

RED ACTION

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A FACE IN THE CROWD

EDITORIAL

Allowing for the diverse array of 'experts' given air time after the recent London bombings it is amazing how many were on message. All including *Searchlight* and the ANL were agreed that the bombs, were 'acts of desperation'. A natural consequence of the frustration among the Far-Right from being in a continuous decline since the 1970's. A spin on events summed up by soundbite from the Prime Minister who declared racists to be the "real outcasts".

Having established the context, the arrest of a suspect led to high fives all round. Particularly, as the police were quick to point out, he was not 'connected to any group'. And if indeed he was not connected, then the bombings were not deemed politically motivated. If the perpetrator was a lone homicidal maniac, then a fundamental review of anti-racist strategies, as proposed by AFA to the steering group of the National Civil Rights Movement recently, was unnecessary. No need to fix something that wasn't broken. Such was the evident relief, that any who departed from this consensus, became instant outcasts themselves. Including Cardinal Hume, who a day prior to the arrest had the temerity to suggest the bombings reflected some 'underlying sickness in society'. A London *Evening Standard* editorial attacked him for being "hysterical" and "foolish" simply on grounds of the bombings now being known to be the work of a lone wolf, rather than a wolf pack. A pack

as a product of society might have required some soul-searching, but a nutter was an aberration, for which nobody in an otherwise tolerant multi-cultural society need be held to account. An entirely rational response if true. Except that very same day Cabinet Minister Nick Raynsford announced plans to raise the threshold needed to secure a seat in the London Assembly elections next May, specifically, in order to prevent the Far-Right "gaining a foothold on the democratic ladder."

Then less than a week later, on May 10, a tenfold increase in race crimes in London in the last year, from 250 to over 2,000, caused Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Grieve to remark: "There is something poisonous in London which is now bubbling to the surface." On May 26 a *Daily Mirror* exclusive putting the bomber and Tyndall together only eighteen months earlier was entirely ignored by the same press, which had taken such succour from the 'lone wolf' theory. Reminiscent of the town council in the film *Jaws*, now that the scare was over, the media including the *Evening Standard* (who take a keen interest in such matters) didn't want to know.

Meanwhile on *Searchlight* instigation, the *Mirror* announced that that of the 81 candidates put up by the BNP for the

Euro elections, 8 had given false addresses. This led 50 MP's from all parties to demand a investigation into electoral fraud and a media debate on the probity of banning electoral broadcasts by parties 'like' the BNP.

During one such discussion a journalist from the *Mirror* suggested that only those whom a "tolerant society found acceptable" should be allowed to publicly express their views. Of course these days groups 'like' the BNP, no longer means simply parties of the Far-Right but anyone deemed extremist by 'reasonable people'. (A point underlined by the police who zeroed in on AFA leafletters at a May Day Rally, the day after the Soho bombing, demanding names and addresses for "intelligence purposes".) The catch-all term 'extremist' now includes tenants fighting against council privatisation, those opposed to cabinet style local government, or indeed anyone involved in politics outside of the mainstream parties. Local initiatives by the IWCA in the Midlands are instantly branded "NF" by Labour, or 'exposed' to non-plussed working class communities as "subversive" by Special Branch.

For over quarter of century British rule in the North of Ireland has facilitated the promotion of 'reasonable people' to positions of quasi-power, and has been facilitated in turn by the pretence that such men and women represented both their communities and a viable future. Naturally the media encouraged this trend, by promoting the views of the right sort

of people who sat on quangos and discussion panels. The 'soft unionist' views of the Alliance Party were matched by the 'soft nationalist views' of the SDLP. In short the two governments wanted people they thought might think like them.

It was a dictatorship of the centre that never quite convinced working class communities in the same way. The demonisation of Irish republicans in particular has rebounded so spectacularly, that Sinn Fein leaders like Adams and McGuinness are regarded by working class kids on both sides of the border as "film stars" rather than politicians. Proving that legislation can delay but never prevent political ideas, if genuinely representative, taking root.

The current strategy of demonisation promoted by *Searchlight*, the ANL and sections of the media will ultimately not only fail, but risks glamourising fascism in the process for the same reason: they insist on addressing a symptom rather than a cause. In that the policy of 'race first' of which they approve, ie. the constant racialisation of every issue from policing, to education, to football, invites everybody to identify with their own tribe only. A conscious promotion of division responsible for a balkanisation that allows the 'centre' a political rule untroubled by either radical or sustained opposition.

Moreover in the wider political process, the government makes it perfectly clear in its promotion of policies at a national and local level that it is not the 'racists' who are outcast but the working class as a whole. This is not likely to change even if Labour was so minded. Because unless it continues to bribe and flatter middle class sensibilities, old class loyalties will reassert themselves and Labour will lose a host of south-land seats again.

Meanwhile the combination of racialising every social issue, at the same time as treating the working class as just another minority, and an abandoned one at that, risks driving those desperate for change toward the Far-Right almost forcibly. A further round of restrictive legislation in order to avoid (in reality put off) the crisis of the vast reactionary reservoir the 'reasonable people' have created, being reflected electorally is then called for. That the demonisation of the Far-Right results in the camouflaged criminalisation of working class activists is, they would claim, evidence of even-handedness. Even-handed maybe, but anti-fascism it ain't. Fascism can be fought only by extending the class struggle, by extending democracy, not shelving it. The centre is still holding, but you sense, only just.

A FACE IN THE CROWD - front cover

Circle Top: Adolf Hitler, declaration of the Great War, 1914.

Circle Bottom: Nail bomb suspect, Brixton market, 1999.

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INTERNAL AFFAIRS AT THE COAL FACE

THE SON of the Home Secretary, the future son-in-law of the heir to the throne, the captain of the nation's rugby union side; it seems that just about everybody's doing it and those who aren't are all talking about it. Drugs that is. The establishment and tabloid media have been falling over themselves in the stampede to condemn those high-profile figures accused of dealing, in their usual hypocritical fashion without any serious attempt to truly analyse the 'evil of drug use' within society. To do that, of course, would, as on so many other issues, require them to examine the root cause of the 'problem,' opening up any number of cans of worms and is therefore something they are not prepared to even contemplate.

It is probably a timely coincidence then, that over the next two issues *Red Action* will be publishing a series of articles on the impact of drug use within working class communities. This is being undertaken with the aim of opening up debate on this important issue within the ranks of RA members and supporters. But it is not intended that this be merely an academic exercise. It will also form part of a discussion paper to be debated at this year's RA conference aimed at developing practical approaches to problems facing hard-pressed working class communities across Britain. Although we will only be embarking on the initial stages, it will signal, once again, RA's determination to break with custom and practice of the British Left.

