

Morris Beckman and the '43 Group'

The Second World War changed Morris Beckman. His studies were brought to an end and he joined the Merchant Navy. He criss-crossed the Atlantic on tankers and merchant ships and survived two sinkings.

At first sight his post war career is unremarkable. With no going back to earlier plans to be a civil engineer, he joined the clothing trade – still very much a Jewish trade. During the war he developed a sideline in writing and carried on with articles and stories for trade magazines. He also took part in clandestine activity to physically destroy fascist activity in Britain. Now retired, Beckman has written the story of this 3 year campaign which drove the fascist Mosleyites off the streets and destroyed their attempts to rebuild. Beckman's '43 Group' (so called because there were 43 people at its initial meeting), was largely composed of Jewish ex-service men and women. They had returned from the war to see the Mosleyites again holding public meetings, blaming the Jews for the war. The Group had three aims: to expose the presence of the fascists; to physically disrupt their activities, and to pressure the new Labour Government to outlaw racial hatred harassment. On the last of these the Government was unwilling to budge. Although it was accepting thousands of Baltic and Ukrainian nazi collaborators, it would not accept immigration of Jews, least of all the old and sick who might be a "burden on the community" or who "might provoke strong reactions from certain sections of public opinion." (quotes from "Justice delayed: how Britain became a refuge for Nazi War Criminals" by David Cesarani, (Methuen) £5.99). In the 1940s political life was out in the streets, there were speakers corners all over London and in every big city The 43 Group took it as their task to heckle every fascist meeting and, where possible, to knock over their speaking platform. Fascist paper sellers and fascist parades were attacked. Some police were sympathetic to the fascists, but many had served in the army and had seen what fascism in power meant and some were prepared to look the other way. But there were arrests, which only encouraged more people to join the attacks on the fascists. Over the three years, some 1,000 people joined the group, thousands more read their paper 'On Guard' or contributed financially. One of the Group was a certain Vidal Sassoon which certainly sheds a new light on "Wash and Go!" The 43 Group sent in infiltrators to all the fascist groups and had an excellent intelligence network. One member even became one of Mosley's bodyguards suffering at least one beating from fellow 43ers unaware of his real identity. Jewish community leaders opposed the 43 Group, but some of the official Jewish ex-service Branches did support them. Within three years the main fascist group – the Union Movement was in grave decline. Their public meetings and street corner rallies were failing to attract support and local communities had the confidence to challenge their meetings without waiting for the 43 Group "commandos". The Group felt that the fascist threat had been thwarted and, three years after everyone else, Group members could return to "civvies".

Women Resisting Fascism and Racism Day School

On Saturday 24th April, Women Resisting Fascism and Racism held a dayschool at the Queens's Walk Community Centre. Over 50 women participated and groups represented included; the Asian Progressive Forum, Anti Racist Alliance, NAFA, Anti Nazi League, Women's Aid to former Yugoslavia, Lesbians and HIV, London Bisexual Group, and Searchlight Magazine. Women came from Sheffield, Bristol, Birmingham and London as well as Nottingham. A creche was arranged and costs kept low. The event was also widely publicised both locally and nationally. The result was to attract a good mix of women. NAFA took care of the security – which was much appreciated.

Workshops included "What is fascism?", "Despair and Empowerment", "Asylum Bill", "Anti-semitism; the experiences of three generations of women" and "Challenging Racism".

A final discussion centred on positive action. The day's theme was Information-Inspiration-Action. Time was set aside to focus on what women can do to resist further. There was much talk on the need for education; networking with local community groups and anti-fascist groups; and various proposals were made for the continuing activities of Women Resisting Fascism and Racism. An interesting debate arose over whether or not resistance to fascism ought to be non-violent, a debate that continues....A full report of the dayschool is being prepared. Women Resisting Fascism and Racism has continued to grow since this dayschool. We meet twice a month, and for more information contact: WRF&R c/o Women's Centre, 30 Chaucer Street, Nottingham.

Babysitting costs are refunded at each meeting. Come along and shape what happens in the future.

**WRF&R: c/o Women's Centre,
30 Chaucer Street, Nottingham.**



**NAFA Subscriptions are £2 waged, £1 unwaged,
£10 Trade Unions & organisations.
Please write to PO Box 179, Nottingham NG1 3AQ.**

Unity

**NOTTS ANTI FASCIST ALLIANCE
ISSUE NO. 1 • DONATION PRICE 10p**



**NAFA
United against
fascism
United against
racism**

NAFA is a broad based anti-fascist group. We are open to all anti-fascists and are not run by any one political organisation. We try to be democratic and give different people the opportunity to make whatever contribution they can. Interested? Then contact us at:

**NAFA
PO BOX 179
NOTTINGHAM
NG1 3AQ**

**BNP
MEETING IN
NOTTINGHAM**

Question: WHAT DO YOU CALL A FASCIST IN A SUIT?



