meetings are planned in working class areas around the themes raised in the leaflet.

Rather than raising "demands" upon MPs, and councillors or proposing a "beefed-up" anti Poll tax campaign, Red Action advocated resistance to Westminster rule.

If the left and the nationalists are serious about Scottish sovereignty and opposition to rule from Westminster, then why continue to pay for it? As well as maintaining non-payment of the Poll Tax, a campaign aimed at cutting off funds to central government could be organised.

Non-payment of electricity, gas and TV licences would hit back at Tory privatisation as well as affect their propaganda machine.

Obviously, there would be natural fear about further non-payment campaigns but if we can make our communities Sheriff free zones then a little of the same treatment would ensure that the gas, electricity, and TV snooper vans were kept out of our areas.

Trade Union backing could prevent any antagonism developing. The unions could also force employees to stop collecting income tax further affecting government revenue.

Such measures have been used by the civil rights movement in Ireland, the Basque country and even by squatters throughout Europe.

They aren't utopian dreams. These forms of direct action are the sort of civil disobedience that would get results, and are a lot more realistic than the dreamers who are staking Scotland's future on a referendum!

Instead of a phoney-war, such a campaign could force a real constitutional crisis that would be in the interests, not only of Scottish workers, but of the English, Welsh and Irish as well!
S.Mills, Glasgow.

RED ACTION ARTICLES

All signed articles are that persons own view, and may not necessarily reflect Red Action decided policy.

CONNOLLY COMMEMORATION CRUSHED!

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE.

launched one of the biggest operations seen in Scotland since the miners strike in order to deny republicans the right to march.

At the usual 'warm-up' march in Glasgow, there was an unusually high police presence who were determined to stamp their authority on the marchers and their supporters. Two people were arrested at the Glasgow march. One of these was a Red Action member selling the Celtic fanzine, 'Tiofaidh Ar La', who was told that he was being detained under the PTA. He was held for 5 hours and was subsequently informed that the charges against him were for 'Breath of the Peace' and 'Resisting Arrest'. Buses, booked by Republican bands well in advance were persuaded by the police not to turn up. Those which did were followed and turned back before they reached Edinburgh.

Meanwhile, in Edinburgh itself, hundreds of police swamped the city centre, harassing anyone who attempted to assemble with others. People were moved on from bus stops,

thrown out of pubs and hounded out of the city centre.

Clearly there are legal questions regarding individual civil liberties and the right of republicans to march which ought to be pursued. However, any challenge in the courts, should be properly regarded as a supplement to the challenge on the streets, not an alternative to one. Any over-reliance on state courts to overturn state bans, can mean that everything becomes subordinate to this legal strategy. This may lead to demoralising compromises, including the motive for holding the commemoration being depoliticised by the organisers, in pursuit of the required 'respectable image'.

With all the eggs in the legal basket, alternative manoeuvres or fallback positions are never seriously considered or worked out. In the absence of a political strategy, the collapse of the legal strategy often leads or can be used as a pretext to shelve any further plans to hold an out-door commemoration, at all as "hopeless". This is what happened in Glasgow where the Hunger Strike Committee under the stewardship of the Labour Committee on Ireland were banned last year. T

have failed to even apply for a march this year.

In complete contrast to the wretched capitulation in Glasgow, the Edinburgh committee stood its ground and never lost sight of the fact that a certain defiance of the state is inevitably built into such occasions. Indeed to salute and immortalise the armed defiance of a historic and revolutionary figure is after all the principle reason for the march's existence! For that reason Connolly should be commemorated in Glasgow and Edinburgh this year. Whether in the form of marches or at public meetings and rallies. If the state succeeds in keeping the Connolly march (which already has a large base of working class support) off the road, this will not represent an end to its ambition.

This is evident from the fact that the intimidation and harassment meted out by the state and the loyalists to the young Republican organisers in the build up to the march, has not ended but intensified. A week prior to the march one of the organisers, was phoned at his home by the Special Branch, who warned him that his name and the names and addresses of others active on the committee had

been circulated among loyalists. Less than ten minutes after the 'warning', two strangers attempted to force his door but were spotted by neighbours. In the weeks following the march up to ten Special Branch officers have been involved in surveillance and naked harassment of the organisers. By targeting the core activists on the committee they are serving notice that they intend to encourage the committee, to wind up voluntarily! In recognition of the fact that the James Connolly march is the now the only Republican event left in Britain with genuine public appeal, it faces the danger of it too, being left isolated by fair weather friends. Red Action members from Glasgow, Edinburgh, London, Liverpool and Manchester made it to Edinburgh on the day, precisely for that reason, and will be part of any campaign to overcome the harassment of Republicans by the state.

For this march to survive, a specific strategy needs to be adopted, with the aim of mobilising the greatest possible number of working class people from the natural reservoirs of support for Republicanism that exists in Scotland. In addition, a national

strategy needs to be developed to match and counter the familiar but effective national strategy of the state. This is now, obviously necessary, even urgent, if visible Republican sentiment is itself to survive.

FURY OVER-

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE.

implicit in the 'Workers Power' criticism is the suggestion that being lesbian or gay, must be juxtaposed somehow against being working class! Some of the others interviewed included a veteran of Cable Street, a sacked docker, a professional boxer, and a former UDA supporter. All of those interviewed had been attacked or felt threatened by the fascist renascence, as to their sexual preference, because none of them felt it appropriate to tell us, we like 'Workers Power', can only speculate. The exclusive employment of visibly working class advocates was quite deliberate to remind people that with regard to the anti-fascist struggle, both in victory and defeat the working class has always had primacy. To warn people that since the 30's, the last time fascism made its appearance as a European wide phenomenon, the German Communist Party

had 100,000 registered members. Today that living link between the revolutionary left and the working class has withered. Is dead. To admonish them against complacency because today many of the traditional working class institutions of defence have collapsed or are dysfunctional. As a result, embittered by repeated betrayals the most disaffected, sections of the working class across Europe, have begun to

look rightward for radical solutions. To alert everyone to the fact that when fascism has been stopped it is only working class people that have stopped it. To point out that the daily skirmishes taking place on the streets across Europe today, are not the beginning of a war between different classes, or a war between different races, but is essentially a struggle conducted within the same class. A rudimentary struggle between right and left for physical and ideological hegemony, but this time being fought out within the sole bastion of anti-fascism: the working class. It is the same people who were party to the betrayals, who have turned their back on the class, who are now most blind to this reality.

STATE CAPITALISM

Dear Red Action

I am writing to your organisation for the first time. I am a member of the Socialist Workers Party in Japan, for which I am working as a contact here in Britain. I have been informed that your tendency hold the theory of state capitalism - as well as ourselves and I would like to study your view, particularly in comparison with Tony Cliff's version. (Despite the name, we don't affiliate to the British SWP though we have some contact).

In Solidarity

S. Takeo
N. London

Red Action does believe that there is a fundamental difference between the 'degenerated workers' state theory, and that of 'state capitalism'. In so far as the workers' state theory maintains that the former Stalinist states were in some sense forms of proletarian political power, or 'transitional' to socialism, Red Action rejects it unconditionally. It comes from a perspective that is profoundly anti-working class. The state capitalist theory maintains that the soviet union underwent a change of political form from a (degenerate?) workers' state to a form of state capitalism in 1928. We do not see that the supposed grounds for this transition existed: the Soviet Union had long since ceased to represent any form of proletarian power. Nor would Red Action want to support all the theoretical implications of the state capitalist formula as reflected in the fundamental categories of marxist economics. Nonetheless it is plainly less reactionary than the orthodox Trotskyism of the workers' state position.

More to the point, Red Action is not a sectarian organisation which offers its members a set of dogmatic positions and perspectives or which defines its identity in opposition to both other left groups and the class by reference to them. Red Action supports all dialogue and polemic within the left related to practical and theoretical issues, both within and without the organisation. Articles in the Red Action paper are printed with the understanding that they do not represent a fixed system of incontrovertible interpretations or as a unique blueprint for revolutionary consciousness. Rather, they are conceived as contributions to a continuing dialogue within the Marxist tradition; a tradition which recognises as part of its methodology that there are no 'definitive' positions fixed in the concrete of party orthodoxy. Rejecting sectarian shibboleths, Red Action's identity depends primarily on its class composition and class practice. Theoretical positions are ultimately no more than articulations of class location. An extended Red Action article examining the Trotskyite and neo Trotskyite theories concerning the nature of the Stalinist states appears in issues 5 & 6 of the journal Open Polemic (OP BOX 1189 London W39 PF)

Articles in the Red Action paper are printed with the understanding that they do not represent a fixed system of incontrovertible interpretations or as a unique blueprint for revolutionary consciousness. Rather, they are conceived as contributions to a continuing dialogue within the Marxist tradition; a tradition which recognises as part of its methodology that there are no 'definitive' positions fixed in the concrete of party orthodoxy. Rejecting sectarian shibboleths, Red Action's identity depends primarily on its class composition and class practice. Theoretical positions are ultimately no more than articulations of class location.

An extended Red Action article examining the Trotskyite and neo Trotskyite theories concerning the nature of the Stalinist states appears in issues 5 & 6 of the journal Open Polemic (OP BOX 1189 London W39 PF)

Self-Determination

Dear Red Action

Thanks very much for the stickers (I'm sure they'll brighten up some lamp-posts etc somewhere) and the two copies of Red Action. Please find enclosed £3.00 for the

next ten issues. I found it very good reading, especially the hard-line Republican stance and your support for the Irish Republican Army in their war against the British state in the six counties (and beyond).

I'm a committed Scottish Republican who also wants to see (hopefully very soon) a thirty two county Irish, Welsh and English Socialist Republic as a matter of principle. My support for Scottish independence isn't based on any sort of 'Bonnie Prince Charlie romanticism' (although the after-effects of Culloden with Cumberland racist anti-celtic stance was every bit as severe as the 'Hell or Connaught' position faced by the Irish during Cromwell's rule.) It is based on the sort of arguments put forward by the likes of Lenin who admitted that it was the right of every nation in Europe to self determination (whilst denying it too a large part of the USSR!) and by this country's (Scotland's) greatest Socialist ever, John MacLean, who 'unashamedly' stood on a platform calling for a Scottish Workers republic, until he was killed due to hardships faced in the custody of his majesty (i.e. HMP Peterhead etc). Does your 'Endorsement' of 'the armed struggle as a legitimate tactic' also convey to Scotland, and if eg: a Scottish Republican Army were set up would you support it? Yours eye
D. F.
Knockanrioch
Moray

PS Keep up the good work with Anti Fascist Action. You may be interested to know that on Sat 22nd at the Aberdeen v Rangers game, the Rangers fans flew a BNP flag throughout the game (as well as giving their usual nazi salutes!).

BEATING THE FASCISTS

Dear Red Action

Could you send me 250 "Beating the Fascists" stickers. I and my friends are getting increasingly pissed off with the slow, creeping increase of NF propaganda in and around Birmingham.