Many on the Left, however, will tell you that this is either a distraction or quite simply just wrong. That the real battle remains 'the struggle for Left unity and the development of the revolutionary programme'. This reminds me of an occasion shortly before the last general election, when the SLP were canvassing a large council estate in Wythenshawe, just outside Manchester. According to the *Weekly Worker*, time and again canvassers were informed by local residents that their biggest concern was that of anti-social behaviour by local youths. The SLP response? Retire to a venue in central Manchester to tell a public meeting of fellow lefties, that the problem was down to the capitalist system and therefore, once it was replaced with socialism, the problem would be eradicated. This was reported favourably.

Obviously, the 'solution' to long term problems will only be possible with the conquest of political power. But as we work towards this goal we must also develop strategies that can provide, dare I say it, a 'thirdway' for communities stuck between a rock and a hard place; ie. forced to choose between the utopianism of the Left and the indifference of the State. While I am sure no one within RA is under the illusion that there are any simple answers to what are often extremely complex problems, sticking our heads in the sand is just not an option. We will need to debate these issues with a maturity and honesty that will only be possible if we are looking at what our own role might be developing and implementing alternative strategies on the ground.

The recent election results point to the still-growing alienation of the working class from the political establishment. To those even prepared to address, let alone fill, the vacuum, the reward will be substantial. If we are to ensure that it is to be filled by those from the Left spectrum rather than those from the ultra-Right, that work must begin now. And let's face it, for those of us at the coal face it is far from being abstract. While at a meeting of activists in the South West of England recently, I was struck by the stark admission that everybody in the room (whether family, friends or even themselves) had been affected at some point by drugs in a negative way. Motivation, if any were needed, to set our minds to the task.

Steve Potts



THE BIG ISSUE

When former Militant member and Labour MP Dave Nellist was elected a councillor in the local elections last year our editorial posed a question: "the last of the socialists?" At first glance Tommy Sheridan's election to the Scottish Assembly from Pollock in Glasgow might seem to disprove the thesis that socialism, ie. the collection of failed recipes through which the Left has identified for at least half a century, is dead. Perhaps working class rule can be achieved without a serious revision of theory, practice, strategy and tactics. Perhaps socialism's demise has been exaggerated. Perhaps all 'isms' are not 'wasisms'. Perhaps as one SWP commented: "There has never been a better time to be a socialist!" Hardly.

Despite the low turnout which should favour fringe parties, the SWP, 'the biggest party' on the Left who stood candidates in Scotland and Wales never came close. Or even made a fight of it. Their best result was under 3.5%. Against that Sheridan polled 5,611 and 21.51% in Pollock. However the Scottish Socialist Party vote across Glasgow was a mere 7.25% and the total vote nationally 1.99%. Yet that Scotland is different is proved by the 13,887 votes for Scargill's SLP in Scotland South where the SLP did not even manage to field a candidate! The SLP vote in this former mining area was a personal testimony to Scargill, in the same way the victory in Pollock was a personal vote for Sheridan. He would have won had he stood as an independent, because the work in Pollock has been put in. At the polling station it was all, "thanks for fixing that stuff with the house Tommy," and the like. Sheridan won because he deserved to. He did the work on the ground. It was not a vote for socialism much less Trotskyism and clenched fists. 'Immediate class interests' the core programme. Hard work the secret ingredient.

BIG ISSUE PREDICTION: The exceptions prove the rule.



Our friends in the North
AFA in the

North West have been linking up with bands on the hard core scene over the last few months, and the response of bands and punters have far surpassed what we had hoped for. Initial contact with some of the prominent bands on the scene prompted a three gig benefit tour in late May. In preparation other gigs were leafleted while AFA stalls promoted the tour. 150 attended a "highly politicised" AFA benefit in Manchester. Bradford, despite clashing with the European Cup Final, was also a success. The bands committed to doing the third gig, which had to be pulled due to venue problems are putting out a benefit CD for AFA instead. A second mini-tour is already planned to promote this CD.

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NOT WAVING...

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

"THE ELECTION results in Scotland show enormous disenchantment with Labour. But they also saw a breakthrough for the Left, and hugely encouraging signs of the potential to build a socialist alternative to Labour", Charlie Kimber. "These results show that the Left is back on the agenda and there are great opportunities ahead", so said Dave Sherry, election agent for the SWP in Glasgow Cathcart (both, *Socialist Worker* May 14). His comments were partly about Tommy Sheridan of the Scottish Socialist Party winning a seat in the Scottish Parliament, but also about the SWP's vote in the same election. This was surprising as Sherry's candidate, Roddy Slorach, had just come bottom of the poll with 920 votes (3.41%). Using Sheridan's vote as evidence of a swing to the Left is dubious anyway, given his high public profile, the long years of standing for seats in the same area and his recent conversion to Scottish Nationalism, it would have been a surprise if he hadn't been elected. The two comments are even stranger as Slorach got the highest vote polled out of the SWP's five candidates, all of whom brought up the rear in their respective constituencies.

In Wales, where the SWP stood on the United Socialist joint slate along with the Socialist Party and Cymru Goch, the results were exactly the same as in Scotland, around 2% or under.

So why does this pretty abject list of results lead to the SWP thinking the tide is turning in their favour. The answer is to be found in the same issue of SW: "Socialist Worker supporters report hundreds of copies of SW sold door to door during the campaign, dozens of recruits to the SWP and some new branches established".

However there is another, more serious, reason for them talking up the election results. Immediately after the General Election, Socialist Worker spoke of Blair's majority leading to a crisis of expectations amongst the working class and ever since have spoken of the "growing anger" leading to a new opposition to Blair. In *International Socialism* no.82, the SWP's 'theoretical' journal, Central Committee member Lindsey German declared that Labour was in crisis "in every major area of government policy" and that just "one major national strike or an all-out strike in one city would lead to a rapid crisis of Blairism and Labourism as society polarised along class lines". Heady stuff indeed. In an effort to find the elusive breakthrough, they point to every little spat within Labour of being the harbinger of revolt. "I can no longer defend the indefensible. There is no alternative for me but to stand up and be counted". These are the words of Mark Irvine, a leading full time Scottish official for public sector union UNISON. He resigned from the Labour Party last week"; runs a recent piece in SW.

Now this quote doesn't tell us anything apart from the fact one individual has realised Labour is no longer the party of the working class. Plenty of working class people have realised this already despite the SWP's auto-Labourism over the years, particularly in the Rhondda where Labour lost all 31 of their council seats. This doesn't mean much more than they've lost all faith in the main establishment parties. In protest, they voted Plaid Cymru.

