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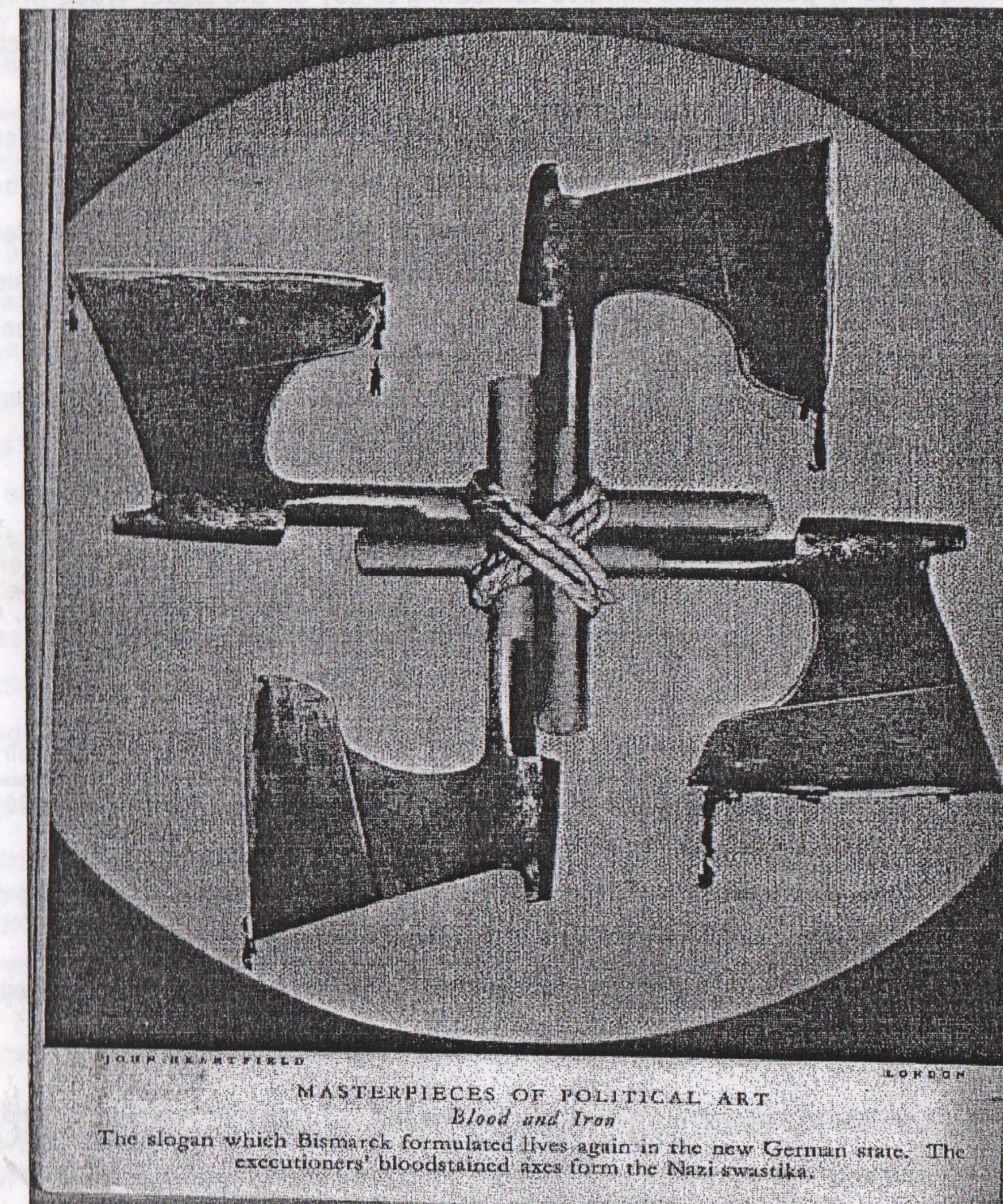
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Anti Fascist compilation pamphlet of 3 articles

£1 Spring 2010 ISSN 2042-048X

"Popular Front Anti Fascism"



"Autonomous Anti Fascism: Towards Praxis"

"BRITISH FASCISM PAST AND PRESENT"

Why Anti Fascism, why autonomous, why now?

Introduction

Anti Fascist analysis and debate is coming to dominate increasing amounts of political space, whether this be in the more radical and confrontational parts of the movement for liberation, such as the anarchists, or the different Marxist groups and publications. Independent, or party publications all have something to say on the issue. Trade Unions and the Labour party's are also talking about and publishing anti fascist ideas and action.

In this context Cl@ss War Classix has decided to put together a compilation pamphlet in the finest pamphleteering traditions of the labour movement to contribute to the debate. Cl@ss War Classix number 5, **the Anti Fascist special** edition comprises of 2 articles from **Mayday magazine** issue 1 (2007) and issue 4 (2009), the key contribution this magazine makes is analysis that suggests a politics of autonomy is necessary to break out of the anti fascist impasse identified.

The theoretical areas of autonomy are in the space between the 'left right wing' Searchlight (who practice with the New Labour hierarchy, Trade Unions and others) positions and practice, and the ultra left e.g. Red Action/IWCA type who say that there is a need to start again outside of the degenerate institutions of the labour movement, or, those Marxists who say anti fascism is reactionary.

Their (Searchlight/Ultra Left) politics are predictable, because they are very often mirror image opposites, but their political implications become inverted so they always oppose each other. Therefore, the answer is to be both inside and outside of the Labour movement, following in the best New Left traditions. The space between Searchlight and the Ultra Left are the new 21st century areas of autonomy, where people are not so ideologically committed and who are sceptical of those who produce politics as a finished product of commandments, in short they operate more anarchistically.

These articles identify the existence and necessity of a **horizontal popular front of anti fascism** founded upon the progressive sensibilities ordinary working people already have. It is an anti fascism that organises beyond traditional boundaries and explicitly involves those targeted by racists and fascists. Utilising the best early labour movement cooperative traditions, it would involve whatever voluntary, charity, and/or welfare support systems there are for migrants, and the setting up of new ones. These new

networks should be secular if possible, but including religious ones if necessary because these institutions can have the infrastructure that can provide welfare functions.

The third article in this collection is by Andy Newman and was published on the Socialist Unity website in February 2010, "**BRITISH FASCISM PAST AND PRESENT**". As usual with these debates, a large and steamy number of replies have been forthcoming, currently numbering 270 comments as we go to press & this can be found on the Socialist Unity website. It has been chosen to be included because the article covers a large number of issues, a lot of the replies are from different political perspectives, and this shows that a mature attitude is essential if political growth and unity is to occur. A fractured left is a *defeated* left.

It is important to try to break anti fascism and politics as a whole out of its 'ghettoised' sectarian, closed, predictable and reductionist forms. Rather the network model of organising is more appropriate for the 21st century, and the political and technical composition of the working classes. The key issues are centred upon the circulation of ideas and struggles, authentic cooperation within and amongst anti fascists, anti racists and others, and the abandonment of hierarchical political practice, especially the traditional authoritarian statist 'Marxist' party types and the current institutionalised Labour and Trade Union variety. This is the way towards autonomous political growth, instead of a means to recruit or just reproducing the same institutional status quo practice. **It is through anti fascism as a model of working class liberation and struggle that progress can be made.**

Cl@ss War Classix is a new initiative to reproduce seminal publications of the class war.

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Number 5, **The Anti Fascist special**, published in February 2010 is £1, 4 copies for £2.

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Autonomous Anti Fascism – towards praxis

Dr Trevor Bark

Abstract

The left and anarchist movements in Britain are in disarray; sectarian, small and ineffective. Thus, the Neo-Liberal project has successfully divided opposition, and requires practical and theoretical contributions to rediscovering the way forward politically through the resulting confusing and debilitating political ambience. While the right are on the march generally, the fascist movement in Britain has been growing because of the problems of globalisation from above. Racism is created by events at home and abroad, and the changing nature of state policy and practices affect the terrain of these class struggles and their development. This article is an attempt to discover self-built class struggle anti fascism in these conditions.

Introduction

It is essential to consider Britain as a fading imperialist power, which is now economically and politically closely aligned with the world's dominant superpower; America. The history of the fading of one power and the emergence of the other is crucial. Old racism has been replaced with a newer variety whose characteristics are constantly on the move, though it is not less pernicious (Sivanandan, 2004). Part of the failure of the Left¹ is the political isolation, confusion and myopia of those who are not only concerned about the fascists in Britain, but are trying to do something to oppose them, without serious success. Just when the situation calls for unity the left is still fighting the battles of yesteryear, amongst themselves.

Often there is no joined up thinking which would be the result of taking solidarity and political growth seriously, do they really believe the movement will build itself without regular and open meetings and conferences which can leave previous moribund ideas and practices behind? This means not practicing in traditional formulations, but across barriers which have been erected for, and by us. Must the Left be forever afraid of the insights of anarchism, autonomism, and post structuralism, and forever chase the approval of managerial politicians of the left, centre and right who look upon them as excreta?

While the debate over the definition of fascism extends beyond Marxism and anarchism, and includes Weberian and totalitarian approaches (Passmore, 2002), the subject of

fascism is complex and is a worldwide phenomena which makes definition difficult (Griffiths, 2005). Passmore (2002) attempts a 28 line, approximately 250 word definition, which is meant to synthesise the best elements of previous theories. Although, this article will assume readers know what is meant by fascism so it is possible to approach issues of strategy straight away.

While the reasons behind BNP success are being debated and identified (Sivanandan, 2001, 2006, Metcalfe, 2003, O'Hara, 2003-4, 2006, et al) this article is not intending to come to a definitive position upon this. However, briefly they are; Labour becoming the party of business, economic deprivation, segregation as a result of council policies, improved BNP organisation, their occupation of empty political space, election frequency helping momentum, the War on Terror, Left complacency and inadequacy, and other inadequate opposition. A complete position upon this is not possible, in part because the empirical survey work amongst BNP voters has not been accomplished with the rigour necessary¹¹ and in numbers that allow such a definitive and absolute position to be constructed. However, O'Hara's¹² list of the reasons for BNP growth (NFB, 2006, 3) would be a starting point for such analysis. Instead, this article seeks to describe the conditions, the options available and a possible way forward for anti fascists.