Answer: THE ACCUSED

This bunch of boneheads in suits might not look much. But they think they're the master race! Four of them, Simon Chadwick, Graham Tasker, and the Belshaw brothers are now awaiting their fourth court appearance in connection with an attack on a Jewish Solicitor and anti-fascist in Mansfield. After their arrest race hate material was found in their homes, along with Combat 18 documents. This included a list of Jewish students in Nottingham. At each court appearance so far anti-fascists, including members of NAFA and Nottingham ANL, have picketed the court. This has clearly unnerved the master race because the case has now been moved to Leicester. The date is yet to be announced but watch out for details.

The BNP have held a number of meetings in pubs in Nottingham. They have been booked under such names as The Vauxhall Owners Club and a Cycling Club. In one pub about a month ago they were rumbled and sent packing with little Graham Tasker complaining about being

picked on. If you know of any sordid gatherings by people claiming to be a Robin Reliant Owners club or a Poodle Appreciation Society let us know. In fact, any information on BNP activities in Nottingham would be gratefully (and confidentially) received.

1993 LOCAL ELECTIONS

Cotmonhay (in Derby).....	104 votes (3%)
Oxley (nr. Watford)	115 votes (5%)
Hinkley (in Leicestershire)	57 votes (1.8%)
Blably (in Leicestershire)	70 votes (3.4%)
Colne (in Lancashire).....	162 votes (3.4%)
Reigate East (in Surrey).....	74 votes (3%)
Healey (in Cardiff)	57 votes (4%)
Stoke-on-Trent	99 votes (4.3%)

There are several questions which have to be asked of the BNP's strategy, and their reasoning for standing so few candidates. The outcome of the elections indicates that the BNP have no actual electoral support and that their "high profile" tactics do not work.

BNP candidates tended to focus on areas of high unemployment and small suburban communities, such as mining villages. In such places, where a work based culture and social life has declined along with industry, many workers have lost their 'identity' and the BNP may, to

some, offer an alternative.

In these times of a long standing Tory government, disillusioned right wingers, and lets face it may be ex-Labour voters, look for an alternative. The right wing manifesto of the BNP may appeal to some, with its policies on immigration control and promises of higher white employment. However, many potential BNP voters are put off by the extreme and often violent image of the party, such as skinheads and football hooligans. The media has portrayed this image when reporting fascist activities in Britain and Europe. The recent 'World In Action'

Throughout Britain, the BNP stood only 8 candidates in the local elections on 6th May this year.

The NF stood only 4. These pathetic results must have been a disappointment to the BNP and their supporters.

programme on Combat 18 left many people appalled that such extreme tactics are used by fascists. This kind of image may have contributed to the BNP's failure in the local elections, and explain why there is very little "freshblood" attending BNP rallies and meetings. Yet this 'pathetic' showing shouldn't be a cause for complacency. BNP activists have been involved in acts of violence, and unless stopped many will continue to be so. What's more, fascists have used other more 'respectable' tactics with more success in the past. This is an option we must be prepared to face up to.

Lesbians, Gays & Bi-Sexuals Fight Back

The murders of five gay men by a serial killer in London has highlighted the fears of lesbians, gays, and bi-sexuals who face the daily threat of physical attack and discrimination.

This was the news which played on the minds of many of the 100,000 on this year's Pride demonstration. On the journey back to Nottingham I was shown an article in The Daily Sport which shocked some of the people I spoke to. It applauded the serial killer! As the writer put it; this was the only way of ridding society of AIDS. This matches the attitude of the British National Party (BNP), who are no friends of ours, and the article shows that neither is The Daily Sport. In Britain, attacks on lesbians, gays, and bi-sexuals are on the increase. A Home Office sponsored survey in January found that attacks had increased by one third. Last August, London gay pub 'Central Station' had its windows smashed and CS gas thrown into a crowded bar. On the

same day, due to a tip off to 'Capital Gay' magazine, a successful picket by gay activists prevented attacks on other gay pubs such as 'Brief Encounter', 'Cromptons', and 'Village'. In the last month there has been yet another vicious racist attack at the 'London Apprentice' ('LA'). In the latest incident, a black gay man was attacked by three white skinheads. In the past, black gay men have been subjected to both