In light of the above, it probably comes as no surprise then that the SWP have bottled out of standing in the Euro elections, giving the implausible reason that they don't want to split the Left vote because Scargill's SLP is standing. If all their rhetoric about the party booming and the working class champing at the bit were true, you'd think they'd relish giving a bunch of half-dead Tankies a pasting. But of course it isn't and they don't. While explaining away recent election results may have seemed easy enough, coming a poor second to the SLP (reduced to barely 200 members) might have proven a bit of a challenge even for the legendary grip of the SWP's central committee. **Colin O'Brien**

RA in Scotland

APRIL 3: Red Action sale at Celtic park. AFA Benefit with band *Recidivist* in Edinburgh. Literature sold, money raised. May 15: over 60 copies of the RA Bulletin sold at Celtic Park followed by a joint *Fighting Talk/RA* sale outside *Wolfe Tones* concert. More political literature sold at another gig later in the evening. May 22: well over 1,000 *Taf's* sold outside Scottish Cup Final. June 5: James Connolly Society March in Edinburgh. Attended by a 50 strong Campaign Against Sectarian Attacks/AFA delegation. A bizarre request by some march stewards that CASA placards be taken down in case they might prove provocative to police was politely rejected. March leafletted and large number of *FT's* sold. A small number of off-duty AFA members, socialising with friends, clashed with BNP/ICF (Rangers FC casuals) in Edinburgh city centre in the afternoon.



National Civil Rights Movement

LONDON AFA representatives attended the first steering group meeting of the recently launched National Civil Rights Movement held in London on May 16. A proposal that "in addition to a legal/monitoring approach to race attacks (now running at 2,000 a month in London alone) there was an obvious need for a political strategy and a working party should be set up to investigate this" - was rejected. Or more accurately given that three or four conversations spontaneously broke out as the AFA delegate addressed the meeting - ignored. In addition, it also now clear that the title 'Civil Rights Movement' is also misleading. For a majority of the steering committee ambitions stretch no farther than securing government funding for a monitoring type project on a National scale. Nonetheless a national conference is planned for early September when the AFA proposals will be vigorously re-submitted.

Annual General Meeting

WEST MIDLANDS AFA held its AGM in north Birmingham on May 9. The well attended meeting voted unanimously to support all IWCA initiatives as an integral part of an ongoing strategy opposed to attempts by the BNP in B'Ham and the Black Country to present itself as the radical alternative locally. A 17.3% BNP vote in Tipton, quadrupling that achieved by the nominal socialist candidate, shows militant anti-fascist concerns are well grounded. The regional AFA organiser told the meeting: "the entire position in which we find ourselves is the logical conclusion of all the years we spent dismantling the BNP's street operation. We must now see it through to its natural course".

Celtic Supporters

RED ACTION Celtic FC supporters in the west Mids have joined forces with other Celtic fans in the region to launch a *Tiocfaidh Ar La* supporters club. The club will serve to link up supporters of the fanzine on both a social and political level throughout the Midlands area. If interested in getting involved make contact via *Tal* or West Midlands RA (see page 11).

BACK ISSUES

CREDIT TO THE REPUBLICAN STRUGGLE

TO REDACTION, Once again it gives me great pleasure to thank the Red Action group for their participation in the International day of solidarity in Glasgow on the 22nd of August.

It has been noted by our organisation that Red Action are appearing at all parades and demonstrations up and down the country, even in the occupied six counties in Ireland, also Sheffield, Glasgow and Manchester to name but a few.

You are a credit to the Republican struggle.

Hope to see youse in the future.

Joseph O'Kane

P.R.O. Republican Bands Alliance

Scotland

Red Action, issue 35, October 1987

INTO THE GHETTO

For all the expressions of piety about the 'dignity of the Lawrences', history and recent developments in Europe show that the middle classes are not to be trusted. Which is why A. Shaw, in a reversal of accepted custom and practice, argues that the interests, aspirations and sensitivities of the 'ghetto dwellers' must now become anti-fascism's absolute priority.

Given the current climate, it is predictable that the removal of a universal right to trial by jury, that has existed since the Magna Carta, is debated as if it would effect less than 5 % of the entire population. For everyone is apparently agreed that not only is racism society's greatest evil, but as importantly is an unreasonable wickedness that only appears in badly educated people. So once racism, or indeed the badly educated, are obliterated, envy, crime, injustice, ignorance and inequality could be expected to go with it.

Once the scientific basis for racism is sufficiently blurred, so to speak, racism, it is generally believed, would automatically become redundant. And with everything else already being in its 'natural hierarchical order', life would be grand. Which is why "Everybody" according to Warren Beatty's character in *Bulworth* "has got to keep fucking each other until we are all the same colour." "Vigorous and widespread miscegenation" is indeed "the best answer" to racist arguments according to former *Independent on Sunday* editor Andrew Marr.



Andrew Marr, *Observer* columnist and former editor of the *Independent on Sunday*.

And under a headline "Poor? Stupid? Racist? Then don't listen to a pampered white liberal like me..." Marr acknowledges that it isn't sufficient simply to berate the "lower orders" (fashionable though it may be) in order to achieve the desired change. "These people are likely to be utterly unmoved by anything the elite liberal establishment has to say about Stephen Lawrence or racism. They don't listen. They don't care. The collective breast beating - I originally mistyped it 'beast beating', which is maybe better - from Tony Blair, Jack Straw, The *Guardian*, *Channel 4 News* and yes Sir Paul Condon and his well schooled spokesmen - will change not a single mind in the working

class white ghettos where the intense and violent expressions of racism come from." (*Observer* 28.2.99) Marr, like the majority of the liberal press, is in no doubt that racism comes from white working class ghettos. If that is its source, emasculate the working class and destroy racism is the subliminal message.

And so for all the piety about anti-racism, the 'dignity of the Lawrences', the public displays of self-flagellation by the middle classes etc: that anti-racism provides the perfect cover to get in a bit of 'beast beating' is clearly a major

attraction. As Marr acknowledges, the conflation of liberal anti-racism and old fashioned snobbery makes it all right to hate the poor. And moreover the poor know it. So Marr is only half right. Not just in Britain but all over Europe the relentless preaching is changing minds but - negatively.

Despite the mounting evidence of a rebounding propaganda no opportunity is wasted to drum home the message that 'anti-racism' is that vital distinguishing component separating the 'poor, stupid, self pitying and the badly educated' from their social superiors. A point not missed by self confessed racist and former *Sunday Telegraph* editor Peregrine Worsthorpe, who was startled to discover that in an otherwise perfectly reactionary world of the American upper classes the slightest hint of racial bigotry was now regarded as the ultimate social gaffe. Of course that wasn't always the case. Quite the reverse.

Only fifty years or so ago, precisely the same social circles in Germany, Britain, France, Spain, Austria and (as we have recently learned from the files of Ford and General Motors) the United States decided that Hitler was, on balance, a case of "the lesser evil". A lesser evil to the political threat coming from their respective ghettos that is. And it was as a young disgruntled lower middle class layabout, and temporary member of the "lower orders" himself, that a young Hitler, though he considered the work beneath him, was forced to seek employment on a building site. As he explains in *Mein Kampf*, it had a profound effect. "Some of the men went into the nearest public house," while "I drank my bottle of milk and ate my piece of bread on the side." And when they talked politics, "Everything was rejected: the nation as an invention of the "capitalistic" classes, how often I hear just this word! - the country as an instrument of the bourgeoisie for the exploitation of the workers; the authority of the law as a means of suppressing the proletariat; the school as an institution for bringing up slaves as well as

as Marr concedes the middle classes have sacrificed almost nothing to the pieties of multiculturalism, which he senses is the moral weakness of the liberal establishment

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In this first of a series of two articles, Charlie Dow looks at the impact of drug use on working class communities and looks at the development and impact of drugs policy through to the development of the drug users movement.