The end of the beginning

The Anti Fascist issue is attracting more attention because of the European common market integration, the activities of transnational corporations and neo-liberal economic policy around the world. Therefore, in order to clarify autonomous ideas it is important to work towards the theory and practice (i.e. Praxis) of an authentically independent, egalitarian and autonomous class struggle politics for the 21st century. We do not say, here is the truth, kneel before it, rather the process of struggle has a vital influence upon the character of an autonomous anti fascist movement, and therefore the beginning of this journey needs organising. What form it takes and what politics an autonomous anti fascism practices depends upon the cycle or stage of struggle that the movement is engaged in. The history of anti fascism and the state is also instructive, New Labour compromises and their following of a racist agenda has been done before by the Labour Party hierarchy (Sivanandan, 2004), and the interface between racism and nationalism has led to a confused and confusing debate. Nationalism as we understand it is a historically new construction (Miles, 1987), and racism is a similarly artificial construction; Hobsbawm would call them 'invented traditions' (1983).

Both Nationalism and racism define who is included and who is excluded, and the intertwined historical development of these themes during the rise and fall of the British Empire have blurred the 2 in process (Miles, 1987), and has created the 'excluded'. The historical creation of an imagined community (Miles 1987) of the classless white British I call 'romantic nationalism' – this is capitalism with struggle and poverty either written out of history or sold back to us in an idealised representation, often as compliant and deferent servants, or as subjects waiting for charitable relief. This is where the philanthropic bourgeoisie, and middle class bureaucrats, meet, and are helped with those schooled on the mythology "one Nationism" and "singing down the tube station during the blitz together". E.g. the retired, southern professional classes and those workers who do not like to think about the labour theory of value. These accounts forget the thousands of rich people, aristocracy, and some Royalty, who went to Canada as soon as the war began, and those who remained who flouted the laws of rationing – e.g. the Queen and Prince Philip for their wedding in 1947.

Reading Anti Fascism Politically

The heated debate that occurs over the nature of the correct response to fascism has not escaped old and dead leftist reductionism, sectarianism, and party building. The old left, whilst mutating in form, has not included new working class sectors in their active politics, and instead have re-labelled their politics, or, abandoned them to recruit Muslims using a simple and patronising anti war logic – 'the victims can be brought into our project'ⁱⁱⁱ. Left communists^{iv} sidestep the issue of relating to and debate with the working classes by creating a self-fulfilling prophecy as their theory. They say that anti fascism is not revolutionary, and thereby avoid the issue of a class strategy and associated tactics and propaganda. This, of course, is merely abdicating the scene of class struggle, and provides an opportunity for the very forces of reaction they say they want to suppress. They appear to be under the illusion that some 'external example and theory of a nice pure communism' is more attractive and convincing than class struggle against the immediate enemies of the working class, who practice self and class liberation in the process of opposition to these class enemies. Though, this is far from the only problem with Left communist politics.

Further Left communists assume an automatic homogeneity of the working class is produced by capital, rather than a strategy that encourages class formation amongst diverse groups through struggle. In other words, the practice of direct action and struggle, and the participation in these struggles, is a training ground for the generation

of the consciousness of the working class, its values are created on the move. The working class through self-management of the day-to-day struggle rises in capability towards self-management of the revolutionary conflict – it is neither an automatic nor an inevitable process. They thereby acquire an awareness of the particular limitations of their local struggle and its aims, and of the skills needed to create and sustain wider solidarities and larger struggles as they are all intimately connected. Little local successes may not be repeated, and limited victories may be taken away, and so it is important to understand these in the overall struggle and an ever-wider context of expanding aspirations.

This maybe possible through attempts to create a formal and informal popular consciousness of struggle, alternatively entitled 'popular fronts'. These should impose no membership requirements; instead they are open and fluid – constructed through participation. The task of an AAF is dialogue and debate within the actually existing working classes and class struggles, and constantly seeking to spread the struggles and class consciousness. Specialist sub group's e.g. political networks of pro-migrant decision making and struggle prioritising, or direct action hit squads, within the popular fronts, can then evolve more normally, rather than be imposed from without in a voluntarist manner onto the struggle. Though traditional popular fronts have been a top down vertical approach of party leaderships setting the agenda, and have been criticised by O'Hara (NFB, 2006, page 4). However, AAF is potentially a horizontal popular front from below that works within and beyond institutions, organisations and groups. It is a qualitatively different form of popular front than has ever existed before, although it could take inspiration from different practicing anti-fascists.

Some of the best ideas have come from Larry O'Hara, and Mark Metcalfe, in Notes From the Borderland (various issues), and "The Resistible Rise of the BNP" in Hobgoblin magazine No. 5 (Metcalfe, 2003a). There are many different left factions, and O'Hara writes that even those who profess to be a political alternative to the BNP have multiple problems with their strategy; "With the best will in the world, the IWCA [Independent Working Class Association] successor to Anti-Fascist Action, isn't directly challenging the BNP either" (O'Hara, 2006, 4). The 1970's Anti Nazi League was relaunched by the Socialist Workers Party, but was a pale imitation of its former glory (Renton, 2006, Lux, 2006) and so was quietly dropped. Instead, the SWP has chosen to focus on Respect, and also instrumentally uses UAF (Unite Against Fascism). AAF seeks to work with those actually practicing an autonomous anti fascism even if they do not know it, and in particular to work with migrants who have a vested interest in such a politics. This is anti fascism as *a politics of self and class liberation* rather than an 'attempt to build the party',

or something else. However, the difficulties encountered so far are perhaps because of a failure of old leftist practice, combined with opportunist and inadequate theorising of social conditions.

Labour, Tory, Same old Story

Racism of the early 21st century is still a tool of discrimination and a means of exploitation, 'conditioned by economic imperatives, but negotiated through culture: religion, literature, art, science and the media' (Sivanandan, 2001). The globalisation project is based upon a pursuit of profit and a new international division of labour which has created conflicts, and traditional demonisation and exclusion are mobilised seemingly in a natural continuation through time, which disguises changed relationships, but focuses concerns upon new targets. Thus displaced asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are kept out;

'even if they are white, on the grounds that they are scroungers and aliens come to prey on the west's wealth and confound its national identities... it is xenophobia, it is – in the way it denigrates people before segregating or expelling them – a xenophobia that bears all the marks of old racism, except that it is not colour-coded. It is xeno-racism: a feature of the Manichaeian world of global capitalism, where there are only rich and poor – and poverty is the new black' (Sivanandan, 2001, Fekete, 2001).

This has been created in part by the new state, just like the old state where Labour is just as complicit as the Tories, but the welfare state of developed capitalism has been replaced by the market state of globalised capitalism. Everything which isn't directly profit making or contributing to the security of the state which enables capitalism is priced and expedient decisions are made regarding their funding. Expanding capitalism scours the world in a manner not unlike the Vikings of old, in search of 'new markets, cheap labour, raw material, natural resources. Oil' (Sivanandan, 2006). It is now necessary to consider an anti fascism of liberation in such conditions.

Here to Stay, Here to fight^v

An autonomous anti fascism (AAF) does not unthinkingly engage in voluntarist struggle; if it did this could involve always doing no platform^{vi} direct action, or social democratic campaigning, without strategic and tactical thought. Thus, attacking any fascist groupings wherever and whenever found, outside of a strategy that seeks to prevent the largest

current fascist problem nationally, is not revolutionary politics. This is partly because the movement is split historically by ego's and disputes, and 'comrades' on the left are often in their own circle of friends and no more. AAF should aim to provide open and honest dialogue, by working outside our individual and groups "comfort zone", amongst people who will have different priorities, without regard to idea origins, in order to get to the key issues of mobilisation and politicisation for anti-fascist struggles. This ideally has to involve all those working class people and groups who are trying to make their lives better through opposition to racism and fascism. It is the relationships between anti racism, anti fascism and the class struggle that are important.



From reading the socio-economic situation politically now, and by looking historically at the political and social functions fascism has had for capital we may begin to work towards our goals. Further, the 20th century history of 'black settlers' (Sivanandan, 2004) has often been ignored by white comrades, the narratives of oppression and often violent struggles ensured the rise of a hierarchical politics of ethnicity for a nouveaux black middle class to implement; 'one cannot understand racism in the age of globalisation without understanding the racism of industrial and colonial capitalism. We cannot contest the one without understanding how we contested the other' (Sivanandan, 2004).

Often inter ethnic solidarity was built on the factory floors of the Midlands, London, Lancashire and Yorkshire, however the decimation of the clothing industry which was part

of a wider desertion of factory capitalist business in search of cheaper labour helped to foster the communities of segregation. Of course, these communities of segregation are not absolute, and there are avenues of contact and networks which overlap, although the images of these communities are such that local discourse often uses such language to stress separation. Thus the locus of resistance shifted into the community, and the black community was enthusiastic supporters of different class struggles in terms of welfare and financial assistance, at workplaces in Southall, Preston, Tipton, West Bromwich, et al. Asian and Afro Caribbean struggles recognised an 'undifferentiated racism that debased and dehumanised West Indian and Asian and African alike...[supporting] each other in the fight against racism' (Sivanandan, 2004). However, this unity was to be dispersed by the different class struggles 1st generation blacks were to face in the 1970's; Asians fought back against NF attacks under the slogan 'Self Defence is No Offence', while African Caribbean's were fighting sus laws and other police oppression. Thatcherism intensified these struggles, and dispersed and managed them too (Sivanandan, 1990), leading towards anti fascism being relegated in priority by the left for approximately 2 decades. Therefore it is important to remind ourselves of the historical roles of fascism for the left.

Fascism in practice

Fascism means counter revolution

The prime historical role of fascism is defeating communism within the working class by destroying the unions and the political left. This is why rhetoric of national-socialism aims to draw the working class away from class unity, and why big business has backed fascism at high points of class conflict and crisis.

Boot Boys and Girls of Capitalist and Nationalist hegemony

Fascists historically have agitated overwhelmingly within working class communities. They have done so using racist and nationalist ideas at a localised level with far less restraint than politicians or the media. They are not constrained by mainstream views on migration, religion, or racism – that it is something that you cannot admit.