If you also send me 10 copies of Red Action I will try to sell these amongst friends, also could you send me a copy of 'We are Red Action'.

Although not yet a member I will try to promote and bring awareness of Red Action to as many people as possible. The fight against Fascism is all too important to ignore, united in strength we should work together to crush BNP/NF influence. I look forward to an early reply! Best wishes.

G. F.
Birmingham

CLOSE TO THE TRUTH

Dear Red Action

Hi! Been reading your paper for a year or so when I can get it on demos and pickets and stuff-thought I'd plunge for a subscription. I like the AFA reports and stuff on Ireland. The stickers'll go some way to unsettling the local BNP squad in Ilford where I'm living for the moment. I'm actually a member of the SWP but I've supported AFA's views for a number of years and continue to do so despite ANL mark II which is not measuring up to my expectations! I'm not aq

among my branch either.

I was interested in your comments in the article 'Trotzky's verdict on the ANL' (issue 82). I've gotta bone to pick about your inferences on the class nature of local government workers. Yeah, I have got a college education (surprise, surprise) but most of the workers in Housing Benefits and Poll Tax and cashiers and telephonists etc. have not. Nor do they have "leisurely careers" unfortunately. To most of us Local Government work is just a job and not a particularly well paid or stress free one at that. I, for one fucking hate it and wish I was educated enough to do something else. That said I do think you've come close to the truth in the article.

Anyway, best wishes. I'll still be supporting AFA after the ANL mark II has dissolved - sooner rather than later I expect.

Yours C. T.

Grays

Essex

HAVING A
LAUGH!

Dear Red Action

I read this item, laughed and thought you would appreciate it. It's taken from an 'autonome' paper 'Ausbruch' (Break Out) published in south-west Germany. If you can't find space pass it on to some other worthy organisation like AFA, the DAM or whatever.

I hope it demonstrates that not all is fascist gloom and doom over here.

On March 21st various nazi organisations mobilised across Germany for a demonstration intended to gain a foothold in Leipzig, where they are not yet particularly strong, and generally to strengthen their organisation. Among those expected were leading nazi's such as Christian Worch of the FAP (Free Workers Party) or Thomas Dienl from Weimar, currently occupied with the setting up of the NDP (German National Party).

We were prompted by this mobilisation to visit on March

20th a two storey house, number 20 Schmidt-Ruehl Street in the Scoenefeld district of Leipzig, postal address of the FAP.

We only knew for certain, that the Leipzig FAP official Dirk Zimmermann lived there, with a girlfriend, whose name we don't know. The windows of the ground floor were boarded up.

When we forced our way into the otherwise undefended house during the night before the nazi demo, only the woman whom we'd seen in the days beforehand was sleeping there. We asked her to dress and come with us outside into the courtyard. The dog had panicked as we came in and we made sure that it was able to get out.

In the occupied rooms nazi emblems and swastikas were hung on the walls along with different sorts of military shit. There was an office, where we found FAP and Viking Youth papers, which we took with us and had a good laugh at. We found amongst them:-

-Membership papers from the FAP and Viking Youth.

-Photos, VJ brochures, correspondence with other nazi's.

-Court papers to do with actual bodily harm, police papers about the confiscation of a firearm.

-Material about the 'Auschwitz hoax', against abortion, arms magazines, international fascist propaganda.

We destroyed the flat and the office in the otherwise unoccupied house, made sure that the woman really had been alone and set the house on fire, because it was used exclusively by the nazi's. It happened to be a detached house, so that there was no threat to innocent people.

Obviously the nazi's were feeling very secure or it wouldn't have been so easy for us. For example, the door of the house was open, there were no sentries, despite the public anti-fascist counter mobilisation for the next day, and this despite the house having already been the target of an anti-fascist action once before.

It is possible to attack the fascists and their organisations! Think about actions-don't leave them in peace!

Ever more attacks, so that they can do less political work (and are occupied with their own self protection).

Autonome Anti-Fascists

JOIN RED ACTION



Red Action is an organisation founded by working class people to work for the furthering of the cause of Socialism. Membership is open to all who accept our political principles and pay a weekly subscription. Every member has an equal vote on all Red Action policy and decisions.

If you support our aims but do not wish to become a member, you can become a supporting member. This does not entitle you to vote, but you will receive.

1. A free subscription to the newspaper.
2. A regular internal newsletter that will keep you informed of what is going on in the organisation.
3. Notification of any Red Action activities in your area.

The cost for this is £20 for one year. Subscriptions to the paper are still available separately. The cost is £3 pounds for ten issues. Please remember that producing a paper is a very uneconomic business and we are always very grateful for any donations, and especially grateful to anyone who can take extra copies to sell.

All cheques and postal orders should be made payable to 'Red Action'.

**BM BOX 37, LONDON
WC1N 3XX**

LETTERS

TYNE & WEAR AFA A MOCKERY!

Dear Red Action

I started doing a bit of work with TWAFA in Sep/Oct last year because I wanted to do something about the fascists and didn't know anyone else who was doing anything locally but had heard of AFA (TWAFA shouldn't be 'allowed' to use these initials they're a mockery!). Since then I've done a lot of work for them which has gone largely unappreciated in that any discussion I attempt to instigate on tactics gets dismissed or simply ignored.

Their main campaign has been in Sunderland since then, where the BNP have been allowed to establish a regular paper sale since last summer and now it is their main base here (there's no doubt that they are getting more established in this region). TWAFA's response has been to stand in the same area near the BNP giving out leaflets about how nasty and racist and violent the BNP are, in other words, advertising them more than the BNP themselves do and no attempt is made to confront them either ideologically or physically. They cannot offer an ideological alternative because they claim to be "hideously respectable" (council funded) non-party-political including religious and community groups (although the inclusion of these groups is massively exaggerated!) They think cross class unity is the only solution (but don't achieve any!) and aren't interested in the working class and winning over possible fash supporters by offering an alternative.

They believe in complaining through official channels as the only solution and petitioning the council to ban BNP paper sales, prosecute them for stickers and fly posting etc! They have such a shallow solution to the problem, it makes me sick they never even think about addressing root causes. This is made worse because there's one or two good people wasting their time with them but more importantly because they alienate so many potential working class anti-fascists as well as driving other people into the arms of the fascists through their nauseating tactics! They also give the fascists confidence as they think that this is the best we can manage in the way of opposition to them-hardly a threat to their intimidating and dominating image and tactics.

Some TWAFA leaflets do nothing more than list criminal convictions of various fascists throughout the country! I'll try and send you a sample of some of their leaflets and newsletters so you get the real flavour!

TWAFA has a mailing list of nearly 300 people for its newsletter (mostly Labour movement people and council leaders) but can't mobilise even 10 of these to help with surveillance or intelligence etc! It has resources due to council funding but creates so much bureaucracy for itself that the struggle just gets buried! They are more interested in working with professional community workers than working class people.

The BNP are getting so confident that they turned up

at the annual turgid Mayday rally! There was 500 lefties and eight fascists - they didn't even come "mob handed" though: they didn't bring any "heavies" just a regular paper selling squad! They injured two lefties but walked out of the park relatively unscathed apart from the efforts of a few of us who dodged the ANL and other lefties who tried to stop people hitting them! The fash won this episode not the left, it was appalling the lefties just didn't know what to do- they just wanted to ignore them!

The TWAFA response to Blood and Honour gigs up here is to find out on the night (by surveillance) where it is then call the police and ask them to stop it - which they didn't do surprisingly enough - and so they get to have their gigs unhampered!

problem that an "intensive" ten month campaign (leafletting nearly every Saturday) has had little effect on the BNP and even worse anti-fascists have stopped coming to leafletting sessions to the extent that instead of forty people, there is less than ten and it's not safe to leaflet! People that should know better could not see the problem/answer that is staring them in the face-someone had the audacity to suggest that we were seen too much as Labourites and rabble and we should market ourselves to Tories and Liberals etc and stop doing street work and concentrate on complaining through official channels instead! Needless to say I couldn't even be bothered to waste my breath again, raising a class analysis and class struggle politics! Someone complained about the number of lifestyleists, hunt sabs types that used to come to leaflettings and get us a bad image. Someone else suggested mobilising the AFA northern network to occupy the pub the fascists use (and picket it and petition the brewery etc). I suggested that a stunt like this for a couple of hours one day would do nothing in the long term battle against racism and fascism. I was told it would get the manager bad publicity but I don't think many people would care if they're not anti-racist!

I bet this letter makes real depressing reading HOWEVER IT IS NOT ALL BAD NEWS! Through TWAFA, Class War, Anti Poll Tax etc; I have met a few people who agree with the need for an effective AFA group and slowly we have the need for an effective AFA group and slowly we have enough people dotted far and wide throughout the region to get a network together (to defend each other initially and also start an AFA group with a gig/public meeting etc). I agree with the notion of polarising people along racist/anti-racist lines as the main division. I think we've all got to concentrate on getting the fundamental message across to the rest of the working class that racism and capitalism stinks and why and that there can be something better!

On that happy note I'd best shut up for now!

Take Care

T. F.
Heaton
Newcastle upon Tyne

A COMEDY OF ERRORS

The rest of left versus Red Action

Workers Power (WP no. 148) recently published an article on Red Action, in which they concluded that RA rejected Marx's concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They have since apologised and acknowledged that RA does not reject this concept - just the reverse. RA's reply has been published in WP no. 152. It is accompanied by a second attack on RA written by Mark Harrison. In their second attack, RA is stigmatised as practising "vulgar sociology" and of being - wait for it - "squeamish utopian Stalinists". Much more important than any amount of sectarian abuse is the dispute concerning the place of democratic forms within Marx's conception of the workers' state. **Red Action believes that it is upon this**

issue that the right of revolutionary socialists to call themselves 'Marxist' above all depends.

In a key passage, Workers Power suggest that, "the proletariat has to create an authority for itself, and indeed over itself that allows its vast numerical strength to be concentrated at the decisive point." Whoa there! "An authority for itself" - of course, this is the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the essence too, of Engel's defence of centralisation and authority in relation to the anarchists - **against whom his arguments are directed.** Engel's entire point is that without the centralisation of authority "in the hands of the

proletariat" (WP), there can be no democracy, no "authority of the majority over the minority" (Engels). That is, centralisation and political authority are the **essential instruments of workers' democracy** without which there could be no democracy of any kind.

Now examine, most carefully, the next bit: **"and indeed over itself"**. Indeed! Here is the essence of the Trotskyite/Leninist revision of Marxist political principles expressed with clarity and simplicity. Consider what this formula could possibly mean. It does not mean that the workers elect an executive to implement the programme democratically decided upon by

the class, but an authority that imposes its own programme irrespective of the wishes and interests of the class. Do Workers Power suggest that there should be a referendum in which the proletariat is asked, "Do you agree to surrender all political authority to the self-elected and irremovable Central Committee until the Central Committee decides to give it back?" Perhaps not. But how else would the proletariat "create an authority over itself"? In effect Workers Power argue that the working class is incapable of providing its own leadership - of instituting political rule of and for itself - and that political authority is therefore the prerogative of a "self-selected" revolutionary party.