There has always been a strong relationship between substance use and working class communities. In the Victorian period working class people frequented the old gin halls and also took laudanum (a formula containing opium) to stave off the hunger pangs that were part and parcel of living in poverty. Working class substance use has always caused concerns for the establishment. It should not be forgotten that Bank Holidays were introduced during the industrial revolution to normalise the idea of regular working hours, as previously Mondays were widely seen as the day to recover from the weekend excesses.

The Victorian middle classes were horrified by this behaviour and the numbers of religious or university missions across the East End of London, and other inner city areas, bear testament to their desire to 'morally educate' the working class.

Interestingly, middle class drug use seemed to cause less fears and a quick look at Queen Victoria's pharmacy bills show how partial she was to cannabis tincture, cocaine and opium (for medical purposes only of course!). Also, the whole romantic movement of artists and writers were inspired by their use of many of the same substances. As ever, no surprise that there is one rule for the rich and another for the working class. Also we should remember that we live in a country that actually sent the gun boats into China to defend Britain's right to sell opium.

Today, substance use remains as ingrained in working class culture as it was a century ago and, in many ways, as frowned upon by the middle classes. However, there is a marked difference between these two eras. Substance use has now been artificially divided into two groups: the legal and acceptable (alcohol, tobacco and caffeine) and the illegal and prohibited (cannabis, heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, et al). It is unclear what informed this process of

division as it is inconceivable that alcohol and tobacco would have been selected as the substances least likely to cause health problems. Some believe, that the US chose to endorse substances linked to the dominant communities while prohibiting those linked to black communities. Since the late 1970s, there has been a rapid increase in illicit drug use. 50% of young people report having tried illegal drugs by the age of 16 (mostly cannabis and ecstasy). Despite all attempts to halt this upward trend, some commentators think that drug use will become increasingly normalised as more and more people try illicit drugs while a percentage go on to become regular users. Patterns of drug use vary. The vast majority of people who use drugs do so without major problems, despite that lack of information, variable quality and the absence of positive role models. A small number of people do, however, get into problems. Some drugs are more likely to cause problems than others. However, there are examples of people using all types of drugs who stay in control most of the time while conversely there are examples of people getting into problems with most types of drugs. Equally while the stakes may be higher with some methods of taking drugs, this is heavily affected by someone's social setting, and injectors have largely changed their behaviour in light of advice on HIV/AIDS.

Working class areas get caught in a Catch 22 situation. The condition of an area contributes to the level of drug taking, while the impact of drug taking runs the area down further

When looking at data on drug taking, one factor is absolutely clear. There is a strong relationship between problem drug use and class. This does not mean that more working class people use drugs. Drug use is spread relatively evenly across all social groups. So why the link with problem drug use and class? There are probably a number of factors:

* If you cannot afford your drugs, you are more likely to end up involved in crime and facing health problems. Prohibition massively inflates the price of street drugs which makes matters worse.

* Working provides a structure to your life, so using drugs and having nothing to do all day, can be a risky combination.

* Drugs, particularly crack and heroin, provide insulation against the limited opportunities and poor housing for those who live in run down areas.

* Inner city areas provide a stable market for drug dealers with sufficient demand to offset the risks of supply (although recent evidence shows all drugs spreading into even more scarcely populated regions).

* In areas with high degrees of visible drug use, young people are forced to make a choice about whether to accept the offer to use.

* As drug dealing becomes established, and has a public profile, kids see a way out of poverty, which in turn leads to greater availability.

Working class areas get caught in a Catch 22 situation. The condition of an area contributes to the level of drug taking, while the impact of drug taking runs the area down further. The State has made a huge investment in combating drug taking. Ironically, the money thrown into the War on Drugs could easily have ensured a free, clean and unlimited supply of drugs to every user across the world and thus limited both personal risk and the widespread social consequences of drug taking. Despite this fact, there is surprising unanimity among Governments about drugs policy. The public position is that illicit drugs are dangerous and only the sad, mad and bad take them. These people, and their suppliers, should be hunted down and punished or at the very least forced into treatment.

Against this backdrop, an alternative approach has been developed. The Harm Reduction movement came to prominence in the late 1980s with the advent of AIDS. In 1985, reports surfaced that 50% of injecting drug users in parts of Scotland were infected with HIV, the virus that can lead to Aids. If this pattern had been repeated across other parts of Scotland, England and Wales, the effects would have been devastating, leading to fears that injectors would provide a potent source of cross-over infection to the dominant population. These fears led the Thatcher Government to support a pragmatic harm reduction policy which put public health above moral objections. This led to the development of needle exchange and the expansion of methadone maintenance prescribing (offering dependent drug users a stable dose of a heroin substitute).

Through the 1980s and 90s, the harm reduction approach has lived in an uncomfortable relationship with a public order model, albeit one which placed an increased focus on getting the dealer rather than the user. However, some within the harm reduction movement have started to fear that while Governments were willing to fund harm reduction in the HIV era, the support for progressive interventions is ebbing away as this health crisis subsides. To support this view one only has to look to the epidemic of Hepatitis C (HCV) among injecting drug users. The 60 - 90% infection rates of HCV among injectors seem to have left most Governments unmoved. This has led one leading international drug user activist to comment that "there seems to be a direct correlation between our ability to secure funding and our likelihood to infect the dominant population". Unlike HIV, HCV is very infectious ensuring very quick transmission between injectors, but HCV is not sexually transmitted thus limiting cross-over transmission. Simply put, it seems that as long as epidemics of blood borne viruses can be contained among drug users then the Government seems unpersuaded of the need to fund public health campaigns. To demonstrate their total disregard for drug users, a recent consensus statement from European experts on HCV recommends the exclusion of active injectors from the only costly treatment (approximately 90% of the total HCV infected population are injectors). This effectively protects State funded health

services from the impact of their Government's decision not to meet their obligation to respond to this new public health crisis.

The desire of Government's to press on with the War on Drugs, despite the substantial weight of evidence against prohibition, has led some to question the underlying motivation to the War on Drugs. Drug users provide effective scapegoats who can be blamed for poor education, run down housing estates and an over-stretched NHS. Simultaneously, the War on Drugs justifies the need for the extension of CCTV schemes, more police and the removal of fundamental human rights such as the right to silence, the right to free assembly, and the right to privacy. Most importantly, anti-drug user propaganda brings division right to the heart of working class communities and, particularly with drug-testing, into many work places. New Labour, New Scapegoats! Conveniently, the very poverty of many working class communities ensures the spread of drug taking while at the same time providing someone to blame for the poverty.