Attacking Ethnic Minorities

Those who have swallowed fascist propaganda want to demonise 'the other' – today this is often 'Pakis', though there is a great ignorance of the ethnic differences that originate in East and South Asia. This can manifest itself in verbal and physical attacks upon those

targeted; some of the perpetrators with violent urges can be uncontrolled and are especially noticeable. There are various levels of this; going up to, and including, fascists at the peak of their hierarchy. In Britain today the abandoned estates in former working class heartlands can be no go zones for outsiders, and some find themselves victims of racist harassment and violence. The situation in Germany today and from the early 1990s is different, where siege situations have provoked some migrants to return to their country of origin, or to move to another area where the state can do the harassment instead.

Fascist Scapegoats

Democracy is really elective dictatorship – where government is established every five years and operates unchallenged. In other words government is the process of normalised repression, and its' most authoritarian practice has been against the working class and the left. Policy towards migrants has been restrictive and racist legislation - detention centres, education, welfare, policing, family and work have all been restricted and practiced oppressively. Ostensibly measures that have been used to pull the rug away from underneath fascist groups by turning racist ideas into rhetoric and legislation, have in fact further justified those original ideas and contributed to their growth by legitimising them amongst practitioners of such policy ie. Often state, private and/or quango employees. Whenever there are racist attacks public opinion is encouraged to blame the oppressed for their oppression and victimised status – thus compounding the problem. The far right then is both an effective pressure group and a scapegoat, as fascists can be blamed when the states' law fails to control the population. To combat fascism in the new conditions suggestions for the way forward will now be outlined.

AAF Praxis

For these reasons AAF is not only an attack on fascist parties, but has to attack the socio-economic conditions and bourgeois hegemony, and the historically racist establishment. AAF must seek to be the distilled essence of class struggle to achieve class consciousness and unity, the preconditions for effective class action and a growing class for itself.

Thus, functions of fascism for capitalism mean that anti capitalist politics' as it confronts this fascism must go beyond a simplistic policy and tactic of attacking fascists, if it is to go beyond voluntarism. Anti fascism must seek to be the means whereby migrants can protect themselves in the first instance against threats to their existence posed by racists, fascists, and state policy, and also be a contribution to class consciousness in the broader

community in which they are based. This is the way that an apolitical anti fascism can be turned into meaningful revolutionary activity by consisting of a practical contribution to empowerment of the diverse communities concerned. It is not a question of prioritising one community over another, but of achieving the class consciousness that recognises the original sources of official and unofficial racist activity.

Thus what can be termed welfare work should assume a central role and not be seen as merely 'social work', or 'charity', though welfare work is often controlled by charities. AAF should reclaim such work and give it the central role, meaning and revolutionary politics it had during the formation of the UK working class in the 19th century. In 21st century Britain many groups have sprung up to deal with the debris created by immigration laws, increasing incarceration, asylum policy and the withdrawal of welfare from these people.

Some of these are; No Borders – No Border camps and actions, Anti deportation campaigns, Campaign Against Criminalising Communities, Medical Justice Network, Stop Political Terror, Campaign to Close Campsfield, Regional Refugee Networks and more (Sivanandan, 2006). They all tackle problems which originate in 'or derive from the policies of government and strictures of the state' (Sivanandan, 2006). Further, the wanton disregard for humanity is part of capitalist policy, it is the 'other', and 'we' are not like them. Thus by working against the capitalism and its state another new range of values is being created, that is part of the values of progressive working class communities, and the general framework and flows of power that will form the determinations for social experiences and the possibilities of struggle.

Globalised Communities of Resistance

It is possible to speak of multicultural 'globalised communities of resistance' because of the historical development of capitalism and the economics of expansion and imperialism. The working class was multiethnic as it was born through struggle according to Linebaugh and Rediker (2000), and a global Neo-liberal economics demands a multicultural working class response in the 21st century because of the similar causes of problems and resulting class experience. The dynamic of Anglo American imperialism is attempting to balance capitalist domination with the façade of electoral support, and therefore the war abroad is joined at home with the politics of divide and rule. Governments spin information and propaganda out to a willing corporate media, which is based on faulty or 'improved' intelligence with a simplistic good v. evil stance, 'resurrecting a primitive racism' (Sivanandan, 2006).

The 2 directions of policy, internal and external, cannot be neatly separated, instead they are parts of the same capitalist continuum, the war on terror and the war against migrants merge in theory and on the streets where racism 'cannot tell a settler from a immigrant, an immigrant from an asylum seeker, an asylum seeker from a Muslim, a Muslim from a terrorist' (Sivanandan, 2004, 2006). Globalisation however, needs such confusion, in order for policy to seemingly justify and control bureaucratically the treatment of migrants and asylum seekers who were forced by capitalist market expansion to move. Also, to provide the rationale for Imperialism, militarily and economically, that ensures the conditions for this expansion. This is why globalisation has need for the nation state, still. The resulting nation, under siege at home and abroad, where repressive laws, more cuts in welfare etc are financing the ever growing global military industrial complex, and its particular manifestation in Britain is damaging the 'whole fabric of society' (Sivanandan, 2006).

The Criminal justice system is attacked at all levels (Garland, 2001 Lea, 2002) and forced to assume a more punitive approach, protest is criminalised, and the central state gets more powerful. This circle then reproduces itself internally as cuts in welfare to pay for the criminal justice system lead to more prisoners, which leads to more cuts (Downes and Hansen, 2006). These examples epitomise the 'destructive reproduction' theorised by Masaros (2001). Thus it is the symbiosis of globalisation and racism, and 'Empire' (Negri and Hardt, 2000) and globalisation, which now defines the parameters and content of resistance. The various issues which arise cannot be combated on their own, it is impossible to combat one without combating them all 'Imperialism is the project, globalisation the process, culture the vehicle, and the nation-state the political and military agent' (Sivanandan, 2004). The conflicts will develop in the epicentres of the multitudes experience, and the right to combat (Ruggiero, 2006) will take place in the age of the city and the planet of slums (Davis, 2006)

Practically AAF should mean

Disruption of Fascist activity in the community

Anti-Fa^{vii} already contributes to this a little, although they are a relatively small group. Activity must go beyond already active militants and mobilise key groups of those attacked by fascism. For AAF to win the battle of ideas and effectively disrupt fascist activity it is the working class itself, including migrants, who must be involved in the struggles and play significant roles. It is politically uninvolved people who will be

encouraged to participate in collective activity against the forces of reaction, both the migrants, first, 2/3/4/5/9th etc. generation and 'white people'. This resistance will be built upon existing networks, projects and groups – Tenants Association's, homeless projects, Migrant support groups, charities etc. should all be worked within to promote resistance to racists and fascists, both officially through policy and practice and unofficially beyond institutional structures in popular front manifestations, when physically opposing fascists in the community. This will be as bases of localised resistance, and should be of a network type – the church hall, the political group, the monitoring group, the tenants association, the migrant self help group, the social centre, and this is the way that useful information can also be spread and generated. The historical memory of the class who have fought fascism, the elderly, should be merged with those who have fought fascism in the past decade and those who have yet to fight them. This is potentially a diverse and popular assault on fascism and fascists, and imagination and self-belief must be taken into the streets of our communities as the working class is encouraged to fight fascism.

Self Defence against racist attacks

This already happens on a mass scale (Bradford riots, Sivanandan, 2001) and sporadically from within the black and Asian communities. These initiatives, though often informal (Lux, 2006), should be encouraged – especially where there is no institutional basis for fighting back, or where black and Asian militants are left exposed by other members of their community, even because of their exemplary direct action. Where ethnic minorities are visibly small then there may be some vulnerability and so the solidarity of the wider community should be mobilised.

Prioritise Revolutionary Politics over Bourgeois hegemony

Revolutionary politics should destroy the fascist/nationalist racism ideas base, and expose the romantic nationalism as no more than a façade for the ignorant. This is the ultimate tie that the state has upon the working class, now that the working class is without an obvious representative; the state appears at best to be a lecturing school teacher who disciplines, *soft cop*, and at worst the police who brutalise, *hard cop*. State power is exercised by welfare employees who are ultimately backed with violence (Poulantzas, 1978) from the enforcers for those who resist authority for whatever reason. Unless the hold of this is broken then the working class can never be independent, let alone a revolutionary class.

Working with or for the Labour hierarchy, even indirectly, serves to discredit anti-fascists and helps the BNP appear as a radical alternative. Similarly the Communist Party has disappeared and the SWP have shrunk too, so the two central planks of a United Front strategy, mass working class reformist and revolutionary parties, are absent. Often, united front anti fascists e.g. UAF, and Respect, have diluted and compromised on the politics of working class autonomy, independence, and liberation, in order to target certain groups they have prioritised. They fail to gain a wider audience than the trade union bureaucracy, left Labour MP's, and water down their politics to a respectable labourism, or throw away liberation politics to appease a religious group. Thus, racism is de facto portrayed as the higher evil as sexism and homophobia present in some Islamic interpretations is discounted by Respect. Conversely, fascism targets the lower end of the

working class i.e. the disenchanted, and outside of the working class heartlands (the deindustrialised areas) the class basis is left unspecified, but is basically a little Englander mentality, often associated with a middle class classlessness.



It is ironic that those most oppressed by the capitalist state can be its strongest supporters – through racist patriotism – when it is the constituency with the least to gain from such support. Racism is at once a crude and sophisticated construction; the basis of racism is discontent and struggle, which fascists aim to racialise, which in turn shifts the blame from capitalism and the state who have created the situation with their power, onto the migrants and liberal/left. These issues are class issues and radical politics. Theory and practice are necessary to not only counter act capitalist strategy, but to set a working class agenda.

Fascists constantly use class issues to further sow discontent by racialising struggles. Their calls for segregation, repatriation, or forceful expulsion can seem like a radical

response, but they only alleviate the symptoms of a class society which can only be cured by revolution. The status quo caused the problems; so it cannot be any part of a permanent solution. Crises in e.g. housing can focus latent racism and build upon popular media and government racism. Society is divided and categorised because that is how capitalism governs and can govern in the future, thus society is rebuilt in its own image as new issues are constantly generated within old themes. Hence, the different nuances of racism.