Action though, remains with Marx on the question. It is RA's belief that any revolutionary socialist organisation that opposes itself to Marx on the absolutely central issue of the principle of workers democracy, is not entitled to call itself a Marxist organisation.

Workers Power accuse RA of presenting the elected body of the Paris Commune as a "perfect ideal" - "utopianism" - which they say, Marx "never did" (WP). In fact, RA has never done anything except quote Marx's own opinion on the matter! It is Marx who holds the communal form of organisation as a model for the dictatorship of the proletariat, being: "the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labour."

If Workers Power still want to repeat the slander that it is RA who "idealise" the revolutionary democratic institution of the Commune while Marx and Engels as they say "attacked" (WP) it as not being 'dictatorial' enough, then let them chew on this: **"Look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the proletariat."** (Engels).

Or this: **"there cannot be two opinions about it - the Commune was the conquest of political power of the working classes."** (Marx).

But Workers Power and the Trotskyists do have a "second opinion" on the Commune - they allege that, "Marx and Engels have very serious criticisms of the Commune" (WP). For RA the definition of a 'workers' state' (and equally, of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat') is just this: "the political power of the working class" - no more or less. Any authority elected by the class must be as Marx himself stresses, **accountable and revocable** (i.e. democratically removable). It does not of course mean that a workers' state once constituted will never henceforward, make mistakes. Marx said more than once that the Commune acted "with no pretensions to infallibility" and was "not ashamed to confess blunders by correcting them."

It does mean that RA, along with Marx, believes that they cannot and will not be corrected by the authoritarian, bureaucratic machinations of self-selected committees of "scientific" socialists - **la Workers Power.** To this end, the public functions, Marx insists, "military, administrative, political", must be made "real workman's functions, instead of the hidden attributes of a trained caste." It is not centralisation and authority that RA (or Marx or Engels) object to - on the contrary they are the necessary instruments of any democratic process. But the entire question revolves around the question, **who exercises the authority and who does the centralising and on behalf of whom?** Red Action insists that it must be a majority of the working class.

In a number of articles, RA has stressed that the primary condition of any form of revolutionary workers' state is the democratic organisation of the workers themselves. Marx puts this concisely: "Whatever the merits of the single measures of the Commune, its greatest measure was its own organisation." Its political and social character, Marx asserts, consists not in any specific 'programme' or 'perspective' but, "only in this, that workmen govern the Paris Commune." Marx adds that the Commune, "consisted of simple working men" - its most important qualification. Further, this communal form of political organisation was to extend throughout the new workers' 'state'. In other words: "The great social measure of the Commune was its own working existence. Its special

"In order not to lose again its just conquered supremacy, the working class must on the one hand do away with all the old repressive machinery, previously used against itself and on the other, safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials, by declaring them all without exception subject to recall at any moment." - ENGELS 1891

"The workers' dictatorship will have to be highly authoritarian and centralised...the proletariat has to create an authority for itself and indeed over itself." - WORKERS POWER 1991

measures could but betoken the tendency of a government of the people by the people." The dictatorship of the proletariat is defined by its class form and class content - and not by the ideology or programme of a sect of political "scientists".

This is the real meaning of Marx's attacks on the Utopians. He explains the roots of their utopianism: "All the socialist founders of sects belonged to a period in which the working classes themselves were neither sufficiently trained and organised by the march of capitalist society itself to enter as historical agents upon the world's stage..." Evidently Workers Power still believe this to be true, though Marx even in 1871, patently did not. But in that case, they would gain far more respect by consciously and avowedly building their organisation on that premiss, rather than continuing to pretend that they are followers of Marx.

Workers Power claim for example, that the preservation of the state in the hands of some professional caste of revolutionaries - they boast that they are set apart from the class, "we are Marxists, scientific socialists (WP)" - is the key to the socialist transition. Marx himself is ruthless in his criticism of such leaders and their elitism: "In every revolution there intrude, at the side of its true agents, men of a different stamp...mere bawlers who, by dint of repeating year after year the same set of stereotyped declamations against the government of the day, have sneaked into reputations of revolutionists of the first water...they hamper the real action of the working class, exactly as men of that sort have hampered the full development of every previous revolution. They are an unavoidable evil..."

For Marx, it is the defining feature of the bourgeois state that it presents itself as an authority standing over society. He writes: "Only the proletarians...were the men to break the instrument of class rule - the state, the centralised and organised governmental power usurping to be the master instead of the servant of society." It is the Commune itself which so far from being the form of a workers' state as a form of authority over itself, actually "breaks" the modern state power". The unity of society is to, "become a reality by the destruction of that state power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity independent of, and superior but, "only in this, that workmen govern the Paris Commune." As Engels wrote in 1875, "the Commune was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word", (Lenin added in 'State and Revolution' that this was the "most theoretically important statement Engels makes"). There is no 'gap' or 'transitional period' between the overthrow of the bourgeois state and its replacement by the political power of the

MARX & THE PARIS COMMUNE

The key to any analysis of Marx's own concept of the workers' state is an examination of his reaction to the Paris Commune of 1871. He wrote a contemporary account of the revolutionary events in France ('The Civil War in France') during this period which provides an unrivalled insight into his understanding of the processes of proletarian revolution. The war between France and Germany in 1870 had led to the capitulation of the French and the siege of Paris by Prussian armies. Ordered to surrender by their own government, the Parisian workers of the National Guard seized political power in defiance of both the Prussian armies and the bourgeois republic based at Versailles. This was the Paris Commune. It instituted revolutionary forms of proletarian 'dictatorship' and in its short existence before being defeated by the armed forces of the counter-revolution, formed the first workers' state in history. Marx asserted that: "With the struggle in Paris the struggle of the working class against the capitalist class and its state has entered upon a new phase...a new point of departure of world-wide historical importance has been gained."

Workers Power however want to suggest that Marx was critical of the 'naive' democracy exhibited by the Commune and favoured a dictatorship of a restricted 'cadre' type grouping. They allege that Marx at one point criticised the Commune for being too lenient with the forces of reaction. This is so. The Paris proletariat showed too much "good nature" towards its enemies as Marx, in a private letter, phrases it. Therefore, Workers Power conclude, Marx believed that power should be concentrated in a "self-selected" (WP) Central Committee. This of course doesn't follow: a democratic majority can perfectly well be as ruthless, violent and so on, as any oligarchic committee. Centralisation and forcible action can be sanctioned by a democratic majority of the working class as well as by a military junta.

In their article, Workers Power say that Marx criticised the Commune for not being "authoritarian enough". Let us see what Marx himself wrote, in his major published work on the 1871 events, 'The Civil War in France': "In their reluctance to continue the civil war...the Central Committee made itself guilty of a decisive mistake in not at once marching on Versailles." (Marx)

Marx ascribes this **decisive mistake** to the "indulgence" of the Central Committee, which Marx says was, "interpreted as mere symptoms of weakness." This is the same Central Committee that Workers Power contrast to the allegedly weak-willed Commune and as commend as being composed of "the most decisive and resolute elements!"

What was this "Central Committee"? Marx says it was the "provisional government" of the "glorious working men's revolution" of March 1871. Workers Power tell us further that the Central Committee was "self-selected" (WP) and praise it for being so: "The Central Committee of the National Guard gained power not through an election but through an uprising." (WP) That is quite unequivocal: the Central Committee, say Workers Power, was not elected and allege that Marx supported it against the elected body of the Commune. It is difficult to know whether this is a conscious effort at misrepresentation or simple incompetence. But at least Workers Power have come out of the closet and declared themselves in favour of the leadership of a band of dedicated revolutionaries who are not elected by anyone but themselves - and who then overrule the decisions of the representative body of the class itself. These of course, are the putschist tactics of August Blanqui - who had many followers in the Paris Commune.

Perhaps Workers Power are in fact confusing Blanqui with Marx, because Marx says, in a well known text, that the "Central Committee" was "elected by virtually the whole body" of the National Guard, some 300,000 in number, "the bulk of which consisted of working men." In fact, 215 out of 270 battalions of the National Guard took part in the elections: the rest Marx calls, "the old Bonapartist formations". Marx stresses that within the National Guard, consisting of, "all the armed manhood of Paris", it was, "the working class battalions who had taken the initiative."

In the original draft of 'The Civil War in France', Marx explains in considerable detail the basis of the Central Committee's election: On its existing military organisation [the National Guard] grafted a political federation according to a very simple plan. It was the alliance of all the National Guard, put into connection with the other by the delegates (Marx's emphasis) of

each company, appointing in their turn the delegates of the battalions, who in their turn appointed general delegates who were to represent a district and to cooperate with the delegates of the nineteen other districts. Those twenty delegates, chosen by the majority of the battalions of the National Guard, composed the Central Committee..."

It is too late for Workers Power to sneak back in the closet and claim they didn't really mean to endorse the imposition of a "self-selected" putschist and explicitly anti-democratic clique over the authority of the elected representatives of the class or that this process was somehow not a 'real' election. Marx himself bars the way unequivocally: **"Never were elections more sifted, never did delegates more fully represent the masses from which they were sprung."**

All of this, let it be carefully emphasised, refers to the

Fundamental to the theory and practice of the revolutionary left is a radical and perverse revision of the theory and practice of Marx and Engels. In effect, this revision in theory has come to represent the negation of revolutionary practice. Red Action's "impertinent" exploration of the central issues involved has led to the rest of the left being forced to abandon or defend theoretical positions previously regarded as impregnable. This article illustrates how a representative group of the revolutionary left, Workers Power, have been forced to make their hitherto implicit break with Marx and Engels open and explicit.

election of the Central Committee which Workers Power praise precisely for being "unelected" and as being evidence of Marx's support for the dictatorship of unelected, authoritarian cliques over the class! It must rank as one of the most bizarre, contorted and embarrassing arguments ever produced by a revolutionary sect.

Marx's support for the "sifted" democracy of the Central Committee is not limited as a transitory or special form. It is designed to extend through the whole of society: "The Paris Commune was to serve of course, as a model to all the great industrial centres of France. The Communal regime once established in Paris and the secondary centres, the old centralised government would in the provinces too, have to give way to the self-government of

the producers...The rural communes of every district were to administer their common affairs by an assembly of delegates in the central town, and these district assemblies were again to send deputies to the national delegation in Paris, each delegate to be at any time revocable and bound by the mandate or formal instructions of his constituents."