One cannot talk about drug use without considering the role of the US Government. From a US perspective, drugs have replaced the 'red threat' in the post Cold War era. No longer is it the 'reds under the beds' but 'junkies destroying our communities'. Interestingly the War on Drugs justifies US interference in many of the same geographic regions as the Cold War. To many, the moral rage of the US Government is laughable given the recently published report into the Contra affair. The long-awaited declassified version of volume 2 of the report, was released on 8 October 1988, just one hour after the House of Representatives voted to conduct an impeachment inquiry into President Clinton. This has purposely and effectively killed comment on this revealing document. The report, which has been in the hands of the Intelligence Committees of both houses since the spring, is a virtual confession by the CIA that it engaged in a conspiracy to

hide drug trafficking and gun running throughout the battle against the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua. The report points an accusing finger at Oliver North, the National Security Council and, indirectly, at George Bush, who was then head of the CIA.

This confirms that the US have a pragmatic position all of their own. Rather than reducing harm, they want to maximise division. Either through direct intervention, or deliberate non-intervention, the US in particular, seem happy to allow the spread of problematic drug use within certain sections of the community. The close connection between the location of major crack use and the sites of the race riots of the 1980s, in both the US and Britain, is worthy of note.

So it is clear that the US is happily having its cake and eating it. Drumming up, and benefiting from, anti-drugs propaganda while at the same time willing to play for political advantage with the impact of the drugs trade. Prohibition has clearly placed the drugs trade firmly in the hands of organised crime

and driven out the more amateur enthusiasts such as Howard Marks. This was hardly difficult to predict as the US had already seen the devastating impact of their abandoned attempt to prohibit alcohol. Attempts at progressive policy change, such as the legal prescription of heroin to dependent users in Australia, is met with US threats of international sanctions. The US is not alone in this behaviour. Both Germany and France have put huge pressure on Holland to withdraw its progressive harm reduction approach and New Labour, with their American-style Drug Tsar, are increasingly beating the prohibitionist drum.

Even if readers of this article are untouched by the human rights case put by drug user activists, then the attempt of the drug users movement to reach out and form alliances with others affected by drug use is an interesting challenge. Drug use clearly has a major impact on working class communities which cannot be avoided by those who are committed to championing working class agendas. It is clear that the State has got its act well together on drug use. There is an opportunity for us to stand back from the demonisation of plants, powders and pills and to address the social consequences of drugs policy and the desire by the State to maximise the potential of divide and rule from scapegoating drug users. Drug use is not an easy issue to manage and it promotes strong feelings among those it has touched. However, it is an issue that the Left ducks at its peril.

In the next edition of RA, the second article in this series will consider the range of responses from the Left and put forward a progressive model of community organising around drug use in working class communities.

Community Resistance

N. LONDON Islington

'tenacious' campaigners

ISLINGTON branch of the Independent Working Class Association have just finished delivering the last of 15,000 copies of the latest edition of their newsletter, *Islington Independent*, to estates across the borough. This has been accompanied by the IWCA gaining press coverage on a range of issues, including the proposed closure and sale of a number of schools. An IWCA spokesperson told both the *Gazette* and *Express* that, "Parents, pupils and staff alike must resist any moves by the chairman of education, Rupert Perry - who like most of his Labour colleagues sends his kids out of the borough for their education - to sell off their schools. They must demand that their needs be placed above those of the property developers and receive the support their hard work deserves. After all these schools are not 'theirs' to sell anyway. They do not belong to the 'council' but to us, the people of the London Borough of Islington, who have paid for them many times over. We have to begin organising ourselves independently, in our own interests". This was followed by leading letters in both papers preempting Labour's plans to abolish the local neighbourhood forums and introduce cabinet style rule at the town hall; an IWCA representative pointed out that, "faced with increasing hostility from residents frustrated by an adher-

ence to Tory spending limits and unable to use the 'blame the government' alibi now that Tony Blair is in No 10 they want rid of them. If they get their way we'll be run by New Labour careerists, climbing the greasy pole, consulting with focus groups made up of businesses and middle class residents only. What we need is more democracy and accountability not less".

In the last edition of *RA* we reported on the campaign being waged by what the *Highbury & Islington Express*' editorial called the "tenacious" FACTS (Fight Against Council Tenancy Sell-offs) campaigners, to halt the privatisation of the borough's council housing. In a recent ballot in the Copenhagen area, the vote was lost, with 60% voting in favour 20% against and 20% not bothering. Given the balance of forces, the result was never really in doubt, with even the *Express* admitting that it amounted more to a vote against the Labour council than a resounding endorsement of the privatisation scheme. In a letter to the *Islington Gazette*, FACTS campaigners pointed out that, "Clearly the concept of a ballot based around a free and fair debate has been reduced to the level of farce. While tenants across Islington are being told that there is no money available for even the most basic repairs, 'Vote Yes' campaigners had access to a bottomless pot of money with absolutely nothing left to chance to ensure that tenants made the 'right choice'. Of more concern is that, even with this unbalance, officials still tried to ban 'Vote No' campaigners from the estate and moved the date of the ballot forward by three weeks". Far from being deterred by the result, FACTS members claimed to have learnt much from their first campaign and will be redoubling their efforts on the newly targeted estates.

In the next *Community Resistance*, we will be reporting on the launch of the newly-formed IWCA branch in Hackney, East London.

S. LONDON Southwark

'ethnic cleansing'

FACED with what one elderly resident called the "ethnic cleansing" of the traditional working class community in Southwark, to make way for the new London Assembly building and assorted, hotels, luxury apartments and restaurants; the IWCA have been leafletting estates south of the Thames, condemning the council's plans...

"In response to the forced removal of people from their homes in Kosovo, Blair is prepared to bomb Serbia into the Stone Age. Meanwhile, his government plots precisely the same thing here. True, the social cleansing of areas like Southwark, Newham and Islington is not being done at bayonet point. But the deliberate removal of tens of thousands of working class residents is planned, nonetheless. The middle classes have been constantly pampered by successive governments for over twenty years. Money previously allotted for the NHS, house building, pensions, etc, now goes to them in tax breaks instead. The middle classes are in triumphant mood. Some openly describe themselves as 'pioneers', who arrogantly regard formerly tight-knit working class communities, decimated and demoralised by Thatcher, as 'territory to be conquered'. This process of 'institutionalised discrimination', initiated by Thatcher, has already accelerated under Blair. 'We're all middle class now' Blair tells us, at a time when statistics show that the gap between those who his government 'gives to and who his government take from' is the highest since records began. Evidently, Labour strategists are clearly counting on the working class being too demoralised, too apathetic, or not to put too fine a point on it, too stupid to organise on its own. Individually, each of us can achieve nothing. Collectively, there is nothing we cannot do. So let's do it".