Cases are often individualised, and this is further compounded by state and media treatment. and there is no automatic solidarity. Instead cases must be encouraged to shout loud, these cases then can become issues, and issues can become causes. Well thought out approaches and dialogue with oppressed communities, and radical class analysis and practice, could begin to make a difference and win people away from reactionary politics. This, coupled with open and honest political work with anti fascist groups, anti racist groups, migrant organisations, charities, trade unions, social centres and left groups may begin to form an informal *popular front* of *horizontal* and AAF rather than atomised traditional practice. Also this would be opposed to the traditional perspective of popular fronts which attempted to ally itself with anti fascist parts of the establishment in a *vertical* strategy.

This will not happen overnight, further practice, theory and analysis, conferences, and meetings will be necessary, as well as much pavement travelling and dialogue within our communities. AAF should maintain its autonomy and politics, and promote them. Only in the instances where our autonomy is being threatened, for example, by dictatorial authoritarians, liberal peace police, or undemocratic structures, does AAF refuse to work with anyone.

Left communists criticise anti fascism for being reformist, and there has been some truth in this. In the past activists have promoted short term and reformist solutions – ‘vote anyone but the BNP’ when the others have been responsible for the current political situation. Instead, the creation of an alternative politics and hegemony is necessary; beyond a voluntarism that doesn’t step outside of the status quo, or operates in isolation. Rather the aim of the popular front is to organically link these spheres of operation. The dichotomy between reforms versus revolution has caused considerable angst, and the New Left proposed to escape these ideological dead ends by arguing for reforms within a revolutionary strategy.

The proposed popular front is an horizontal one that can work within and beyond council organisation, N.G.O’s and voluntary groups, and other institutions of welfare provision. Any apriori suggestion that these are definitely impediments to re aligning and creating popular fronts of anti fascist welfare and resistance are merely pseudo radical, proto religious ideological statements (Marx, Theses on Feuerbach). Rather, the obstacles and other problems should be openly discussed and circulated during this praxis, and the nature of the 21st century social conditions can then be theorised from evidence collected in this practice.

These revolutionary ideas should critique mainstream racist and liberal anti racist ideas, encourage action, and form a clearer picture of class divided society. At its best leftist anti fascism has been subversive in challenging the definitions of the institutional status quo, although this has rarely changed policy. In short such anti fascism has rarely been subversive even, barely undermining the status quo. The revolutionary agenda is in confronting the status quo not only with alternative definitions, but an entirely different way of seeing the world and an entirely new way of life; *without* the institutions of the status quo.

In other words we are talking about working towards a situation of dual power, where the proto working class power is able to self help itself in the fields of health, education, work, defence and welfare – to create a new alternative vision of a cradle to the grave universality based upon the sisterhood and brotherhood of everybody. The values of altruism, caring, sharing, and love of all people is a politics of self and class liberation, ‘the irrepressible lightness and joy of being communist’ (Negri and Hardt, 2000, 413), that can create new communities of resistance (Sivanandan, 1982, 1990) – it is the means and ends of a strategy of AAF. Thus the 21st century Marxists rediscover old themes of class formation (Thompson, 1963), and the means by which this is created is by constituent politics (Negri and Hardt, 2004).

First steps

Fascism is a political movement with a view of the world they want to live in. To be successful anti-fascism must fight, and win, not only in the streets but also **the battle of ideas**. It is not enough to show people that fascist ideas are wrong, AAF must also present ones that people see as being able to win concrete victories in the short term and outright victory in the long term. To win the battle against Fascism, capitalism and the state AAF must adopt a long-term strategy with social revolution at its core. It is a good

time to be reminded that revolutions are social phenomena and revolutionaries cannot force them to happen. Therefore, revolutionaries main goal are to win the battle of ideas in practice to create a new movement and society.

As revolutionary anti-fascists what ideas does an AAF propose? AAF proposes that there is a need to eliminate capitalist society, abolish the state, and create directly democratic community and workplace structures to make the decisions that determine the context of our lives. Furthermore, AAF propose that there is a need to eliminate racism, sexism, homophobia, and all other oppressions by actively attacking those ideologies and supporting people who are struggling against them, especially those struggling from revolutionary perspectives.

Self defence

It is important to see the general welfare of migrants as a whole. Thus, state attacks on benefits, the use of vouchers, social exclusion, are as important a thing to be tackled as racism and physical attacks. They are part and parcel of the same thing, and to treat either as separate in practice is a theoretical mistake. Active engagement in the promotion and practice of community safety by protecting ourselves and each other from racist attacks and attacks by fascists is a priority. It can also be part of an anti social crime initiative where communities can defend themselves against those who prey on them, be they muggers or drug dealers.

Where there already are networks of defence people should participate as volunteers and observe what goes on; the everyday activity and beliefs that form a community. Do not think you know it all or shout about militant activity, it wins you no friends. Instead, **listen**, do not say anything, just keep a record of those who say things that are listened to and acted upon. When you have served some time, *are time served*, and have earned some respect through hard work and self effacing behaviour; then you maybe in a position to suggest tactics that can improve the effectiveness of what you are all trying to achieve. This may lead onto a wider agenda.

In diverse communities attempts at networking are particularly important, where the dangers of isolation and fragmentation are obvious. The elements/spokes which build *the wheel of oppression* must each be tackled and turned in the direction we^{viii} want them to go. Thus, instead of political isolation and weakness we promote collectivity and strength. Practically instead of leaving individuals economically helpless on the streets, we promote collective economic welfare in social centres. In turn this creates alternative values;

instead of bitterness and resentment, we promote optimism and altruism. This is a politics of self and class liberation, of AAF as practical-critical and revolutionary activity (Negri and Hardt, 2004), and a constituent politics in British conditions for the 21st century.

The Range of Anti fascist politics possible

Practical suggestions for ways individuals can tackle fascism have been listed in Metcalfe (2003a). However, for those concerned about the most productive way to proceed as a class against fascists more theorisation is necessary, and the theoretical ideal type parts of the **anti fascist continuum** for those thinking about the way ahead today, and which are therefore possible to organise and practice so as to approach in the practical world, are;

At one end an 'unreflexive **no platform**' strategy comprising of militant anti fascist tactics. At the other end, *social democratic strategy/tactics*.

Moving towards the middle from the no platform end would be a reflexive anti fascism that took notice of local possibilities, and mounted direct action when they could win.

Moving towards the middle from the social democratic end would be passing information to the 'no platform' tendency, who could sabotage a fascist election attempt and help your social democratic strategy.

Moving toward the middle further still (theoretically) from the social democratic end would be the creation of a Unite Against Fascism type united front - social democracy on the streets, and at the ballot box. Respect would be a democratic part of this united front type.

Moving further towards the centre from the No platform end would be a working class popular front, that organised itself politically across group boundaries with the aim of chasing the fascists literally off the streets. It would network with 'respectable' social democratic' anti fascism to get info whilst not selling themselves out politically. It would prioritise the working class movement and migrants; or others victimised and oppressed by fascism theoretically and practically, because the ends ARE the means. This is anti fascist theory as a practice of self and class liberation. This is also the ideal type I would like to see us move towards. The informal popular front Lux (2006) describes could be

part of the way forward, but the suggestion is that a more formal politics such as described could work in tandem with the informal popular fronts.

In June 2006 an American Marxist Humanist group could write;

"There is no greater **sign of the renewal of freedom movements in the U.S.** than the marches for immigrant rights. The rapid emergence of this movement is a response to the globalization of capital, which has forced millions off the land in Latin America through free trade agreements. The separation of the laborers from the objective conditions of production has led growing numbers of people to migrate directly to the U.S. instead of first taking jobs in the cities and sweatshops of their native lands, since employment is drying up in them due to neo-liberal economic restructuring. The globalization of capital creates a reserve army of the unemployed in the form of immigrant labor, even as sections of the ruling class move to restrict immigration and/or discipline immigrant workers through "guest worker" programs that make use of their labor power while denying them all rights of residency.

While the reserve army of labor is an important tool in capital's effort to keep down wages, the unemployed and super-exploited workers are also a subjective, potentially revolutionary force that can bring the system down-provided, that is, that the masses do not leave matters at the level of the massive but restrained rallies that are now going on.

At a moment when workers around the country are being subjected to an intense effort by capital to further lower wages and gut benefits-as seen in the drive to deprive millions of workers in auto, airlines, and other industries of their health benefits and pensions-the new struggles of immigrants has the potential to reawaken the U.S. labor movement as a whole. **No one six months ago predicted such an outpouring over immigration"** (Emphasis added).

With Mayday 2007 in the USA focussed around migrants too, there is every sign of this potentially becoming an ever growing cycle of struggle, whether it can extend elsewhere is a question that can only be answered in praxis.

Conclusion

It has been suggested that anti fascist struggles epitomise the problems with the British left, and that existing practice against fascists is jeopardised by this sectarianism and a lack of critical thinking. The range of anti fascist approaches has been described, social

conditions identified, and a potential way forward that utilises these insights has been postulated. All that remains now is praxis.

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ⁱ Some of the problems of the old left and their dwindling nature can be found here;
<http://www.mikemarqusee.com/index.php?p=41> <http://www.cpgb.org.uk/worker/632/wp.htm>
<http://www.cpgb.org.uk/theory/restofleft.htm>

ⁱⁱ Huw Bynon shows that the research for the Joseph Rowntree Trust was conducted only in one area, and therefore results are not generalisable; <http://www.cpgb.org.uk/worker/621/bnp.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ George Galloway and Respect are 'Old Left', hierarchical, embarrassing, and with reactionary politics.

^{iv} <http://en.internationalism.org/icconline/barikad> accessed January 17th 2007, 18.30

^v Militant slogan of black resistance used in the mid 1970's

^{vi} *No Platform* – the tactic that stops the fascists spreading their propaganda or meeting publicly.

^{vii} www.antifa.org.uk

^{viii} 'We' is the different readers and activists who can identify with these aims.

BRITISH FASCISM PAST AND PRESENT

<http://www.socialistunity.com/?p=5293#comments> 18th February 2010 by Andy Newman

The next few weeks pose a significant challenge to anti-fascists and anti-racists as the BNP mount a dangerous challenge at the ballot box. Although their election campaign will be across Britain, their efforts will be primarily focused on Battlefield Barking where Nick Griffin is standing with some expectation of a result against Margaret Hodge, and where the BNP could possibly even gain control of the borough council.