Conversely, Marx describes the proposal of Workers Power and other Trotskyite/Leninist groups of that ilk, i.e. the assumption of dictatorial power by a group of "self-selected" and "scientific" socialists in the midst of revolutionary crisis - their "taking power not through an election but through an uprising" (WP) - as a counter revolution against the Commune. For, **On the other hand, nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchical investiture."**

As for the formula of Workers Power, that the proletariat will need to erect a (state) power "over" itself, Marx examines this very question in some detail: "...all public functions...were to be executed by Communal agents and therefore, under the control of the Commune. It is one of the absurdities to say that the central functions, not of governmental authority over the people, but necessitated by the general and common wants of the country, would become impossible. These functions would exist, but the functionaries themselves could not, as in the old governmental machinery, raise themselves over real society because the functions were to be executed by Communal agents and therefore, always under real control."

That is to say, such agents would always be electable and revocable. Here Marx identifies the institution of political authority over society (the Workers Power prescription) with the "old", i.e. bourgeois, state. He further differentiates necessary and legitimate governmental functions ("general and common wants") from "governmental authority over the people" - which he explicitly rejects.

How do the Leninists and Trotskyites reply to that? If they were honest and said publicly what they presumably say in private, they would argue that Marx was wrong, and that the party dictatorship of the Bolsheviks demonstrated a higher level of revolutionary organisation than any known to, or anticipated by, Marx. It would at least have the merit of being an honest and coherent proposition. Red

workers through which advocates of an interim 'dictatorship of the party' can creep. The Leninists and the Trotskyites on the other hand have made the Bolshevik party dictatorship that emerged from the circumstances of the civil war in Russia in 1921 the inspiration of a concept of a 'transition period' behind which all questions of the immediate institution of workers' power and democracy can be shunted for the duration. For them, the historical circumstances of that dictatorship becomes a new political principle. In place of the democracy of the Commune you have the authority of the party; in place of Marx, you have Lenin and Trotsky; in place of the worker, you have the political commissar. On the contrary, the process of proletarian class control was envisaged by Marx in 1871 to begin with the process of insurrection itself, with the election of the Central Committee of the people's militia.

The 'workers' state as proposed by Workers Power however, is explicitly a replica of the bourgeois state, or in their own words, "an authority over the proletariat". Conversely, Marx's own description of the Commune is this: "the reabsorption of the state power by society as its own living forces instead of as forces controlling and subduing it, by the popular masses themselves, forming their own force instead of the organised force of their suppression..." "State power" Marx asserts, "is the creation of the middle class, a means to crush the

emancipatory aspirations of the producers, of the working class." On the contrary, the Commune represented, "a revolution against the state itself, this supernaturalist abortion of society, a resumption by the people for the people of its own social life."

It is specifically not, he warns, "a revolution to transfer it from one fraction of the ruling classes to the other, but a revolution to break down this horrid machinery of class domination itself."

But what are Workers Power and other Trotskyite/Leninist groups proposing, if not just this transfer of power to a new ruling class, the dictatorship of a professional revolutionary caste - the new priesthood of the "scientific socialists" - which inevitably, as the history of Bolshevism in its bureaucratic phase demonstrates - resolves itself into a state standing "over" the proletariat? As Marx himself wrote in relation to the reactionary aftermath of the French revolution: "Every minor solitary interest engendered by the relations of social groups was separated from society itself, fixed and made independent of it and opposed to it in the form of the state interest, administered by state priests with exactly determined hierarchical functions."

An elegant and devastating description of the monolithic and authoritarian Bolshevik party and state bureaucracy, as it had developed by the time of Lenin's death and so admired by 'Marxist-Leninists' today!

which have seized power over the proletariat mass in a time of unrest. No, these are organs which are planned creations of that mass...which have been elected by the masses who are responsible to the masses (and are) unconditionally democratic institutions..." (Trotsky's emphasis)

"Unconditionally democratic" - this is entirely in the spirit of Marx. Unfortunately for Workers Power, Trotsky emphasises the centrality of the distinction between the authority of the elected organs of the workers themselves, and the authority of "conspiratorial organisations which have seized power" over the proletariat. While Workers Power argue enthusiastically for the latter, Trotsky in 1905, unequivocally rejects it!

Even in 1917, Trotsky is still ennobling the Commune as "the greatest event in the history of the proletarian struggle." The pre-revolution Lenin writes in the same year, against the revisionist Kautsky that,

"the transition from capitalism to socialism is impossible without a certain reversion to primitive democracy...All officials without exception, elected and subject to recall at any time...these self-evident democratic measures...serve as a bridge leading from capitalism to socialism." (Lenin's emphasis) He explicitly denies, as did Marx before him, that the elective principle is capable of suspension in favour of a self-selected revolutionary priesthood:

"The way out of parliamentarianism is not, of course, the abolition of representative institutions and the elective principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from 'talking shops' into working bodies."

Lenin is at this time fully aware of the gulf between the putchist tactics of Blanqui, and the workers' democracy advocated so forcefully by Marx:

"to become a power the class conscious workers must win the majority to their side...We are not Blanquists, we do not stand for the seizure of power by a minority." He consequently emphasises not the suspension or abridgement of democracy, but its extension: "To develop democracy to the utmost to find forms for this development, to test them by practice - all this is the task of the struggle for the social revolution."

There is no hint here of any revision of Marx in the direction of substituting the party for the class and principles of self-selection for those of election. Lenin thoroughly understood what Marx had said, and spells it out. The great revision was only to begin with the actual period of the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party. Lenin does comment, along with Marx and Engels (and Workers Power) that the Commune failed to crush its enemies with sufficient determination; but immediately adds:

"The organ of suppression however, is here a majority of the population, not a minority as was the case, under slavery, serfdom and wage slavery. And since the majority of the people itself suppresses its oppressors, a 'special force' for suppression is no longer necessary." The later history of the Cheka is a sad commentary on this declaration.

Workers Power and the whole Trotskyite/Leninist crew will want to forget these 'lapses' on the part of their heroes. They will want to concentrate on Trotsky's later writings when a leading functionary in the Bolshevik party

dictatorship. For by 1920, Trotsky's emphasis is very different. He notes that "formal democracy" and "inter-class democracy" - by which he means the extension of democracy to bourgeois or anti-working class elements - is distinct from the democratic basis of the Commune, which is founded upon the majority will of the working class and its immediate allies. This of course, is also true for Marx. But then Trotsky speaks of the "lack of experience of the Commune" itself, and the "immaturity of its participants", their "lack of unity" and "indecision", etc. Trotsky complains that: "The representatives of the National Guard were in most cases men with a very modest revolutionary past. 'Not one well known name', writes [the historian] Lisagoray." Marx had already drafted an appropriate reply: "To the objections of outsiders that they [the elected leaders] were unknown - in point of fact that they were known only to the working classes... they proudly answered, 'So were the twelve apostles', and they answered by their deeds."

But unhappily, the sloppiness of the Workers Power analysis fails to notice that Trotsky is also criticising the Central Committee for its "irresponsibility", "pathetic attitudes", its "feeble and formalist dictatorship" and "political timorousness", i.e. the very body that Workers Power had praised to the skies for its "decisive and resolute elements"! We will not embarrass them further by asking who is correct on this question, Workers Power or Trotsky. Nor is it necessary to underline the fact that whereas for Workers Power the Central Committee was "unselected" and "self-selected", Trotsky acknowledges that, "The Central Committee of the National Guard drew its authority from democratic electibility", being "elected directly by the masses".

It is in 1921, however, that Trotsky develops the analysis which to all appearances Workers Power have attempted to tail, albeit with an ineptitude which does Trotsky himself no favours. Here for the first time, Trotsky directly attacks the class itself, not just its representatives, for revolutionary incompetence. "The Commune shows us the heroism of the working masses...but at the same time it shows us the incapacity of the masses to choose their path, their indecision in the leadership of the movement..." This is because,

"It is only with the aid of the party, which rests upon the whole history of its past, which foresees theoretically the path of development...which extracts from it the necessary formula of action, that the proletariat frees itself from...its lack of decision, its mistakes." From this, it is but a step to the conclusion that: "There was no organisation of a centralised party...with special organs for realising its decisions."

In a word, "The Central Committee of the National Guard needed to be led."

So what for Marx was the highest and final term of praise for the Central Committee as a revolutionary body i.e. its expansion in practice of the concept of the democratic representation of class interests, has become for Trotsky in 1921, a limitation and a reproach. Readers of previous RA articles in editions 60 and 61 will not be surprised to trace the connection between Trotsky's changing theoretical position and his actual position as the military head of a regime fast becoming an authoritarian dictatorship.

We are now onto the relatively familiar ground of who and



THIS DELIBERATE ILLUSTRATION OF LENIN IS HOW THE BRITISH LEFT, STILL DEFINE THE 'PROPER' RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP AND 'THE MASSES', AND OF COURSE BETWEEN THE CONTEMPORARY WORKING CLASS AND THEMSELVES. A PROTECTIVE BUT RESOLUTE FIGURE HANDLING DOWN COMMANDMENTS TO A SUITABLY PLIANT BUT GRATEFUL PROLETARIAT.

what it is that has the task of 'leading'. "The entire working class...can act methodically and firmly...on the condition that at its head...there is an apparatus which is centralised and bound together by an iron discipline." Marx of course, does not have any objection to "centralisation" in itself. The political scheme that Marx sketches above in relation to the communal government of France is directed towards providing the most democratic possible form of majority rule consistent with the political dictatorship of the proletariat. "The unity of the nation was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, to be organised by the communal constitution...in reality the Communal constitution brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and these secured to them, in the working men, the natural trustees of their interests." (Marx)

This is a vital part of the meaning of the dictatorship of the proletariat. As Lenin summarised Marx's position in his 1917 analysis in 'State and Revolution', "If the proletariat and the poor peasants take state power into their own hands, organise themselves quite freely in communes and unite the actions of all the communes in striking at capital...won't that be centralism?"

Trotsky has added an entirely new qualification: that organs elected by the working class are incapable of leadership; that a self-selected group must rule in their place; that this group rules 'in the interests' of the working class (as that group understands them). How is this last step accomplished? How is the authority of the ruling group enforced if not through the consent of the ruled, i.e. through election? There is, to the eye of common sense, only one way - through the use of force, a police apparatus. Yet this form of 'authority' excludes no-one. Bandits, war lords, feudal lords or slave-owners have a title equal to that of any self-selected 'revolutionary committee' to authority of this kind.

Trotsky must therefore provide at least the appearance of some kind of third relation between the ruler and the ruled - a non-accountable authority that doesn't rely on brute force: "The revolution must create an organ composed of experienced, reliable organisers...giving it full powers to choose, designate, and educate the command." The "command", as for example the Central Committee of the Commune, may itself be elected, but must, Trotsky says, submit to the "full powers" of an organ created by "selection from above". Reversing Marx's position, Trotsky asserts that: "Electibility, the democratic method, is but one of the instruments in the hands of the proletariat and its party. Electibility can in no wise be a fetish...The methods of electibility must be combined with those of appointments."