Now & Then

Now that the trial looms some basic questions remain and obvious theories abound: why was the authenticity of US intelligence's Tripoli-Berlin intercept not challenged by Washington and London, given the fact that a similar intercept had earlier been mistakenly used by Reagan to blame Libya for a bomb which exploded at [La Belle] a Berlin club on April 1986, and to justify the US bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi nine days later. Victor Ostrovsky, a former colonel with Israel's Mossad Secret Service and author of the best-seller *By Way of Deception* (the Mossad motto) will testify that it was Mossad commandos who set up the transmitter in Tripoli that generated a false signal about the "success" of the Berlin bomb. Ostrovsky will testify that the Lockerbie intercept so resembles the La Belle intercept as to have probably the same provenance. Ostrovsky believes that in both bombings Israel implicated Libya to shield Iran thereby encouraging Iran not persecute its small Jewish community. For the defence a key element will be: did Iran play any role at all in the crime that "avenged" Iran Air? Or did Mossad delude London, Washington, and the Security Council not to divert suspicion from Iran but from their own alleged "active measures" against the airliner?
Guardian Magazine, April 17 1999

Then bingo. Evidence is found of an explosion causing the crash, it's party time for Fleet St. The next stage in the sequence has of course already been written, and follows the familiar chain. Crash-bomb-US victims-Arab perpetrators.

Why the Arabs? Because that's just the way things are: after all if one starts pointing fingers then the ultimate fall guy is of course the man they all love to hate good old 'Mad Dog' Colonel Gaddafi. But really you have to ask yourself who has anything to gain from the initial blowing up of the jet. If it was some terrorist group then you'd think they'd claim it to let the US and rest of the Arab world know they did it.

Well if you think about it the only possible result of the bomb on the plane would be to generate the hostility of US toward the Arab World.

Now who in light of recent events, considering the recent diplomatic exchanges between the PLO and the US would benefit most from a fracturing of this new and delicate relationship? I just can't imagine can you?

Red Action, issue 49, February, 1989

slave drivers; religion as a means for doping the people destined for exploitation; morality as a sign of sheepish patience, and so forth. Nothing remained that was not dragged down into the dirt and the filth of the lower depths." It was the shock of this confrontation which first politicised, then persuaded the young Hitler to study "book after book, pamphlet after pamphlet" and to begin fighting back. "I argued till finally one day they applied the one means that wins the easiest victory over reason: terror and force. Some of the leaders of the other side gave me the choice of either leaving the job at once or being thrown from the scaffold."

Nowhere you notice, in this life changing experience is there any reference whatsoever to Jews. Not a mention. Even for arch anti-Semite Hitler, the Jewish question was an afterthought. An all too convenient and none too original scapegoat, brought centre stage to provide a rationalisation for capitalist iniquities, and to disguise his fawning admiration for the "capitalistic classes". For Hitler as for his fellow building workers class hatred, not race hatred, was the thing. It was contempt and fear of the lower orders rather than contempt and fear of the Jews that was his motivation. Consequently when Hitler took power the first into the camps were not minorities, intellectuals, journalists, teachers, civil servants, homosexuals or - Jews. It was instead, in their tens of thousands, Hitler's and capitalism's direct, immediate and indeed only serious political opponents. His original adversaries, the 'poor and badly educated' building labourers and their social equivalents. The "other side".

Such a reading of history would be inconceivable to someone like 'anti-racist campaigner' Lee Jasper who welcomed the launch of the National Civil Right Movement with the comment that the Lawrence inquiry "had thrown open the issue of race in this country. We're moving away from our usual obsession with class". (*Observer* 28.3.1999) Jasper is a member of Jack Straw's Home Affairs advisory committee. He is considered an expert on race. An anti-racist expert. An expert in highlighting issues pertaining to all things racial. Someone who sees all of society problems as racial. Someone for whom race is both the problem and the solution. Jasper is pro-black. A black nationalist. He only becomes anti-fascist by the accident of believing fascism, stripped down to the essentials, is between black and white, a war between races, rather than a war between classes. A war moreover between the European races and outsiders. A myth constructed by the liberal elite who present anti-fascism as an offshoot of middle class liberalism, rather than the rearguard of working class communism. Much like being 'coloured' in South Africa, being 'black' in Britain is a political, not biological classification. And fascism was and continues to be the clearest expression of the polarisation and often militarisation of the eternal struggle between classes, within Europe. Not a struggle between the West versus the rest. Marr, Jasper and indeed Bulworth may believe colour is central, but Hitler (something of an authority), begs to differ.

Ironically it is this false marrying of liberalism and anti-fascism which has come to be regarded by the middle classes as proof of their innate economic, social, intellectual moral and cultural superiority over the "lower orders". But as Marr concedes, the middle classes have no real investment in anti-racism, (much less anti-fascism) "have sacrificed almost

"one day they applied the one means that wins the easiest victory over reason: terror and force. Some of the leaders of the other side gave me the choice of either leaving the job at once or being thrown from the scaffold."



nothing to the pieties of multi-culturalism, other than smiling at the shopkeeper, inviting a black colleague for a drink, or being pleased when your child knows as much about Diwali as Easter." This he senses is "the moral weakness of the liberal establishment. We condemn the police for their awfulness, their racism, their incompetence, their, their... their... working classness perhaps? But how many *Observer* readers would dream for a moment of encouraging their children to join the police? Oh no, not us. How many middle class liberals send their kids to inner city London comprehensives (All right a few. But not me, that's for sure)." And while on the subject, how many middle class liberals would serve the cause of multi-culturalism they profess to be so proud of, by insisting their off-spring engage in a bit of 'vigorous miscegenation?' (No need to answer that.) But where the middle classes have made a shrewd investment is in ensuring the rewriting of history to make it conform with a contemporary view of themselves. And as importantly, of the inhabitants of the ghettos.

So for instance, if as is accepted the Empire 'was won on the playing fields of Eton', Republican forces in the Civil War in Spain it is reported just as routinely, were generously furnished by the playing fields of Oxford and Cambridge. In a recent article (*London Evening Standard* 27.4.99) the conflict in Kosovo is "compared to the Spanish Civil War during which" it is casually mentioned in passing you understand, that "many Oxford undergraduates abandoned their studies to join the fight against the fascist forces of Franco." (Many? How many? More than volunteered from Cricklewood bus garage?) A view vigorously rebutted by International Brigade veteran Bob Doyle in an interview with *Red Action* in 1988 when he explained that "undergraduates and the like" never made up more than "a handful" but attracted "great prominence" by an "ability to write about it".