At the same time the racist and anti-Muslim hooligans of the EDL will be mounting provocative events on 20th March in Bolton and 4th April in Dudley. With regard to the EDL there is still a potentially catastrophic misunderstanding from some about the social nature and psychology of their hooligan base, so this week Socialist Worker writes of the need to "chase the racist English Defence League (EDL) off the streets."

The British far left are in no position to wage the type of physical confrontation that Socialist Worker is irresponsibly hinting at here. It is possible that mass popular celebrations of multi-culturalism may have a role in undermining the EDL, but denying the streets to the EDL is a task that only the police are equipped to handle. The fact that some 25 EDL supporters chose to cheekily protest at the UAF conference last weekend

illustrates the danger of politicising the hooligans into seeing ritual confrontation with the left as part of the repertoire of their rituals of violence and territoriality.

The BNP pose a different set of challenges. We need to understand the social nature of the BNP, which although it has a fascist cadre, is essentially a populist-racist electoralism rather than an openly fascist organisation. Of course this hard fascist core is far from irrelevant, but the electoral trajectory of the BNP leads it away from traditional fascist activity in the here and now; towards the sort of post-fascism personified by Gianfranco Fini and the Alianza Nazionale.

The relationship between the EDL and the BNP is symbiotic based upon overlapping interest and membership, rather than them being organically connected. If the EDL can provoke racial violence, especially where young Muslims are seen to be fighting the police in the run up to the election, then the BNP will capitalise upon it; but the BNP are not seeking to present themselves as a paramilitary force.

I was struck by a recent article on **Richard Seymour's blog**, where he says:

"The size of the combined [BNP] electoral challenge and [EDL] street mobilisations amounts to the largest fascist threat that the UK has ever seen."

Now I understand why within the limitations of Richard's politics that he overlooks the rather more serious fascist threat that Britain faced in the summer of 1940.

But there is still a highly problematic aspect to Richard's hyperbole, because if Nick Griffin and the rag-tag and bob-tail collection of misfits and losers in the BNP are more of a threat than Oswald Mosley and the British Union of Fascists (BUF) were in the 1930s then we would have to treat the future prospect of a BNP government very seriously, and by inference, the threat of the BNP at the next general election is of more pressing urgency than stopping the Tories.

Indeed there is much to learn from how the threat of Mosley was contained, and that historical experience should not be diminished by comparison with Nick Griffin

Make no mistake, the BUF were a serious threat. Sir Oswald Mosley was perhaps the most impressively talented fascist leader in Europe. A patrician, and an intellectual politician who had been a Labour cabinet minister, and associated with the left. Indeed the Labour Marxist John Strachey briefly followed Mosley into the New Party in 1931. It was Mosley who introduced the ideas of John Maynard Keynes into the Labour Party, in collaboration with the union leaders Ernest Bevin and A J Cook; and while not acknowledged for obvious reasons, Mosley was a key influence in developing the idea that the Labour Party should

pursue distinctive economic policies based upon state interventionist government, whereas in the 1920s the Party had tended to follow liberal orthodoxy in the short term while advocating an abstract socialism for the future. The charisma of Mosley as a left winger is exemplified by the fact that 7 out of 20 girls in my mum's class at primary school in Scunthorpe were named after his first wife, Cynthia.

This is not the place to speculate on the individual motivations for Mosley's rapid evolution into open fascism, with the formation of the BUF in 1932, nor his increasingly strident anti-Semitism; but we do need to understand the context. Fascism was triumphant in Italy, and on the cusp of power in Germany when the BUF were formed: and in a few short years fascism spread across Germany, Austria, Spain and Portugal. Britain was torn apart by depression and class conflict, and there was a terrible sense of betrayal that the Parliamentary Labour Party had split with the unions and most of the membership to join the National government in coalition with the Tories.

Mosley's BUF was initially supported by Lord Rothermere's newspapers, the Daily Mail, Sunday Dispatch, and several local and regional titles. The Italian government subsidised Mosley to the tune of £224,230, equivalent to £7 million in today's money. Fascism was also socially and intellectually respectable: the author of the best selling children's book "Tarka the Otter", dedicated his rather good series of adult novels, the Dandelion Years, to Adolf Hitler; Britain's foremost avant-guard painter and controversialist, Wyndham Lewis, wrote a short book praising Hitler and advocating fascism, and the literary clique around Ezra Pound and TS Eliot were admirers of Mussolini. Anti-Semitism was mainstream: indeed Ezra Pound's introduction to Milton's Paradise Lost (included even in my 1970s Penguin edition) castigated Milton for his "Hebraic influences".

Mosley used his brilliant skills as a public speaker and his political charisma to devastating effect; with provocative rallies and marches in uniform through Jewish and immigrant areas; his firm grasp of the law meant that he sailed close to the wind in provoking a violent response from Jews and the left, without himself stepping outside legality; and then his blackshirts would go on the rampage; imposing by physical force their rule of the streets; while the BUF afterwards spun a narrative of self defence.

The determined opposition that the blackshirts received and the violence was a double edged sword, it did strip away respectability from the BUF, but the fascists revelled in their image of being hardened revolutionaries, and the prospect of violence attracted many to them, as well as repelling others.

The Communist Party achieved a great victory by heroic heckling at the Olympia rally in 1934, where the savage backlash by blackshirt stewards caused a national outrage (I had a school teacher who lost an eye at Olympia through being kicked repeatedly in the head), and the Daily Mail dropped its support for the BUF. But Olympia did not stop the BUF from growing, and enhanced its reputation for seriousness.

The physical force tradition of opposing fascism needs to be carefully considered, because the rich historical experience shows that sometimes it is effective, sometimes counterproductive, but it is never sufficient. For example, there is considerable risk of mythologizing past successes, and drawing inappropriate conclusions for the present.

Sunday 4th October 1936, the Battle of Cable Street was massive morale boost and victory for the left and for the Jewish community, but it was not necessarily a decisive defeat for the BUF. Indeed, within the two weeks following Cable Street, the BUF staged a number of very big and uncontested meetings in Stepney, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green and Limehouse, and on 14th October, just ten days after the Battle of Cable Street Mosley addressed a crowd of 12000 fascists in Bethnal Green, and then led them in a march to Limehouse. Indeed on the Sunday of 11th October a gang of 200 BUF thugs rampaged down Mile End Road, smashing the windows of Jewish owned shops, and throwing a hairdresser and a four year old girl through a plate glass window.

At the Battle of Cable Street, Mosley and the blackshirts turned away rather than contest the streets by physical force, on other occasions they fought, and the retreat on 4th October may be explained because Mosley had important personal plans that meant he could not afford to be arrested on that particular day. On Monday 5th October 1936 Mosley flew to Berlin where he married Diana Mitford, in the presence of Dr Joseph Goebbels, his wife Magda, and Adolf Hitler.

The most obvious negative consequence for Mosley was that Mussolini drew the conclusion that the British fascist leader was a dilettante, and continued financial support was made conditional on good results in the London County Council elections in 1937, where in fact the BUF did relatively poorly; so they lost their subvention from Rome; the Public Order Act which came into force on 1st January 1937 also banned political uniforms, which was a potent psychological blow to Mosley's movement.

Anti-Semitism continued to be a very strong force in the East End, the volunteer polling organisation, Mass Observation, reported in 1939 that 20% of residents of Stepney agreed with Jew-hating stereotypes, blaming Jews for their economic hardship.

Throughout the late 1930s anti-Semitic violence was a daily feature of East End life; and in the 1937 election the BUF polled 16.3% in Stepney with 4172 votes.

The important legacy of Cable Street was not that it physically defeated the Fascists on the streets, but that it forged in fire the alliance between the hard left and the Jewish community, and boosted the confidence of the anti-fascists that they could defeat the BUF.

Forget the cod-sociology about fascism being a "petit-bourgeois" movement of the middle classes. In Stepney in 1937 and in Barking in 2010 the BUF voters and BNP voters have been and are the most disadvantaged parts of the working class, and they have been attracted to vote for the far-right on the basis of anti-Semitism then, and anti-immigrant racism and Islamophobia now. It is a social movement based upon racism, and the distinctive national chauvinism and sense of entitlement born of the British imperial legacy.

Fascism was defeated in Britain in the 1930s by a number of distinctive and complementary processes. Firstly, the successful, anti-fascist Popular Front built around the defence of democracy in Spain, and stressing the traditional defence of democracy in British culture, that won around not only the labour movement, but shifted the intellectual climate, so that for example prominent Hitlerites like Wyndham Lewis repudiated their views, even before the war with Germany seemed likely. Significant alliances were made by anti-Fascists with the Catholic clergy, for example, in Stepney, where local priests were vital in preventing indigenous anti-Semitism merging with pro-fascist sympathy for Generalissimo Franco.

Secondly, the Communist Party in particular were instrumental in overcoming inter-community divisions though initiating the Stepney Tenants Defence League, which took militant action to defend the economic interests of working people, cutting across the religious and social divides. The STDF succeeded because it was deeply rooted in the local communities, and did not deal in platitudes and generalities, but campaigned for a sustained period over practical daily issues.

There are important lessons for today. Physical defiance of the BUF and the NF in the 1970s operated to impede the fascists from achieving mainstream respectability. In the changed political circumstances of 2010, the English Defence League have no respectability to lose, and the BNP are sufficiently arms-length from them not to be politically damaged by the violence. We also need to understand that in certain circumstances, physical confrontation can make the far right MORE attractive to

dangerous young men who enjoy violence, and it can further politicise their inherent prejudice.

The other thing to learn is that because the underlying cause of people voting for fascism in Britain is deep ingrained racism by socially marginalised people, then thinking that exposing the BNP to be Nazis is fatal to their electability rather over-estimates the political awareness of their voters, and betrays mistaken faith in the degree to which the anti-fascist consciousness forged in the Second World War still survives. Of course exposing the Nazi connections of the BNP leadership plays a useful role, but labelling the BNP as fascist or Nazi is increasingly ineffective.