Obviously, if you have elections to a certain body, which are then totally and unaccountably subject to revision by a body that appoints itself - then you haven't got a 'mixed' system of election and appointment: you have a system of self-perpetuating authoritarian dictatorship pure and simple. This in fact is how the Bolshevik party functioned after 1921.

Trotsky then, clearly faces a problem in making his conception of a species of non-elected, non-totalitarian authority 'sexy'. These are some of the ways he attempts to present this third relation: "the party [should be] in continual contact with the masses [and] through the party's militants, would have penetrated into the masses, uniting their thought and their will. The party does not create the revolution at will...but it penetrates at every moment the state of mind of the revolutionary masses...Needed are a correct theory, an intimate contact with the masses...a party [that] penetrates into all the domains of the proletarian struggle [and is] linked intimately with the movement of the masses, with its ebbs and flows." This is the Mills and Boon theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. With his uncompromising and hardly accidental stress on the concept of 'penetration' Trotsky reveals how the party is conceived as an insulated and compact social group, mastering and inseminating the passive political body of the masses. As I am told happens in all Mills and Boon epics, the object of the party's attentions, the proletariat, eventually learns to love its master and even the feeling of being dominated. So at least, the theory goes. Of course, language like this is ultimately meaningless and at best represents a sort of soft-focus 'enhancement' of an otherwise disagreeable reality. By 1919, in fact, only 11% of Bolshevik party members were workers. The reality can only be that the "self-selected" party enforces its authority over the class by armed force - imprisonment and shootings.

In Trotsky, this is a prelude to his introduction of the main theme of his revision of Marx. Marx, as has been abundantly demonstrated, insists first and last upon the principle of election within the political form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is not the same as "formal" or "inter-class" democracy, but it is never abrogated or diminished as the formative principle of the executive bodies of the working class itself. For Trotsky, on the contrary, "simple elections" cannot resolve the challenges facing the class during the revolution. "The methods of shapeless democracy (simple electibility) must be supplemented and to a certain extent replaced by measures of selection from above." This is the exact point at which Trotsky departs from Marxism - and from the pre-revolutionary views of both himself and Lenin.

F.GORDON.

LENIN & TROTSKY & THE PARIS COMMUNE

It is to be hoped that everyone who has followed the argument so far (and possibly in earlier editions of RA) will no longer be willing to swallow the fiction that the principles, politics and programmes of Trotskyite organisations such as Workers Power are Marxist. They are not. Red Action believes that Workers Power are not unique, but typical of the Trotskyite left, and that is why their attack on RA is significant. Since the roots of its arguments are so shallow and so easily demolished by an analysis that is truly based on Marx's own position, how is it possible for Workers Power and other Trotskyite/Leninist groups to commit such an outrageous catalogue of misrepresentation and distortion? Where does the tradition of the party dictatorship and its distortion of the history and principles of the Paris Commune stem from? In this case, the answer is, in a word: Trotsky. But a distinction has to be made even here between Trotsky, the revolutionary fighter of 1905, and Trotsky the Commissar of 1921.

Writing in 1905, Trotsky is concerned to apply the principles and lessons of the

dispersion of the bureaucracy, the establishment of the principle of election of all functionaries...these are the measures which from the example of the Commune, it is necessary to carry through at the very beginning."

Under these conditions Trotsky says, "popular representation...can be nothing other than a democratic form of the rule of workers' democracy." On one particular, he is very insistent,

"The dictatorship of the proletariat in no way signifies the dictatorship of the revolutionary organisation over the proletariat, but a dictatorship through the proletariat. And this was best shown by the Paris Commune." At this stage then, it is apparent that Trotsky forcefully repudiates the very formula promoted by Workers Power and other elements of the Trotskyite/Leninist vanguard!

He contrasts the experience of the Viennese revolution of 1848, which, "was dominated by the students...The proletariat followed the students...This was a classically clear form of a benevolent revolutionary dictatorship over the proletariat." (Trotsky's emphasis)

By 1871 Trotsky observes, this had changed: "In the Paris Commune, everything was based on the political independence of the workers. The Central Committee of the National Guard warned the proletarian electorate of the Commune not to forget that only those people who were elected from the midst of the workers themselves would serve them well."

The lesson from the Commune is still vital for Trotsky in 1905. The Soviets of Workers' Deputies, "are not previously prepared conspiratorial organisations,

"The Central Committee of the National Guard gained power not through an election but through an uprising." WORKERS POWER

"The Central Committee was elected by virtually the whole body of the National Guard...Never were elections more sifted, never did delegates more fully represent the masses from which they were sprung." MARX

Commune to the revolutionary situation in Russia: "The abolition of the standing army and the police, the arming of the people, the

EUSKADI

INTERVIEW

Recently Red Action met with members of the Basque Liberation Movement, Herri Batasuna.

During their stay a number of meetings were held with Xabi and Bego who come from the town of Eibar and are involved in the organisation of Basque militant youth. Their collective also produces the political/cultural Basque fanzine, 'Porrot'.

The following is an interview they gave for Red Action, outlining the historical context of their struggle and their own personal analysis of recent developments.

RA: What are the historical roots of the Basque struggle?

XGB: The roots of the struggle originate from the conquering of the Basque land, then called Reino de Navarra, in 1512 by the Castille crown for Spain. Although conquered, the Basque people have retained some 'privileges' such as not having to send people into the army, paying taxes etc; a level of its own 'sovereignty'. During the 18th century there were three wars for independence which the Basque people lost, and with it those 'privileges' they had previously held.

With the arrival of the Republican government during the 1930s, the situation for the Basque people began to last to improve, however this was short lived as Franco's Fascist armies were victorious in the hard-fought Civil War; and the severe repression began.

So you can see, from the historical past, to the present day, the story of the Basque people is one of struggle. A struggle to gain our independent homeland, our economic and social freedom, our language and culture; all of which have been suppressed or eroded, bit by bit, by force of arms, for centuries.

'Socialist/Social Democrat' party with a facade of Liberalism, which in reality means only oppression where the Basque people's are concerned. The Popular Party (PP), is the Spanish constitutional party of the right-wing, and contains former Francoist elements. The PCE are the Spanish Euro-communists, a shrinking organisation.

Then you have the Basque parties, the PNV which is the party of 'traditional' Basque nationalism, a pro-capitalist, Christian Democrat party. Then you have EA, 'Basque solidarity', who split from the PNV in 1988, but despite its radical rhetoric, the two are almost indistinguishable. EE is the Basque left, a social democratic party who are champions of 'reform' in Euskadi and are moving ever closer to the ruling PSOE party.

RA: What are the main forces involved in the movement for liberation?

XGB: Well those organisations and individuals involved in the struggle for Liberation and Socialism constitute the MLNV, the Basque National Liberation Movement. The Liberation Movement is made up of many elements, KAS, is the Patriotic Socialist Co-ordinator and is made up of, HASI (political party), LAB (patriotic trade union), ASK (organisation for the popular movements), EGIZAN (women's liberation organisation), JARRAI (youth organisation). Herri Batasuna-Popular Unity, is the mass electoral platform, and expression of all those elements that constitute the MLNV. There is also a party, SUTIK, who though very small, are still important to mention. They were formed a few years back from Trotskyists, Maoists, etc, and are extremely supportive of our activities.

movement, although at present having approximately three thousand members, is growing rapidly and SUTIK also have a trade union movement, SKUIS. The middle classes at this present time, or at least elements, are playing a progressive role in the struggle.

RA: Would you describe HB as a predominantly Nationalist movement, or Socialist, or Marxist?

XGB: Well, with HB not being a 'party', then there is no definitive 'party-line'. HB contains marxists, socialists, nationalists even some anarchistic elements. There are elements of Marxism contained within its constitution, but the best way to summarise it is quite simply as an umbrella organisation, encompassing various political tendencies, all working together for the liberation of Euskadi and in the interests of the Basque working classes.

RA: What are the armed struggle organisations, and the level of their activities, and their effectiveness?

XGB: The main armed struggle organisation is ETA-Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (Basque Homeland & Freedom) who have been active in the Spanish state now for over thirty years, and have their beginnings in the days of the Franco regime. They carry out a high level of activities, but of course, news of these in Britain are subject to the same censorship as the IRA's activities are to ourselves.

Its effectiveness can be summed up quite simply by the fact that it has been the single most important factor in dictating the pace of political initiatives in the Basque region; it sets the political agenda.

RA: Do ETA's actions enjoy widespread support?

XGB: ETA's actions enjoy widespread support amongst the Basque peoples, and this is demonstrated in large demonstrations, etc; and also of course, in the vote HB receive.

RA: The issue of 'policing' anti-social crime by the IRA in Ireland, is a subject that often brings rise to controversy. Do ETA carry out similar actions?

XGB: Obviously most of ETA's actions are aimed at the paramilitary state police and the Spanish states economic interests. However, recently there has been a dramatic rise in the influx of hard drugs to Euskadi, and this threatens to become a real problem. The police are openly encouraging this practice, as they see it as a way of exploiting peoples misery, by making it easier to recruit informers, sowing discord in the community, and pacifying the revolutionary youth. With this in mind, and after repeated warnings, ETA have taken action against the pushers and traffickers themselves, sometimes resulting in executions.

ETA acts in response to the Basque peoples wishes, ie: when the people had clearly rejected the governments proposal to carve the Iruztzu-Andoain motorway across some of our most beautiful countryside, the governments intention of building it anyway, has met with the armed actions of ETA against its building contractors and equipment.

It is also thanks to ETA that the Basque people do not have to endure any nuclear

installations on our land, as the government were clearly told that all such construction work would be met by armed action.

Iparretarrak-IK, is the armed organisation of Northern Euskadi and operates in the French state. It's actions are aimed at economic interests.

needs. Basque activists could once use the French state as a safe haven, and GAL's activities were aimed at forcing the French government into greater collusion with the Spanish state in fighting 'terrorism'. To this end, they systematically carried out a policy of genocide against



There are over 600 Basque political prisoners held in Spanish jails.

RA: What is the relation between HB and ETA?

XGB: Basically the relation is the same as that of Sinn Fein and the IRA in Ireland. Herri Batasuna supports the actions of ETA, and ETA supports the electoral platform of HB.

RA: What is the level of repression in Euskadi?

XGB: The level of repression is extremely high, for instance, in the village where we live, there is a policeman for every inhabitant. There are checkpoints between villages, although the repression is not as visible as in Ireland. There is a high level of surveillance, of where you go, what you do, who you meet, etc, demonstrations are repressed; we are not 'allowed' to do anything!

RA: Do you have many prisoners, can you tell us something about the situation in the jails?