It is of course the ability to write about it, and the retrospective capturing of the moral high ground, that entitles the liberal middle classes to lecture the "lower orders" on racism today. But more insidiously it is also the moral platform from which to reshape the 'counter terror and force' of real anti-fascism that so impressed Adolf into their liberal opposites - morality and it's all too frequent companion - capitulation. Robert Skidelsky in his 1975 biography of Mosley explains how, in the 1930's when Mosley's Blackshirts, even in the East End, were more often than not at the wrong end of the violence, and while "the communists organised just as thoroughly, with as much military precision as did the fascists... their use of force was largely concealed, a darkness partly induced by such left-wing bodies as the National Council for Civil Liberties". More

recently in the BBC's coverage of the Battle of Waterloo, the footage selected focused on the only incident in the entire day when the Far-Right were very temporarily, (and entirely accidentally) dishing it out. On one level, like their anti-fascist predecessors in the NCCL, the BBC cannot countenance any proper course of action that is neither nice nor legal. On the contrary, they recognise that for full middle class acceptance, anti-fascism must constantly be portrayed as legal, pacifistic and polite. As a rule the working classes tend not to get beaten up by the middle classes. So by concealing the violence the class nature of the perpetrators is also concealed. So more than simply wanting to avoid 'anti-fascism getting a bad name' the role reversal is necessary to comply with the general propaganda

the middle classes in
Germany France
Austria and elsewhere
are proving about as
staunch as they were
in the Weimar
Republic



Euro-nationalism illustrated: French fascist leader, Bruno Megret, drives off leaving 'the Neanderthals and knuckle-scrappers' very firmly in the background.

equation, fascism = working class - pacifism = middle class: violence = fascism - middle class = anti-fascism.

This constant revisionism goes much further than merely concealing the reality of anti-fascist working class violence. In 1994 Chris Bambery, an SWP Central Committee member, unashamedly set out to reduce the political failure of the entire Left in the Weimar Republic to the "militarist mentality, indiscipline, and bullying of the working class squadists who glorified a laddish life style." For him their violence was not simply excessive, it was counter-productive. Indeed the combination of paramilitary violence and working class militias was for Bambery, in itself, distinctly suspect; ie. 'those who use the methods of the fascists invariably become fascist themselves.' For not only did "some of the squadists" as Bambery delights in pointing out even go "over to the SA" but on one occasion "RFB fighters invited SA men into their tavern to join them for beers at Christmas." It would considerably diminish the anecdotal allegation of widespread working class fraternisation [between Red Front Fighters League (RFB) and Brownshirt stormtroopers (SA)] if he went on to reveal that the one example mentioned resulted in the death of "storm trooper Erich Salgaser who died on January 8 1933 from a single stab wound" (*Beating the Fascists* page 141). So Bambery conceals it. Similarly, in terms of ANL propaganda the stress is firmly on the idea of 'being' an anti-fascist rather than operating as one: 'be nice to your neighbour vote Labour'. Anti-fascism is packaged as a life-style choice like vegetarianism. For additional middle class convenience it is presented 'as being part of you' rather than you being part of any pro-active anti-fascist movement. Hardly surprising, then when a film like *American History X* attempts to portray this limp wristed liberalism as the antithesis of a racism red in tooth and claw, the portrayal of anti-fascism is so unconvincing, the film ends up in the opinion of one reviewer like a "commercial for fascism".

Promoting fascism by default is bad enough, but when an impeccable liberal like George Monbiot pronounces the BNP to be "clever" (*Guardian* 29.4.99) you know we really are in trouble. "Sophisticated" fascism is something new to George. For as he goes to great pains to point out, previous to his discovery, the consensus was that they were all "Neanderthals" and "political-knuckle scrapers", ie. working class. What Monbiot has of course stumbled on is Euro-nationalism. The type of "clever political manoeuvring" that has little to do with shouting 'wogs out'. A sophistication developed and exemplified by Megret, Fini, and Haider. A sophistication moreover that impresses more than simply *Guardian* journalists, but more infamously, the European counter-parts of the 'Guardian reader'. In March this year Austria's Jorg Haider, he of the impeccable fascist pedigree (both his parents were in the SS) topped the poll beating the social democrats and conservatives into second and third in a state election in Carinthia.

This success followed another shock victory for the right-wing Christian Democratic Union a few weeks earlier in the German state of Hesse. A victory that according to the *Daily Telegraph* left the CDU "almost embarrassed", based as it was on a million strong petition against granting citizenship to resident Turks. In Hesse too the victory owed something to defections from the smaller parties. The denominator common to both racist triumphs was tactical voting by the liberals and not insignificantly - the Greens both of whom according to local daily *Salsburger Nachrichten* "made strategic mistakes forgivable in normal times, but fatal at times of political polarisation." (comment *Guardian* 13.3.99)

Post war, for much of Europe for much of the time, political polarisation seemed as distant as street fighting in the Weimar Republic. So government sponsored anti-racist strategies could politically indulge the myth that the working class ghettos were the source of racism, were inherently racist and nationalistic, while the middle classes were instinctively decent. And because the middle classes could be trusted, physical force anti-fascism was dismissed as both excessive and unnecessary. Well recently the middle classes in Germany, France, Austria and elsewhere are proving about as staunch as they were in the Weimar Republic. So threatened did the Nazis feel by them then, that Hitler even publicly apologised for 'the unfortunate but necessary nocturnal activities of his brown-shirts keeping them awake at night!' Back then, a bit like Andrew Marr now, Goebbels wondered whether the inhabitants of the ghettos 'could ever be made to listen?' Particularly after his 1931 national speaking tour was wrecked by widespread working class violence, with a rout by the inhabitants of the dock area of Hamburg-Altona, leaving

fifteen of his supporters dead and fifty wounded, and the Minister for Propaganda thunderstruck. "Will it ever be possible to make a change here?" he fretted.

Brilliant a spin doctor though he was, he could not possibly have imagined that it would be in the name of anti-racism that the desired 'change' would be accomplished. So from a militant anti-fascist perspective in order to begin to undo what has been done, the interests, aspirations and yes, sensitivities of the "other side", must be given primacy. Into the ghetto. Cold-blooded realpolitik rather than senti-

ment or starry-eyed idealism demands it. Simply because 'the working class is' to paraphrase Churchill, 'the most reactionary of classes... except for the others'. Put bluntly, anti-fascism will need to come up with a diet substantially more appetising than middle class moralising, pie in the sky, and shaky warnings of dictatorship, if the lower orders are to form the backbone of the movement next time round.

And quickly.