The BNP remain a marginal political force, and if the mainstream consensus against them can be successfully mobilised at the ballot box then they can be denied further breakthrough. However, the long term lesson of Stepney in the 1930s is that the social base of fascism is undermined by there being locally rooted community campaigns taking up the day to day issues which breed resentment.

This is where the far left have mainly failed, and failed utterly. There is no prospect of such rooted campaigning around social disadvantage springing from the outside left in Dagenham or Barking; the only social forces that do exist there are the trade unions, and the warring factions of the local Labour Party. We must not mistake the wish for the reality: the far left are incapable of developing in the foreseeable future the type of mass campaigning we need deeply embedded in the estates of Barking, against poverty, and over housing issues and in defence of community services. To the limited extent that such campaigns are taken up from a progressive direction it comes from the Labour Party, especially Dagenham MP Jon Cruddas.

That is why the threat of the BNP rears seemingly large, not because the BNP are intrinsically important or liable to make a breakthrough, but because their racism is an easy answer to fill a political vacuum that the left has largely failed to even recognise, except at the level of generality.

Over the next few weeks we have a hard job, getting the anti-fascist vote out, and in Barking and Dagenham in particular make no mistake, this means arguing clearly and unambiguously for a Labour vote. The longer term struggle to undermine the BNP takes some hard and honest assessment of where the left goes from here.

POPULAR FRONT ANTI FASCISM

This is borrowing very heavily from the tradition that Class War originated in and developed with, and that is in the work of E.P. Thompson. Whose classic "The Making of the English working class" is probably the most, or amongst the most influential history books in the world.

Behind every statement lies the more fundamental creativity and an unwavering commitment to refuse analytic boxes *within which political practice incarcerates humanity*. This is our politics, and the poetics of life. Thompson wrote against the weight of prevailing orthodoxies, and we are developing work alongside or against left & anarchist ones, amongst others. **Constantly clarifying positions, not with propositions, but with counters and challenges.** Thompson self-deprecatingly referred to himself as an extinct mythological species, a great bustard, and claimed opposition alone could never gag him. 'For the great bustard, by a law well-known to aeronautics, can only rise up into the air against a strong headwind. It is only by facing into opposition that I am able to define my thought at all'.

"To leave error unrefuted is to encourage intellectual immorality"

Karl Marx

This is an historical tradition too; Thompson was in an antinomian tradition that reached through the ranting impulse of 16th century dissent into sects such as the Muggletonians - a continuity that touched William Blake... "Never, on any page of Blake... is there the least complicity with the kingdom of the beast" [Babylon].

Thompson was a man of feeling, reason and commitment, a standard of what should be. *Against* the capitalist right, and orthodox left (CP, SWP, SP, RA, IWCA. etc), whose understanding of human need was and is ordered by 'things'. To the point where the creative, intellectual, and moral foundations of life, are not discussed and de facto outlawed. Thompson and us take and expect no quarter from such *miserablists*.

From Marx, William Morris, and Blake, Thompson and we see the absolute necessity of countering 'intellectual error', of refusing to abstain from battle;

"Where is the battlefield... if it is not within human reason and conscience"??

This is a socialist and anarchist humanism and agency of choice. Choice itself was struggle, discovered by open-minded people who experience the rich tapestry of social life available. Uncertain in its outcomes, related to past choices and campaigns, but in ways that were not always logical progression. It was driven by the possibility of possibility, not by promises or assurances of success, or laws of historical motion;

"And at last I raise my voice

In the teeth of the swarming wind:

I declare that man has choice

Discovered in that place

Of human action where

Necessity meets desire"

Within the moving relationship of opposition and choice, Thompson looked to the past to renew the present, the better to recover possibility in the future. Reason and Reasons were found in history that encompasses internationalism and insight, forcing appreciation of a body of historical writing guided by a politics of socialist humanism and embattled engagement, insistent integrity and the imagination of the poet. Thompson's awkwardness marked him as alien, but this was forced on him against the weight of bourgeois and orthodox 'Marxist' hegemony. ***Nothing was to be gained by mere imitation, by lying prostrate before the theorist or orthodoxy of the month;***

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword". Matthew 10:34.

Actually Existing

Popular front Anti Fascism

Thompson saw active service during World War 2, and this was to be integral to his later thought. His scarred memories were in the place between necessity and desire, where human agency found a resting place of honour, however diminished by later events and machinations;

"We were disgusted by war but we assented to its political necessity, a necessity which might – Although we hoped most ardently that it would not – entail our own deaths'.

His older brother was a Communist party member too;

"Then as now there was an active democratic temper throughout Europe. There was a submission of self to a collective good. Then as now there was a purposive alliance of resistance to power, 'a popular front' which had not yet been disfigured by bad faith. And there was also an authentic mood of internationalism which touched the peasants in the Umbrian (Italy) villages and the troopers in our own ranks".

There was a new theatre of democratic, socialist, and internationalist symbolism, and the powerful were made defensive; political mores, at least publically, were mindful of class inequalities and the need for welfare provisioning. The most socialist economy ever seen in Britain during World War 2, the wartime internationalism and sacrifice that the struggle had forged were all lost through the partition of Europe and the onset of Cold War.

Thompson remained convinced until he died that many who fought in WW2 were conscious anti-fascists and anti-imperialists, infused with socialist ideas and purpose.

Part of his life's work would be to liberate the 'intentions of the dead', one of which was his brother, and to keep the memory alive of those who fell in battle for freedom and the defeat of fascism. His brother, Frank, was proclaimed a national hero in Bulgaria after the liberation. Later in 1947, Thompson and his mother would retrace Frank's steps and visited the villages where Frank was remembered with affection. Later that year he served in the Youth Brigade on the Yugoslav Youth Railway construction project, in which socialist peasants, workers, soldiers, and students built a 150-mile railway. Finishing ahead of schedule, without supervision, and using only the most primitive tools. The socialist meaning that lay behind this stayed with him too, pointing directly to the alternative values of a co-operative and collective social order, a new *socialism* bound up in a fresh emphasis on people's obligations to his/her neighbours and society.

Inspired by the insurgent popular anti-fascist mobilisations of 1943-47, Thompson was guided by the unfolding possibilities of struggle, protest, and resistance. His 'popular front' had nothing to do with theoretical, neat Communist party or Stalinist proclamations, it was an **informal popular front of the sensibilities working people carried with them**; in Italy, India, Iraq, & Egypt - Thompson had such positive experiences with comrades. One friend of his, a sergeant major, was able to second himself to work for some weeks with the Communist party in Calcutta - against British rule! Many American comrades too were fired by internationalism and optimism, there must of been millions of informal transactions and discourses going on in those years.

After the war when Thompson settled in Yorkshire. His vision was still one of poetic imaginative possibility that could liberate humanity from capitalism, which informs consciousness and conflict in the present so as to create a future of socialist beauty. William Morris;

"I can't help it,

the ideas which have taken hold of me will not let me rest...

One must turn to hope, and only in one direction do I see it

on the road to Revolution."

William Morris was like Blake, whose revolutionary zeal was driven by anger, which was cut with satire, polemic, mockery, hyperbole, abuse, provocation, framing a personality that was humorous, brusque, shy, meditative, and vehement. This was Edward Thompson too.

In the 20th century, working class politics - socialist, anarchist and communist - never faced pure localist issues, but have been immersed in ineluctable political contexts characteristic of those **any** empire/metropolitan imperialist power would produce. This is not counting the many national strikes across industries throughout Britain and the solidarities that engendered. It was Rudolf Rocker who was engaged in organising Jewish migrant workers in the early 20th century in the East End of London. There was; opposition to war, responses to the Russian revolution (British Dockers refused to load boats that were being prepared to support the White counter revolutionary armies). The International Class War Prisoners Association in the 1920s that had 50000 on its events in London supporting the case of Sacco and Vanzetti in the USA (they were anarchists who were framed, and then executed by the state). The independence of India, the rise of fascism, the Spanish civil war, the second front, the cold war, German rearmament, the Kenya and Cyprus wars, and much more in later years that Ex-Wombles and/or class warriors will be able to fill in. Marx in the Internationals and in "Capital", spoke of the 'new international division of labour', and was one of many who realised the importance of an international class-consciousness, and indicates some of the politics any serious organisation should have.

The leftists (inc. some anarchist/left communists) we are arguing against today who say this was all wrong have been confined in a **prison like reality** of their own imperfect historical understanding. Triumphs of course, have been rare, as they have been in other countries, but only sectarian headbangers suppose that politics is an arena in which the enlightened can pursue, in a single-minded way, only teleological and abstract ends. There are those who are oppressed and suffering today as well as in the past, and a politics that ignores solidarities demanded of such situations is particularly theocratic, ruthless, wilfully ignorant and ultimately self-defeating. DO those purists recognise the scale of human suffering in the last and present century? The situation in Columbia today demands our attention, and we are sure Dave Douglass will be very willing to talk about the amount of working class

activists/trade unionists, who have been executed by death squads. This is NOT the same as Britain true, but that does not mean we should selfishly and/or expediently ignore comrades. The new world cannot be built like that. Indeed, many remember the degree of solidarity from workers around the world in support of the British miners.

In Crook, County Durham, the mining county par excellence. There is a charity called 'Crook for Chernobyl' (the Russian nuclear reactor that exploded in 1985) *families*, with premises on the main shopping street. Every year around 25 children from Kiev come to stay for approx 3 weeks with families from Crook and its environs, and we had 2 in our house the other year. The result? It prolongs their lives by approx 18 months 'cos they are the 'forgotten generation' with an average life expectancy of 45 years. It leavened the heart, whilst playing pool in the pub HQ with the kids, when 3 women gave some money to the boys. It is far better to give than to receive and this example IS practical socialism/anarchism. Examples such as these run directly counter to the image of the British working class as insulated, and only concerned with the locality.

Largely it has been possible to protest, to inform the public, to mobilise in order to try to mitigate the excesses of imperialist rule, and/or to express solidarity with other countries. British democratic structures, although very good at absorbing, recuperating, and deflecting class struggle, have nevertheless exceptional opportunities for registering partial and oppositional pressures. Every RA/left communist/purist anarchist will tell you charity/solidarity IS the problem itself, that it would have been better had state power been seized/destroyed. However, this presupposes that there is a pure working class, with an ideal untainted identity, which is merely slumbering and waiting for the right elite viewpoint so it can immediately effect revolutionary change.