XGB: We have approximately 600 prisoners, with 70 more in French prisons. Until a couple of years ago most of the prisoners were held in the same high security prison. Then, in an attempt to destroy the political organisation of our prisoners inside the jails, they dispersed them to 90 different jails. This has had a bad effect on both prisoners and their families. For instance, a friend of ours is in a Tenerife prison. He is no longer allowed visits from friends, only family members, which involves his family travelling enormous distances, costing large amounts of money, for a short visit behind a glass screen.

At the moment there is a hunger-strike in progress to try and gain better conditions, which it is possible might escalate into a very serious situation, so people should watch the news closely.

There are also fifty four political deportees and 2,000 political refugees, who are unable to return to Euskadi.

RA: What effect has the activities of GAL had on the Basque struggle and what have the political consequences of their actions been?

XGB: First of all it is important to explain to your readers what exactly GAL is. GAL was an 'anti-terrorist' death squad which began its activities in the early eighties, and has been responsible for the murder of 25 Basque refugees and the wounding of another 30. GAL was created, like so many other death-squads formed by the state, when it considered the 'legal' process was not fulfilling its

Basque activists and their families in the French state. In many ways it must be said that GAL have been successful, in that the French state have extradited Basques to the Spanish state, and France is no longer a 'safe haven', as there is now open collusion.

Since GAL ended in 1987 there have been 'revelations' in the press that have suggested what the Basque peoples have known all along to be fact, that GAL was set-up and operated, with the total backing of the Spanish state, at every level. Despite the censorship, etc, it has shown, to those prepared to listen, the lengths the state will go to, to suppress the Basque peoples struggle.

RA: What of recent negotiations between ETA and representatives of the Spanish State, in Algeria?

XGB: Under a negotiated truce, representatives of ETA and the ruling PSOE party, sat down in Algeria to discuss a possible end to the present hostilities, and a move towards self-determination for the Basque peoples. An agreement was reached that would allow both parties to move into a new phase of negotiations aimed at a lasting solution. However, when news of this broke the Spanish government beset by internal contradictions

and under pressure from the de facto powers of the Spanish State, failed to honour its agreements; with the inevitable consequence that the truce broke.

Despite this, it was an important step forward as the Spanish government had been forced to accept ETA as being a representative political force. It is important to make

it clear to RA readers though, that we want peace, not war.

RA: Do you believe a negotiated freedom to be your objective, or that it is possible to be taken by revolution?

XGB: At the moment social revolution is not really on the political agenda in Euskadi. We know we won't get all we want by negotiation, but for them to sit down with us, will give us a formal recognition as a nation.

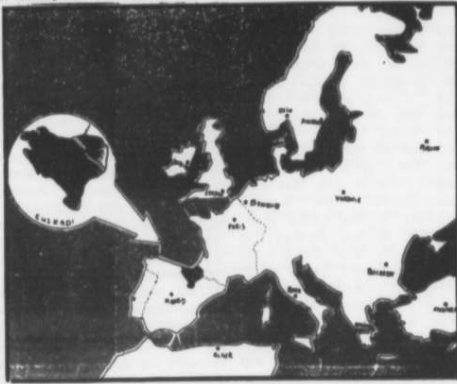
RA: You have both been to Belfast, what similarities have you seen between the struggle of the Irish and the Basque peoples?

XGB: There are very large similarities between our own struggle, and that of the Irish people. I think Herri Batasuna puts far more emphasis on uniting the national and Social questions, than say, Sinn Fein, who seem concerned primarily with Nationalism. This said, the relationship between our organisations are extremely good as we are both suffering severe repression, are both engaged in armed struggle; and are both fighting for National Liberation.

RA: Finally do you have any message for Red Action readers?

XGB: We are in support of Red Action because of the work it does and the support it gives to the struggles of oppressed peoples; and we would ask your members, supporters and readers to continue this support.

We would like to thank Xabi and Bego for giving their time to be interviewed, and hope they enjoyed their stay in London. Later in the year, Red Action members will be taking up an invitation to travel to Euskadi, and hope this will help to increase our understanding of the struggle of the Basque peoples and strengthen the links made between members of our organisations.



RA: What are the territories that make up the Basque country?

XGB: The Basque country, called Euskadi, stretches from La Puri in the French State, to Nafarroa in the Spanish State. The Northern Basque Country, presently held within the French state is called Iparralde and is made up of three regions Lapurdi, Zuberoa and Baxe Nafarroa. The Southern Basque country, Hegoalde, is contained within the Spanish state and is made up of four regions, Biskala, Araba, Gipuzkoa and Nafarroa. In the north Zuberoa is mainly a tourist region and the others Rural. In the south there is a mixture of both Rural and Industrial areas in the various regions.

RA: What are the political parties that operate in Euskadi?

XGB: Well, first of all, there are the Spanish parties that stand in Euskadi. PSOE, is the ruling party, and is a

RA: How is Herri Batasuna organised as a party?

XGB: The first thing to understand is that Herri Batasuna is not 'a party'. It is, as we've just said, an organisation of popular unity, an 'umbrella group' if you like, of different political tendencies and sections involved in the Liberation struggle. But of course, we are an organisation, and we work within a structure. It is extremely important to stress that HB works from the 'bottom up', and not the 'top down'. Each village, collective or group, elects representatives to the zone, and from the zone to the province; and from the province to the National Directorate of Herri Batasuna; this ensures a higher level of accountability, etc.

RA: Is Herri Batasuna a working class organisation?

XGB: Herri Batasuna is based firmly in the working classes of the Basque struggle. LAB, our patriotic trade union

E.T.A. INTERVIEW

Question. - ETA was born in 1959 and has since then acquired very high levels of organisation and struggle, in particular following the death of Franco. Does this mean that for ETA nothing has changed since the fall of Francoism?

ETA. - The best way of answering the question is by explaining what ETA is. ETA is an organisation that was born from the people and from certain specific historical conditions that can be summarised in the 150 years of suppression of the Basque People's liberty and collective identity. The majority of public opinion in Europe and the world is unaware that our organisation is doing no more than continuing - adapting this to the present period and existing conditions - the struggle that has been waged by the Basques over the centuries in our legitimate right to recover national independence and to exercise the individual and collective liberties that Spanish centralism - where the South of our country is concerned - took from them by force of arms.

ETA and the working and popular forces that make up the broad base of the national liberation movement are the heirs of those who in 1839 and 1936 took up arms against the enemy oppressor, whatever the name it went under: absolutist monarchy or fascist dictatorship.

- So you consider yourselves to be at war with the Civil Guard...

- It is the Spanish State that has declared war on the whole of the peninsular Basque Country, for decades maintaining an iron military and police occupation. In this sense the Civil Guard is a decisive instrument in the strategy of force. There has not then been an arm-

istice on their part. Nor will there be on ours, if it is not in the framework of a political negotiation. There was an imposed victory in 1939, and in 1977 there was no democratic rupture with the Francoist past but instead a parliamentary monarchy where the monarchy is written in capital letters and the parliamentary system is secondary...



- Things are as they stand. Why don't you stop killing now, so as to create objective conditions that favour negotiation?

- In order to resolve a conflict between two parties it is necessary that there be an unequivocal willingness on both sides. Our proposal stands, just as we have been repeating in all of our communiques. What happens is that this government doesn't seem to want to understand any other language than that of armed confrontation with its dramatic consequences. Dramatic for everyone.

(Taken from an interview given to DIARIO 16, 21/12/1988)

Dispatches from a warzone



REPRISALS!



"Every time there is an [IRA] attack in our area they [the RUC] are going to arrest our sons as punishment."

On the 22nd May 1991 the British government gave the go ahead to the RUC to implement its latest draconian type 'law' designed to keep the Nationalist people of West Belfast firmly under its jackboot heel. On that day the RUC arrested two 19 year old youths in what was to be the first of many arrests in a brutal campaign of intimidation and criminalisation of innocent youths from West Belfast. Exactly a year later 12 youths aged 17-21 years, have been arrested and remanded in Crumlin Road jail. One youth who was arrested this month had his 17th birthday the day before his arrest.

To combat this youth internment policy relatives and friends of the interned youths formed a committee in August 1991. VOICE OF THE INNOCENT, a non-political group, has appealed to community, human rights and political groups in Ireland, Britain and in N. America to provide their support and solidarity to put a stop to the arrest, brutalisation and torture of the innocent youth of West Belfast by British crown forces and the RUC now before other communities in the Six Counties are targeted.

Four of the youths charged are from Ballymurphy and St James areas of West Belfast. Three of them, Anthony Garland, Michael Beck and Hugh McLaughlin were charged with involvement in an incident which took place on August 2nd 1991 on the Whitecroft Road in Ballymurphy in which a coffee jar incendiary device was thrown at security forces patrolling the area. No physical injury or damage was sustained in the attack.

Anthony Garland (17) is one of three children, the only employed member of a single parent family. On August 2nd 1991 at approximately 12.30pm Tony was asleep in his home when a coffee jar attack on security forces took place on the Whitecroft road close to his Ballymurphy home. Previous to this incident security forces had visited the Garland home harassing both Tony's mother and other members of his family. At 2.30pm, two hours after the attack took place, Tony was taken from his home and arrested by uniformed RUC officers. He was arrested and charged with the coffee jar attack. Despite his protests to be taken to Hydebank Young Offenders Centre he was taken instead to Castlereagh Detention Centre.

The arresting RUC officers allege that Tony permitted those who carried out the attack to escape by allowing them to run through the Garland home. It was further alleged by the RUC that Tony was a member of the

"Republican Youth" and for that reason had motive to assist in the coffee jar attack by leaving the door to his home open thereby aiding the escape of the perpetrators.

Subsequent to his arrest Tony was subjected to six days of interrogation by RUC officers in Castlereagh. His interrogation included six sessions per day of mental and physical abuse. Tony suffers from asthma and he, along with the other youths, was not examined by a doctor before being interrogated. During interrogation Tony was savagely slapped on the back of the head and on his throat. This resulted in severe headaches, nose-bleeds and swollen throat glands. Tony did not see a doctor until his sixth and final day of his interrogation. On the fifth day of his interrogation Tony succumbed to pressure from RUC officers and signed a forced written confession implicating him in the coffee jar attack. He was subsequently charged with attempted murder. After nine months on remand Tony still suffers from severe headaches, nose-bleeds and depression. Tony's asthma symptoms worsened during the interrogation and although denied access to a doctor he was supplied with two inhalers a day. Since his incarceration in Crumlin Road prison his asthma has dramatically worsened. Tony Garland has not been and is not a member of any paramilitary organisation and is innocent of all charges against him.

Michael Beck (18) and Hugh McLaughlin (18) were arrested by the RUC on August 6th, four days after the Ballymurphy coffee jar attack. Immediately following the coffee jar attack, both Michael and Hugh were sitting on a fence in Ballymurphy watching the RUC arrest their friend Tony Garland from his home. Both were approached by RUC officers who asked for their names and addresses. They were told to go home by the detectives. Four days later they were both arrested at their homes by uniformed RUC officers for their alleged involvement in the attack. Both were taken to Castlereagh Detention Centre.