Euro-nationalism. The type of "clever political manoeuvring" that has little to do with shouting 'wogs out.' A sophistication that impresses more than simply *Guardian* journalists, but more infamously, the European counter parts of the 'Guardian reader'

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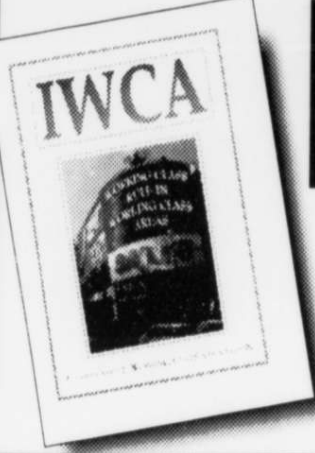
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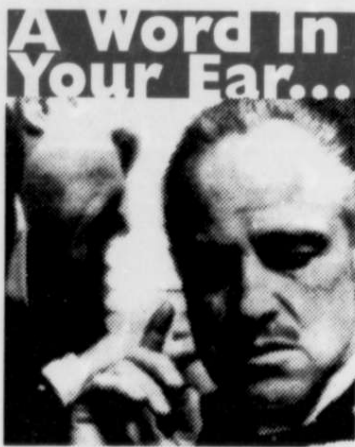
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FEMME FATALE - LABOUR'S MATA HARI

MANY WAS the miner during the '84 strike who was bedded by eager to please female members of Militant and the SWP. One Militant wag, now a member of RA, commented to a district committee meeting that he was probably one of the few people in the room who had not yet slept with a miner! A striking oil worker from Govan recalls, after a strike meeting, being taken by two leading female members of the SWP and introduced to the joys of three in a bed sex romps. This was followed by incessant phone calls from the same two women inviting him to SWP branch meetings. The RCP went one step beyond during a health workers dispute around the same time when two of their female members turned up at a rally in

Glasgow's George Square wearing nurses uniforms. The two RCP women (neither of them nurses nor indeed even health service workers) were carrying buckets with 'Support the Nurses' emblazoned across them whilst wearing uniforms that looked like they had been borrowed from the set of a Carry-On movie. Almost every area have their own stories of horizontal recruitment to the RCP.

Stories of horizontal recruitment on behalf of the Labour Party are less common. That said, one woman - lets call her the 'femme fatale' for the sake of this piece - who oiled Labour's wheels through her association with republicans has a somewhat legendary reputation. Forever around republican initiatives her initial political line was so basic that she was able to ingratiate herself with nearly every brand of republicanism active in the city through a network of mainly manly contacts. RA's first contact with this femme fatale was in 1990 when we were involved in the Republican Socialist Prisoners Aid organisation. Despite her sworn affiliation to the Labour Party and mainstream republicanism, the femme fatale attended meetings of this organisation at the behest of her 'friend' a man who claimed to be the IRSP's representative in Scotland. Incidentally, he now claims to be the RSF organiser in Scotland.

While no oil painting herself, her influence was enhanced no end when she took up with a leading member of a republican flute band, known affectionately to RA members as The Gargoyle. Obviously impressed by the attentions of a younger woman, he faithfully dragged his tongue along the ground after her. She in turn blatantly used his influence among band members to poison the air around Red Action.

In 1991 contrary to general advice she organised a meeting in a hotel in an area with no republican connections. The obvious need to secure the venue was rebuffed while the inevitable Loyalist bomb threats to the hotel led to cancellation of the booking on the actual night of the meeting. Ken Livingstone and a leading republican addressed a crowd of 200 in the dark - outside.

In 1993 in a follow-up Hunger strike commemoration, she insisted that not only should the march start at the city centre, but also that it should disperse from there. The consequences to the marchers safety of a Loyalist turn out was dismissed despite vehement RA protestations. On the day, women with kids were left to brave 300 Loyalists as the femme fatale sped from the area in her Range Rover. Protestant members of AFA, who for obvious reasons sought to conceal their identities with scarves, and who eventually helped escort the remnants of her march out of the area were publicly ridiculed by her as "madmen". A year later she organised another public meeting again to be attended by a leading republican. Any thoughts for security were of course ignored from the outset. When as predicted 200 Loyalists turned up, she simply drove straight past the venue, not even stopping. Less mobile individuals were beaten to a pulp. The meeting was cancelled. She then decided that Govan, an area with a not inconsiderable Loyalist presence was 'ideal' for her next adventure. Prominent local republican's were not consulted. True to form glaring security lapses were dismissed with the comment: "we are not here for a punch up". Specific instructions were also issued that "no tickets were to fall into the hands of Red Action". On the day itself when a joint Govan Republican/RA crew battled it's way past 250 Loyalists they were literally greeted by the enfeebled and beleaguered venue security, with open arms!

Yet another flute band member who fell victim to her charms ended up being thrown out of his home by his wife and children due to his fascination with her. On her direct say-so this guy was central in a gratuitous attack, with other band members armed with cider bottles, on a lone Glasgow RA member, leaving him unconscious.

This former bandsman/boyfriend is now rumoured to be doing business for the 32 County Sovereignty Committee (see Real IRA). Ultimately, both he and The Gargoyle were both expelled from the Bands Association and are now 'unwelcome in Ireland'. In a church so broad as to comfortably include both New Labour and the Omagh bombers it is indeed difficult to discern where her loyalties ultimately lie. That on every occasion RA was successfully side-lined it was the political prospects of republicanism in Scotland that suffered may, be a clue. That of course is for you to judge - 'we couldn't possibly comment!'

SEARCHLIGHT, c/o SCOTLAND YARD

NOW THAT former *Searchlight* editor Gerry Gable, is proud to describe himself as a "member of John Grieve's Racial and Violent Crime Task Force", our advice to all those anti-fascists who hate AFA, but still wish to make a contribution to the struggle: cut out the middle man. Any possibility of 'unpleasantness' associated with accusations of 'colluding with *Searchlight*' can be sidestepped by sending all information directly to: John Grieve, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police, New Scotland Yard, London, SW1. There. Can't be more straightforward than that.

Something We Said!?

We recognise that the current leadership has dismantled whatever aspiration to socialism the Party ever had. It has embraced the free-market and removed all methods of reversing this new direction from within the Party. In its failure to challenge current conservative free market ideology, Labour encourages a climate where the far-right and fascists views may fill the vacuum.

Socialist Alliance founding statement, 27.3.99

Will it end up like Russia?

Frequent doorstep response to Socialist Unity canvassers.

Weekly Worker, 1.3.99

Macdonald is described as affable and amiable in the Scottish press. Considering the nature of the regimes and dictators that British Aerospace deals with around the world, 'oily' might be a more apt description.

Tiochfaidh Ar La spokesperson, Louise Cooper, comments on Celtic FC's new Chairman Allan Macdonald's links to the arms trade.

Sunday Herald, 4.4.99

If people come here to discuss Marx, Engels and Lenin we just tell them to shut up. We are not discussing dead Russians. This is a practical thing.

Trade union militant, Steve Hedley, *Big Issue*, 19.4.99

For the past 20 years we have 'physically and ideologically' isolated these people

ANL organiser Julie Waterston, *Radio 5 Live*, 2.5.99

Then I began to wonder what could have made me so cynical. My mind went back to November 1993 when my old newspaper, the *Independent on Sunday*, organised a conference on men and crime. It was a horrible affair. Middle-class feminists who thought of themselves as paragons of left-wing rectitude, displayed a hatred of working class men that seemed indistinguishable from coffee-morning Conservatives' loathing of single mothers.

Nick Cohen, *Observer Review*, 16.5.99