Politics

One of the continually reoccurring points of disagreement is the politics of Red Action^{viii} and the IWCA. Thompson originally had his disagreements with Anderson and Nairn in the New Left Review in the 1960s, Thompson was accused of being a "Little Englander" by 'know it all' British Marxists who appreciated Althusser and the French Communist Party. In the "Peculiarities of the English", an essay in Thompson's book, "The Poverty of Theory", and originally published in the Socialist Register. Thompson derided those types of people for whom actual history was an inconvenience for their pure ideas. Today the position has reversed somewhat, in that we are defending internationalist and dynamic ideas against Red Action reductionism, in my opinion they have a type of Marxism that belongs more with Stalin than the libertarian project, and there was an observation, by Glynn Rhys, to this effect in an issue of The Heavy Stuff^{viii}. Innovations here are part of the updating of the anarcho/socialist humanist project.

Characterising Red Actions approach is easy, they see themselves as enlightened Leninist elite, remember their view of Welling, 1993. A large demo was organised and most of CW went on it, it was after the poll tax. This was *Popular Front anti fascism*, with approx 50000 people, and some of whom battled with the police as the demo tried to get to the BNP HQ. The cult Red Action said, 'aha! The fascists were nowhere near, if you want to have a go at them we knew where they were/are...' elevating themselves above everybody else who participated and protested. Back to today, and their politics now. I can see how they believe what they do, but to pretend it is 'the best' is not only wrong it is ignorant too. While Red Action were concentrating on AFA in the 1980s, even though the Fascists had a 'march and grow' politics they had no chance of growth or power because of the right wing government (Thatcher). So, it's ok to 'bash the fash' when it doesn't matter. *During this time, substantial numbers of people were experiencing crap Labour party politics and sellouts, and many theorists and activists were re-thinking politics.* This mattered not to Red Action at the time though, if they read widely they might have even discovered that many others had bemoaned the political situation facing the working class as early as the 1950s. Nevertheless, if they acknowledged such things as this they would have to exercise humility, which is something Leninists cannot, and do not, do.

Red Action then endorsed the 'reflection theory' of anti fascism, in that they say we must 'mirror what the fascists are doing' now that they have adopted a clean cut respectable approach, like some European Fascists – 'Euro-Nationalism'. Now the fascists are growing in the UK, **now is not the time to fight them** apparently, just when it is becoming significant!! Thus contradicting their politics of the previous decade plus. Lets build the 'Independent Working Class Association' instead they say – never mind that the IWCA is the crapest clichéd title they could think of. A mirror image itself of the clichéd routine and orthodox 'leftist electoral politics without illusions' that is meant to be the only thing working class people are capable of engaging with. They say this is what opposition to fascism today demands! Despite this they have only stood in one council ward against the BNP, in May 2007 and 8, in 15 years! Losing the election both times and losing to the BNP, recently in May 2008 the IWCA vote crashed down to around 98 votes. This is no alternative to the BNP.

The presentation of themselves as the enlightened elite stinks worse than Lenin's corpse. It is also deeply patronising to the many working class people out there who have struggled, fought the class war, and still are struggling/fighting but are outside the RA loop. *Even a broken clock is right twice a day* though, and they are not without some observations. But to pretend they are unique is wrong, and even if they acknowledge their ideas aren't unique, they are not really interested in ideas, developing them, or learning from others, as they would have a more inclusive approach.

Instead, they have a one-dimensional viewpoint, a la Leninism, that their way is all there is. In reality their way is THE JOKE. That, they are the 'incarnation of the new way ahead for the working classes. *It would be funny if it wasn't so tragic.* Forget the workplace they say with approx 30,000,000 workers! More than at any time in British history, and they also by definition write off the many previous theorists

and activists who have been thinking through working class politics. They say they consult 'working class people about politics', but they should say that the Zapatistas were doing it well before them, and that anarchism and libertarian varieties of Marxism such as Autonomism are by their very nature about discussing and developing ideas in struggle rather than imposing them a la Leninism. One of the most interesting ways to conceptualise conservative Leninists and those who seek uniformity was by Oscar Wilde who wrote the following;

"Most people are other people.

Their thoughts are someone else's opinions,

their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation."

Another huge problem/contradiction with the IWCA is the perception of what the working class is, how class is experienced, and how class is formed. The limited ambition of their ultra localist transitional demands, which as everybody knows, has been hierarchical/Leninist politics. And this IN THE AGE OF GLOBALISATION, almost as if the computer had not been invented, and as if culture/experience was only a local construction. **There are no outsiders in the working class**, something Ian Bone has said. For the first time in history, anarchism is now possible, though it has always been necessary. The skill and knowledge sharing necessary for an anarchist society is within reach technologically.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

If we wish to save people from death, then we must win them for life. It is not enough to engage in representational politics. We cannot wait and impose socialism later, or 'develop' it later, any more than the vain hope that Marxism/communism would be created in state socialist countries. We must change people now, for that is the essence of our cultural work. Moreover, in this work, all the forces of health within society are on our side (informal popular front sensibilities) all those who have warmer ambitions rather than those of decay, bigotry, conservatism of all sorts, stupidity, environmental blight, or imperialist war. **Desire, possibility, urgency, struggle, imagination and experimentation would be the watchwords in the battles to come.** Against reformist electoral Leftism (regardless of its declared allegiance), turgid politico's that regard theory and internationalism as a poisoned chalice, and in contrast to such Leftism. **Governed as it is by anti intellectualism, and the denial of creative human agency.** *We (me & people like me) regard internationalism, ideas, ethics and the value of the individual in the historical process far far higher.*

Rather than privileging one sector, and/or community/ies, the job of revolutionaries is to work everywhere they can – in factories, call centres, shopping centres, day-care centres, tenants associations, popular campaigns, to appropriate authority and sustain working class and popular forms of control. Thompson believed that "A breakthrough at any one of these points... would immediately help in precipitating a diffuse aspiration into a positive movement". All publications should be part of the renewal of popular working class politics; "there will be Left Clubs [social centres] discussion groups, conferences, educational and propagandist activity".

This was against orthodox leftist practice that had lost the ingredient of humanity, and does not let moral and imaginative faculties affect its one-dimensional bureaucratic politics. That also eliminated values such as internationalism from the sphere of political judgement, feared independent thought, encouraged anti-intellectual trends, and finally had stereotypical views of what the 'working class was, what its' views were, and what it needed'. It is the spirit of freedom that has been so widely praised by revolutionaries, authors and poets across all cultures and corners of the globe. In addition, it is part of the heartbeat of Marxism; it is a utopian and missionary belief in the righteousness of working class struggle - **this virtuous and dramatic pose of revolutionary defiance and action**, an essential part of the socialist dynamic and revolutionary way of being. Bureaucrats seek to extinguish these flames, or tone down, and recuperate into the weary self-sacrificial time-served routine of stale ideological purity that is merely self-important philistinism, a convenient excuse to do nothing, and/or the myopic 'realism' of the career politician.

Zizek (2007) indicates that these struggles are old ones, Mao too was writing against 'dogmatic Marxists', and/or those who fail to understand the nature of contradictions, and that is true of some who have failed to understand the inclusive and utopian nature of Marx's theories. Such as Left Communists or Anarchist Communists, who also fail to have Marxist theory because they only have Marxist ideology (as the Situationists would say). Marxist philosophy has characteristics such as its' class nature, the other essential part is its practicality, theory depends upon practice and in turn works for practice, or it should, because otherwise it is not Marxist. Thus we work towards truth (Negri, 1985) based upon objective results in social practice and not by subjective feelings or pre written ideological ultra leftist principles such as the 'Trade unions are reactionary FULL STOP'.

A quote from a London organiser;

"the only thing smelling of alienation is the separations being thrown up by politico's and what they call 'ordinary' people. Ordinary people of course, being those not currently signing up to the (anarchist or any other) ideology of the day. It's the fear that *"People will laugh at us because we don't look serious"*, (read: seriously drab). *"Workers will run a mile and we mustn't offend them with stuff that doesn't look (properly) 'Political'.* We must be wary of straying down far down the path of trying to appease every 'stereotype' of what is and isn't working class. Because there is *no* template that brings instant success.

Believe me, because I've been there and done that. The only thing is just putting in hard work and getting on with it."

Raphael Samuel, part of Thompson's circle, noted that being communist is not just as a card-carrying member of 'the party', 'Association', [or Federation] but **it is the commitment to the revolutionary idea**. Thompson reacted consciously against formulations that saw working class formation in a determined process; 'steam power plus factory system equals working class', and that included 'local representational activity' aimed at supposed immediate 'working class needs'.

Thompson's energy was driven by passion and commitment, "history is the memory of a culture, and memory can never be free from passions and commitments". Consider the emphasis on the anonymous 17th and 18th century threatening letters Thompson freely quoted. Such as "As for this litel

fire. Don't be alarmed it will be a damd deal wors when we burn down your barn", and Thompson was not bothered whether the barn was subsequently burnt down or not.

What mattered was the struggle, trying, & perhaps failing, but trying again. Class-consciousness is constructed on the battleground of class struggle. Thompson thanked those who organised by night, who fell at Peterloo, who hawked the radical press, who resisted and protested in thousands of ways, and thought thousands of thoughts against capitalism, and stood tall for liberty;

"We cannot impose our will upon history in anyway we choose. We ought not to surrender to its circumstantial logic. We can hope and act only as 'gardeners of our circumstance'... I have been meditating not only on the meanings of 'history' but on meanings of people whom I have known and trusted. I have been encountering the paradox that many of those whom 'reality' has proved to be wrong, still seem to me to have been better people than those who were, with a facile and conformist realism, right. I would still wish to justify the aspirations of those whom history, at this point in time, appears to have refuted."

It has been said that high politics is 'the art of the possible', but I prefer to reverse the formulation to get the 'Possibility of art in politics'. Like Morris I prefer the beautiful to the drab, and appreciate skill at work to monotony, I can envisage our future no other way. Oscar Wilde would of agreed "I made art a philosophy and philosophy an art" (*De Profundis*).