Michael Beck is the second eldest of six children and was the only employed person in his household. Hugh McLaughlin, also one of six children was the only employed person in his family and contributed his earnings to the running of the household. Following his arrest Michael Beck was interrogated for four days during which he suffered "karate chop" slaps to the back of his head. This resulted in severe headaches. He was

told he could "say goodbye to the next fifteen years of his life," by RUC detectives. He was accused of membership of Republican Youth and if he didn't confess to the charges against him that his "Ma and Granny would be done as well." During the interrogations Michael was repeatedly grabbed by the testicles and accused of allowing his home to be used as a Republican "safe house." He was also threatened with electrocution. RUC detectives threatened to place his feet in a basin of water and then put in live electric wires. He was told by the detectives that if he "squealed" on his mates he would receive a lighter sentence. Michael was charged with attempted murder. He is not and never has been a member of any paramilitary organisation and is innocent of all charges against him.

Hugh McLaughlin, who was with Michael Beck at the time of the August 2nd attack was arrested the same day. Despite his protests to see a solicitor, he did not obtain legal counsel until 48 hours after his arrest.

During his interrogation Hugh received various blows to his head, armpits and knees. He was grabbed by the testicles and forced to stand for long periods. In one instance Hugh was grabbed from behind by a detective who placed his hands over Hugh's mouth and nose and threatened to smother him. He was told by detectives that his father would be "set up" as they would "plant some stuff in his house." He was told by a "top cop" that if he became an informer he would be paid sums of money (£5,000 to £10,000). He was shown a wallet, told that it contained £200, and told if he agreed to become an informer he "would be given a new life abroad." After three days of interrogation a vague written confession was prepared by the RUC and under extreme duress Hugh was forced to sign it. Hugh, despite his young age, refused all offers of a "deal" from the RUC. He was charged on four counts including IRA membership and attempted murder. (The original four charges have since increased to forty, for which there exists absolutely no supporting evidence.) After nine months on remand in Crumlin Road jail Hugh suffers from extreme depression and nerves. He has lost weight and has constant pain in his arms. Hugh



Damien Austin aged 17 from Beechmount, was one of the first of the youths arrested and tortured under the RUC's latest campaign. Since then, Damien has become the subject of the first Urgent Action Order to be issued by Amnesty International in northern Ireland, which indicates that they believe that death threats made against Damien by the RUC might be carried out.

McLaughlin has never been involved in any Republican activities and is innocent of all charges against him.

James Morgan (19) is one of six children and like the other three youths was employed in a government sponsored Youth Training Programme (YTP). James was charged with IRA membership, possession and attempted murder regarding an IRA coffee jar attack on Queen Street Barracks, Belfast which took place on June 25th 1991. He was charged with being a "lookout" during the attack. He was arrested by detectives from his St James home on June 27th. The two persons involved in the attack were arrested at the scene. James had never been arrested before and was driven through the "village", a strictly protestant area of Belfast to Castlereagh Detention Centre. These events intimidated James who feared for his life. He was interrogated by detectives for four days during which he suffered brutal slaps to the head. He was told that his mother had suffered a heart attack after his arrest and had died. He was told someone had informed on him and they had all the evidence they needed to put him away. He was told that if he signed a prepared statement he would get a lighter sentence. He was asked to inform on arms dumps and local people. He eventually succumbed to RUC pressure and signed a written statement. Before his arrest James was fine and did not suffer from any physical ailments. During his eleven months in custody he has been hospitalised twice. In one instance he was left locked in his cell in his own excrement and urine while he was ill. He was taken to hospital suffering from hallucinations and high fever. James has been diagnosed as having a possible pancreas disorder believed to have been brought on by the severe beatings received from detectives at Castlereagh. James Morgan was charged with IRA membership and attempted murder. James has never been involved with the Republican movement and is innocent of the charges against him.

The cases against the other eight youths is much the same. Many more West Belfast youths have been arrested and taken to Castlereagh but have managed to endure the brutality and pressure from the RUC. The RUC and British Army foot patrols in West Belfast are gloating over the interned youth and are bragging that there will be more arrests. As one person I was talking to put it "Every time there is an attack in our areas they are going to arrest our sons as punishment." This cannot be allowed to happen but while so-called Nationalist newspapers like the Irish News to the British line on censorship and refuse to print any articles or letters sent by VOICE OF THE INNOCENT (a community group not a political one) then the Brits and RUC will continue this oppressive attack on our youth.

All right thinking people everywhere must ensure that the internment of our young people on trumped up charges and forced confessions is not swept under the carpet. We must all back the demands of VOICE OF THE INNOCENT. We must all ensure an end to false arrest, brutality and torture of our youth. "Our young people should not have to live in fear of assault, arbitrary arrest, detention, torture and imprisonment," (Kevin Nolan VOICE OF THE INNOCENT Aug 1991.)

Anyone looking for further information on VOICE OF THE INNOCENT or on the interned youth should phone BELFAST 0232 232234.

M.COLLINS, BELFAST.



Having kept their heads down during the controversy over the child rape victim, the church has now gone on the offensive

BEATING THE BIGOTS

The latest political hot potato to fall into the Irish governments lap is the Abortion/Bright to choose fiasco. At a time when the Fianna Fail government, most of the opposition and the usual big business/big farming interests are threatening, lying, bribing people into voting yes to Maastricht this issue keeps rebounding in the governments' face.

The case of the fourteen year old rape victim being served with an injunction preventing her from travelling to England to have an abortion really brought home to people the anti-woman nature of the 1983 eighth amendment. This was supposed to protect the unborn 'child' from the 'evil of abortion', instead was being used to terrorise a child rape victim and was considered by most people to be obscene. This emotive issue brought over 10,000 people onto the streets of Dublin to protest at the injunction. The depth of feeling forced the government to back down and the supreme court ruled that because the girl was suicidal the foetus was a threat to her life and therefore she had the right to an abortion. This judgement recognised a woman's right to life over that of a foetus and also allowed for abortions to be carried out in limited circumstances. The Catholic fundamentalists, the church and its lobbyists were outraged. Having kept their heads down during the emotive time of the fourteen year old rape victim they went on the offensive. The church called for another referendum to, yet again, enshrine the right of life of the foetus over that of the woman. The well organised Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child network sprung back into action with mass lobbying of politicians and their usual subtle manipulation of its sympathetic media outlets. A new phenomenon in the fundamentalist ranks is a militant anti-abortion group, Youth Defence, who use the shock trooper tactics of the American anti-abortionists, as opposed to SPUC's secretive manipulations. Youth defence have organised confrontational pickets, sent threatening letters to TD's suspected of being pro-choice, sent postcards of supposedly aborted foetus's to TD's and even physically attacked pro-choice meetings and pickets. Most of their propaganda is from America and verges on anti-semitic. As the fundamentalists realise that they do not have the support that they previously did these militants have risen to the fore.

The repeal of the eighth amendment campaign (REAC) is the main organisation on the pro-choice side. Unfortunately it is controlled by a group of middle-class feminists and career feminists who are afraid to rock the boat and correspondingly the campaign has lacked fire. The degree of conservatism of these feminists was demonstrated when they tried to drop the demand for repeal of the eighth amendment because it was too radical!!! They are going down the same road that led to defeat in 1983 by hiding their pro-choice views. They don't seem to realise that the majority of ordinary people don't see abortion as a cut and dry issue of murder. A recent opinion poll in the Irish Times claimed 80% of people asked supported abortion in restricted circumstances and that 16% supported abortion on demand while 19% supported the complete banning of abortion. A 3% difference between both ends of the scale leaves a lot of ground to be fought for by both sides and actually provides a serious opportunity for the pro-choice side to make significant gains.

A much more radical pro-choice group, 'Dublin Abortion Information Campaign' (DAIC), also exists. It is mostly made up of individuals and a few of the far left groups including Red Action. Red Action supports free abortion on demand but are realistic enough to realise that this will not be won overnight and must be fought for step by step. DAIC has been very active with pickets, leafletting, public meetings and were the organisers of the march which brought over 10,000 onto the streets in support of the fourteen year old rape victim. DAIC has a policy of confronting the fundamentalists on any of the major anti-abortion demonstrations and has been successful in the fact that after the last anti-abortion demonstration, which resulted in scuffles between both sides. The attacks on pro-choice meetings and pickets stopped. DAIC has decided to suspend its individual activities for the duration of the anti-Maastricht campaign and join with REAC to try to make it more active and radical.

At the end of the day it is estimated that up to 100,000 Irish women have travelled abroad to have abortions. Since the 1983 amendment was passed and the fundamentalists just do not have a solution to this problem. We cannot continue to export our problems. The bigots can be beaten this time.

At the end of the day it is estimated that up to 100,000 Irish women have travelled abroad to have abortions. Since the 1983 amendment was passed and the fundamentalists just do not have a solution to this problem. We cannot continue to export our problems. The bigots can be beaten this time.

AFA FLYING COLUMN

One of the main areas the BNP have targeted outside the East End of London has been the small Lancashire town of Rochdale. They see the town as a stepping-stone into the North-West as a whole, and Manchester in particular, where they have not been able to mobilise for a decade.

The importance they have attached to Rochdale is evident in the huge amount of resources poured into the town by the BNP during the general and local elections. During the course of the election campaigns, they tried to organise a national rally in the town on at least four occasions.

Their candidate in the general election was Ken Henderson, a former Tory and squaddie who has boasted that "the BNP are going to kick some black ass in Rochdale". Despite this boast, it has been the BNP who have had their 'asses kicked'.

Their first attempt to hold a rally in the town ended in ignominious failure when AFA occupied their meeting place and chased them off the streets (see RA no. 62). Their second attempt fared no better. On this occasion they had to be given a police escort out of town after they were ambushed by anti-fascists (Manchester organiser Alan Payne is still complaining about his headaches).

By now the BNP were finding it difficult to book any sort of venue at all in Rochdale. Word had obviously spread that any sort of association with fascists spelt trouble. This was hardly surprising given the amount of damage that had already been done to several pubs in the area during the recent clashes.

A third attempt to rally by the BNP a couple of weeks later was cancelled at the last moment when a suitable venue could not be found. AFA still mobilised anyway. We had no sooner started to leaflet one

of the areas they were standing in, when word reached us that the fascists had been spotted in a pub on the other side of town. A flying column of anti-fascists was dispatched to the pub in which the BNP members had hidden themselves. No sooner had the anti-fascists arrived than the pub doors were locked and bolted. At this moment the BNP's minibus was spotted at the rear of the pub. It was set on with glee, and hundreds of pounds worth of damage was done to the van while the master-race covered inside the pub. One anti-fascist who returned incognito to the pub in the evening was told that the landlord, fearing for the safety of his pub had considered throwing the fascists out into the baying mob, until two of the boneheads burst into tears, and another disgraced himself in a somewhat smellier manner. Adolf would have been proud of them!