'Triumph of the Will' Class for itself not the *class in itself*

Where Class War had its advantage is in the articulation of working class ideas in practice, **the class for itself in** its basic instinct. That is why I got involved even though I could not articulate it, and why I still am now I can articulate it. It is not mediated leftism like Red Action/IWCA, or any of the other leftists who try to construct an idealised and localised *class in itself*. If we look at what arises spontaneously within the working class we have to look at Thompson, Christopher Hill, Hobsbawm, and our very own Dave Douglass amongst others for the historical experience. In brief, it is class struggle and working class attempts to protest that are important. Those who forget that and do not encourage it do not have the true interests of our class at heart. We should give no time to those who pretend that there is a simple answer to the complex problems the working class faces today. Real struggle is not perfect; it is how we learn to deal with attempts to build working class protest and resistance that is important.

We cannot impose mediated leftism/stasis on working class organisation that is yet more reactionary elitism, which is easily recuperable, apart from perhaps being easily absorbed into neo-Leninism. Thus, Thompson says in "The Poverty of Theory", and which I have updated;

"It is the cumulative attribution, in orthodox left/@, libcom and especially RA/IWCA writing, of identity, volition and even notions of inner destiny, which evoke suspicion. They have gone down to 3 small areas and with a great deal of huffing and puffing in 15 years have, so they say, have found out that they haven't been able to find and classify a class. They can only find people who reflect suggested local concerns. They don't find different workers with Nike gear, who might go to Spain on holiday. In fact they don't find class at all, nor today's, yesterdays or tomorrows feel and spirit of the present times (zeitgeist) either. Class is not this part or that part of the machine, but the way the machine works once it is set in motion – not this interest and that interest, but the friction of interests – the movement itself, the heat, the thundering noise. Class is a social and cultural formation that cannot be defined abstractly, or in localised isolation, but only in terms of relationship with other classes, and ultimately, the definition can only be made in the medium of time – that is action and reaction, change and conflict. When we speak of a class we are thinking of a very loosely defined body of people who share the same categories of interests, social experiences, traditions and value system. Who have a disposition to behave as a class, to define themselves in their actions and in their consciousness in relation to other groups of people in class way's. Class itself is not a thing, it is a happening."

"The Peculiarities of the English" page 85, in "The Poverty of Theory, and other essays" by E.P Thompson, Merlin Press, 1978.

Thus in the end of "The Making of the English Working Class" we find the words of James Morrison, who reflected on the new industrial-capitalist society in 1834 – "**Orphans we are, and bastards of society**". Thompson comments 'The tone is not one of resignation, but of pride', or 'no one likes us and we don't care' as Millwall fans were later to sing - class war, *by all means necessary*.

Oscar Wilde and I agree - No regrets, ever;

"To regret one's own experiences is to arrest one's own development. To deny one's own experiences is to put a lie into the lips of one's life. It is no less than a denial of the soul."

FOR SALE **Anti Fascist publications**

The Fascists in Britain by Colin Cross, Barrie and Rockliff, 1961, 212 pages, first edition. £24

Race and Racism in Britain by John Solomos, Palgrave MacMillan, 3rd edition, 2003, 299 pages. A copy that has been read and has some markings, £12.

Learning About the HOLOCAUST, The Holocaust Centre, Beth Shalom, 2000, 38 A4 pages, colour, ex-library, good condition. £3.

Fascism – as a mass movement, by Muihaly Vajda, Allison & Busby, 1976, spine has been exposed to sunlight, but this is a good reading copy. Minimal pencil marks to the text. £8.

Fascism for beginners by Stuart Hood & Litza Jansz, Icon books, 1993. Very good condition. £8.

Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class: Essays by Tim Mason, edited by J. Caplan, Cambridge University Press, 1996. Very good condition. £16.

Blood on the streets: A report by Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council on racial attacks in East London (Paperback) Foreword by Bil Keys, General Secretary, Society of Graphical and Allied Trades. Paperback: 110 pages. Publisher: Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council (1978) Very good condition, text is unmarked, no inscription. £10.

In Excited Times: the People Against the Blackshirts, by Nigel Todd, published by the Bewick press and Tyne and Wear Anti Fascist Association, 1995, 130 pages, This book reveals for the first time an extensive web of fascism and fascist sympathisers, the shadowy presence of MI5, and the exploits of those anti fascists for whom the Second World War began long before 1939. NEW. £2

Bloody Foreigners – the story of immigration to Britain, by Robert Winder, Abacus, very good condition, 545 pages, 2006. £5.

Facing the Threat: Fascism and the Labour Movement, (Paperback) Information by Searchlight (Author?), published by Tyne and Wear Anti Fascist Association, 1998(?) 33 pages. £3.

Fascism in Britain A history 1918-1985, R. Thurlow, Blackwell, 1987, hardback. Fab, text perfect, photographs are brilliant. £25.

Fascism by Richard Griffiths, Continuum Books, 2005, 165 pages, NEW, £9.

Journal 1935-1944 by Mihail Sebastian, Pimlico, 2003, 641 pages; "One of the most remarkable literary achievements of the Nazi period, Sebastian's journal vividly captures the now vanished world of pre war Bucharest. Under the pressure of hatred and horror in the huge 'anti semitic factory' that was Romania in the war years... standing as one of the most important human and literary documents to survive from a singular era of terror and despair." Like new, £12.50.

The Hitler Conspiracies: Secrets and lies behind the rise and fall of the Nazi party, by Professor David Welch, Ian Allen publishing, 2001, first edition, NEW, £10. Including the deals that helped the Nazis gain power in Germany, and this book covers the anti Nazi resistance in full. Large book, 192 pages, many photos.

The Trial Of Mussolini – Being a Verbatim Report of the First Great Trial for War Criminals held in London sometime in 1944 or 1945, by "Cassius", London: Victor Gollancz, 1943, 82 pages. £4

Reluctant Refuge: The Story of Asylum in Britain by Edie Friedman and Reva Klein, 2008, The British Library, 148 pages. £12. NEW.

Support the Wolverhampton Anti Racists – Drop All the Charges! Wolverhampton Anti Racist Committee, 1978. 16 pages. £3.00

Fascism and the National Front by Colin Sparks, *Socialist Worker* pamphlet, 1978, 47 pages. £4.60.

Under a National Flag – Fascism, Racism and the Labour movement by Frank Richards. Revolutionary Communist Pamphlets, 1978, 28 pages. £3.60

The Anti Nazi League and the Struggle against Racism, Revolutionary Communist Group, by Maxine Williams, 1979 2nd edition with new postscript, 16 pages, very good condition. £ 4.60.

Women and the National Front, Veronica Ware, 20 pages, **Publisher:** A.F. and R. Publications (1979) Very Good condition. A Searchlight pamphlet. £4.

This is "**University Forward**", organ of the University Labour Federation, Vol. 7, No. 4, March 1942, 32 pages. Articles are "*Universities under National Socialism*", "*The Far East*", "*Christians and the war*", "*Should we hate the Germans?*" by Dr. Blunt, O. Stapledon & D.N. Pritt M.P.

"*Nationalism and the Nazis*" by R. Pascal, "A Very great woman" by R. Farrington, "Democracy at war" by T.L. Horobin, M.P. and "Clear Thinking in Politics" by Professor Susan Stebbing. £18.60

Mussolini and Fascist Italy by Martin Blinkhorn, 2nd edition, Routledge, 64 pages. 2001, in very good condition. £4

Immigration and Social Policy in Britain (Social Science Paperbacks), Catherine Jones, new edition (6 Mar 1980) 304 pages, like new. £8.60

The Nazis: A Warning from History by L. Rees. 400 pages, Publisher: BBC Books (2 Mar 2006) £4.60 Very good condition.

White Racism: A Psychohistory by Joel Kovel, intro by Ivan Ward, London: Free Association Books, 1988, 295 pages. £8.60

Illusions of Grandeur: Mosley, Fascism and British Society, 1931-81 by D.S. Lewis, Manchester University Press, 1987. Very Good. £22

Political Violence and Public Order: Study of British Fascism by Robert Benewick, 340 pages, Allen Lane first edition, 1969. £18

THE SCOURGE OF THE SWASTIKA A SHORT HISTORY OF NAZI WAR CRIMES ILLUSTRATED by Lord Russell of Liverpool, Corgi, 1964, 222 pages. £4

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM IN GERMANY by Trotsky, Pelican books edition, 1975, 506 pages. £28. Good condition.

A Woman In Berlin, anonymous, Virago Press, 311 pages. 2007. £4.60. Very Good condition. A "war diary unlike no other... deeply affecting portrayal of a woman fighting for survival amidst the horror and inhumanity of war. Begun on 20th April 1945, on the day Berlin first saw the face of war, and ending on June 22nd 1945, the anonymous author describes life within the falling city as it was sacked by the Russian army."

Christine: SOE Agent & Churchill's Favourite Spy, Madeleine Masson, 2005, 320 pages. £4.60 Very Good condition. "*The thrilling tale of an extraordinarily brave woman who was prepared to die for freedom*".

"The Working Class Against Fascism" Hardback. The Official Text and the 2 speeches – a report delivered August 2, 1935 on the second point of the agenda: The fascist offensive and the tasks of the Communist International in the fight for the unity of the working class against fascism by G. Dimitrov, General Secretary of the Communist International at that body's 7th World Congress held in Moscow, August 1935. Pub: Martin Lawrence; First UK Edition (1935), 127 pages. £14

"Anti Fascist" by Martin Lux, Phoenix Press, 2006, 95 pages. An account of street and indoor fighting against the National Front in the 1970s. Highly recommended. £7 NEW.

"*It's the late 1970s and racism, especially in the form of the National Front, is getting worse, much worse. Anti-fascist is a personal account, written from a strictly working class perspective, of the street fighting that took place to defeat the racists – Brick lane, Wood Green, Southall, Lewisham, and more. This book is unlikely to appeal to pacifists.*"

"A History of Fascism, 1914-45" (Paperback) by Stanley G. Payne, UCL press limited, 1995, 613 pages. £15.

"Fascist Europe: The Rise of Racism and Xenophobia" by Glyn Ford, Pluto Press, 1992, 216 pages. £6. Very good condition.