Rochdale BNP activist

rally outside Rochdale Town Hall (which coincidentally is almost exactly opposite the police station). One of the few people who actually witnessed this rally told AFA that there were about 60-70 assorted fascists present, of which a coach-load had journeyed from London.

Overall AFA can regard the campaign so far as being reasonably successful. We have rocked the BNP back on their heels in Rochdale, and have created a space for ourselves in which we can start to build an effective local campaign in the town. That such a campaign needs to be built is undeniable. For while the BNP were dealt several body blows, they still managed to collect 620 votes in the general election. This indicates that there is a well of potential support for the BNP in Rochdale. Any campaign that can even hope to prevent the BNP from tapping into this well of support must be based in Rochdale, or at least contain significant numbers of local people. The only pre-condition that AFA attaches to building or supporting such a campaign is that it is built to be effective. What we will not support is more of the passive type of Anti-Fascism displayed by the likes of the ANL, etc. It is worthwhile to note, that while AFA was at the sharp end of every confrontation with the BNP in Rochdale, our numbers remained constant, and even increased a little. The ANL and others, who in the main concentrated on

handing out leaflets in the city centre found their numbers falling away dramatically. AFA also handed out thousands of leaflets in town, but concentrated our efforts in areas where the BNP could expect to draw most of their support from, the white working class estates. The lesson that needs to be learned from this is that people don't mind doing the more mundane, boring type of work if they can see that it is worthwhile. The two estates we concentrated on were the two areas where the BNP stood candidates in the local elections. They did poorly in both areas.

One curious side effect of the events in Rochdale, which might be used to measure the effectiveness of the campaign so far has been the disbandment of the Manchester branch of the BNP amidst allegations that certain individuals were passing information to anti-fascists. Clearly if the BNP had hoped to use Rochdale as a springboard into Manchester, then they have failed miserably. This retreat from the country's third largest city comes in the face of increasing levels of racist attacks, and even murders in the city. Red Action see AFA's role in the area as two-fold. The first is to help build an effective Rochdale based anti-fascist organisation that will be capable of challenging the BNP on all levels (and two recent incidents of the BNP being attacked in their own pub by a number of local people indicate that there is potential support for this) and secondly to start developing a strategy to combat the growing levels of racist attacks in Manchester itself. The two tasks are separate, though not unconnected, for if we fail in one, then the other becomes more difficult. We have advanced a long way down the road since we first mobilised for Rochdale, it will require an even greater amount of determination and commitment to finish the job. It will require those same qualities in abundance if we are to even start making inroads into the more commonplace everyday racism that infests many parts of Manchester. We are spurred on by the fact that if we don't, then sooner or later the fascists will.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF MILITANT

CONTD FROM FRONT PAGE
juggle apologetically so that their fierce denunciation of Republicanism makes them acceptable to loyalism - but only by default. So the prospect of Militant being outflanked on this, and other related issues by the BNP, is always present.

So while in England ARA denounces AFA as 'racist' Militant adapt the smear for Scottish consumption and accuse AFA of being "sectarian". Rather than draw the obvious conclusion from the fact that AFA has attracted the political support of some Republicans in response to the fascist/loyalist axis, but have failed to attract similar political support from the loyalist camp, Militant conclude, it must be because AFA is "sectarian."

In rejecting the possibility of an anti-fascist/republican axis as unethical, it counters the reality of the BNP/loyalist axis by attempting to establish a Militant/loyalist one! During the general election the policy was taken to its logical conclusion. Militant refused point blank to share a platform with AFA because it is "sectarian."

At the public meeting in question called by Militant, in response to the BNP standing a candidate in the staunchly loyalist constituency of Lark Hall, a local representative of the ultra reactionary Orange Order was warmly applauded for his offer of solidarity. The motive of the Orange Order,

would have been as "principled" as Militant; the fear of being out-flanked by the 'competition', the fear of being out-flanked by the BNP. Some eighteen months earlier, Militant, visibly rattled by a relatively successful recruitment drive by the BNP in the Militant stronghold of Pollock, they decided to take action.

As an alternative to confronting the fascists physically and so risk polarising the young loyalists, they decided to 'expose' them by debating with them! (Recognising the offer as a sign of weakness the BNP, sniggered at the proposal).

Militant's official policy is, that fascism is BAD but loyalism is O.K. in the hope that loyalists in turn will conclude that the BNP is BAD and Militant is GOOD! The moral of the story is this; any group that out of opportunism panders to reaction, who as matter of policy, bends the knee to Loyalism, should never be trusted, for such duplicity is both inherent and progressive, and given the right set of circumstances, it is not completely outrageous to suggest (that on a live and let live ticket), it might also doff its cap to fascism. While today Militant refuse to share a platform with AFA, on this occasion at least they went out of their way to offer one to the BNP. Militant's failure to implement a no-platform policy with AFA, has meant that they now implement a no-platform policy against AFA!

A curious position you will agree, for an organisation that calls itself 'Revolutionary Socialist' but there is a logic behind it. Whereas AFA, regards the BNP as the irreconcilable enemy, and looks to all Socialists, Republicans, Anarchists as potential allies, Militant looks on the BNP as merely the 'competition'. From that point of view, moderate loyalism in the shape of the Orange Order, is regarded as the ideal upstanding ally needed to face down the mutual threat, that both face from extremism.

Due to the irreconcilability of Republicanism and loyalism any formal alliance with AFA, would make the loyalist Militant/axis untenable, and from the way Militant see things, this development would only play into the hands of the BNP. Consequently, while the radicalism of the BNP threatens the Militant/loyalist constituency, AFA integrity threatens the coalition. And if the Militant/Loyalist coalition is the bulwark against extremism, and if AFA threatens the bulwark then AFA must be the enemy!



Councillor Tommy 'I'll name names' Sheridan was instrumental in the attempt by Militant to organise a public meeting WITH the BNP

DESPERADOS OUT GUNNED CONTD FROM FRONT PAGE

corner while the others, slower in their reactions, attempted to push their way through the locked doors of the court to the accompaniment of kicks and shoves. The single policeman on duty did a disappearing act of his own. The beleaguered and panic stricken fascists beat a retreat to 'Barney's Cafe' doing their pathetic best to appear totally unaware that that they were being kicked and subjected to vile abuse all the way! Cornered in the cafe, a caricature fascist in the full regalia of camouflage trousers, heavy boots, black flight jacket and shiny bonce with a AWB emblem tastefully tattooed on it, stood absolutely transfixed listening to a lecture on his future prospects, except for a cartoon-style gulp as the message sank in. The constabulary having recovered their poise by this time, the two subdued boneheads were taken out the back and stuffed in the back of a police car to complete their journey to court. Hardly had the assembled anti-fascists regrouped on the court steps than the other fascist defendants arrived in a taxi. Neil Parish had evidently thought long and hard about his previous experience and turned up in a swashbuckling handkerchief tied round his podgy face in the manner of a Wild West desperado. Laugh, we nearly cried! Fortunately enough anti-fascists recovered in time to give the defendants a good kicking as they went on the court steps.

Contact was made with the asian workers, who were cheered into court and who afterwards effusively thanked the members of the picket for their support. This contact has been maintained. An occasion that could potentially have been intimidating for the victims was turned round into a very trying experience for the racist thugs. The intimidators were intimidated. A court official told us at the lunch break that, "the skinheads will not be coming out for dinner." Both groups knew what would have been on the menu!

It emerged during the hearing that the attack, which took place last November, was a particularly nasty example of its kind and amply reflected the impression generated by the defendants who, lined up in the dock, looked like a Victorian freak show. The attack took place in Buntingford, a small village in the north of Hertfordshire. The fascists claim to have been looking for the MI on their way back from a Blood and Honour gig. Whoever designed the master race evidently forgot to programme them with navigational skills.

The asian workers who were the victims of the attack, had just left the Viceroy of India restaurant when the fascist's van drew up alongside them and a number of individuals jumped out brandishing baseball bats and bottles. Outnum-

and bewildered, the restaurant workers were battered as they attempted, to escape. The fascists then drove off, only to return for seconds some minutes later when their victims had regrouped. The BNP vehicle then mounted the pavement in an attempt to crush them and having missed, returned to the road. Again a number of individuals jumped out and proceeded to hand out a second battering. The manager of the restaurant who had driven up and tried to stop the attack, was cornered by several fascists in the garden of a nearby house and knocked unconscious. When he came to, he found himself being dragged by the ankles towards the fascists' vehicle and heard them saying, "He'll do, we'll take him" and, "Put the bastard in the van."

Other workers were savagely assaulted for a second time. One testified to be held by one of the fascists with one hand while being battered with the other. He described his attacker as being short and chubby with a round, babyish face and cropped hair. Neil Parish says he was asleep in the van all the time! Only the intervention of local residents roused by the commotion, caused the fascists to withdraw and drive off. One of the residents took the registration, and the van with its ugly crew inside were picked up in the nearby town of Hitchin - no doubt still heading for the MI.

Evidently the fascists are not conversant with the latest counter interrogation techniques, and it is with great pleasure that we can report that several of the fascists have dropped themselves right in the shit in their statements to the police. It appears to be the case that one of the prosecution witnesses was inside the van - if true, this could lead to a very interesting situation. They have all been charged with violent disorder and the driver - at the insistence of the magistrate - with reckless driving. Machetes and CS gas were discovered in the van. Just why the police saw fit to drop just the single charge on this bunch of racist freaks can only be described as a mystery shrouded by the majesty of the law. Nonetheless, the sound of chickens coming home to roost is definitely in the air.

Herts AFA is pledged to developing a campaign around this appalling case centring on the appearance of the fascists at St Albans Crown Court. The case is expected to last about two weeks. Naturally there will be a picket of the court on the opening day. All local anti-fascists are urged in the strongest terms to get involved and demonstrate conclusively that attacks of this kind are not going to be tolerated. Interested parties should contact Herts AFA PO BOX 245 ST. ALBANS.

R.A. merchandise

WRITE TO THE B.M. BOX

For the IRA Against the Common Enemy

Of the Class For the Class By the Class

STICKERS £4.00 PER 250

RED ACTION BEATING THE FASCISTS

Back Issues Available!

No.'s available : 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62. PRICE 10p EACH; FOR A SINGLE ISSUE SEND S.A.E. FOR 5-20 COPIES PLEASE ENCLOSE 50p P&P.

CONTACT RED ACTION IN YOUR AREA...

DUBLIN PO BOX 3355 DUBLIN 7 EIRE	MANCHESTER PO BOX 83 SOUTH WEST DO M15 5NJ	GLASGOW PO BOX 266 GLASGOW G1 5RX	LONDON BM BOX 37 LONDON WC1N 3XX
---	---	--	---

(ALSO...CONTACT BM BOX no. FOR R.A. LIVERPOOL.)