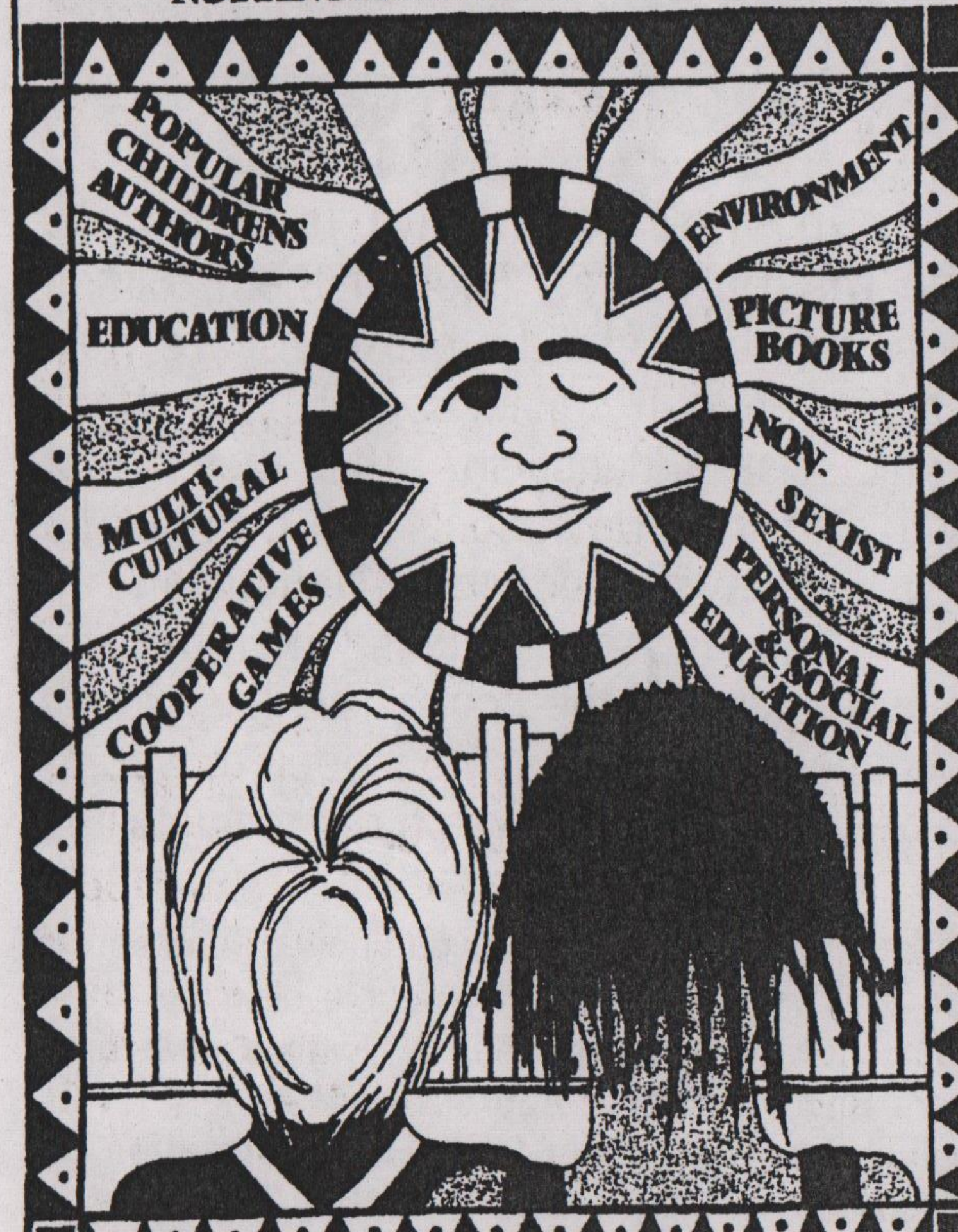
UNITY IS THE WAY TO VICTORY

verbal and physical abuse by a minority of the customers. There have been sightings of men in the club wearing fascist regalia. It is understood that on at least seven occasions the club has shown a video that glorifies fascism. At the same time as racist activities rise inside, there have been numerous fascist attacks on gay men outside the club. For several weeks members of Combat 18 have been

hanging around the 'LA'. Combat 18 have reported carrying out nearly ninety attacks on gay men leaving the club. We cannot separate the attacks on black people inside the club from the fascist attacks on gay men, black and white, on the neighbouring streets. The fascists are active in the area around the 'LA' - the National Front had its HQ there in the 1970s and early 1980s, and the BNP has been increasing its presence in the area in recent months. In the last two years there have been four racist murders within two miles of the BNP HQ in Welling, South East London. **We are tired of being scapegoats in a system that creates poverty and the social conditions breed homophobia and racism. Racism and fascism affects us all. Defeating fascism - in London, or in Nottingham, across Britain and Europe - means building a united front. Unity is the way to victory.**

CHILDRENS BOOKS

MUSHROOM BOOKSHOP 10-12 HEATCOTE STREET
NOTTINGHAM NG1 3AA 0602 582506



we offer 10% discount on net books
schools and libraries: 12.5% discount on non-net books
fast ordering of any books in print
free delivery. contact sue mather or hilary trengrouse

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 21st August: Mansfield Anti-Fascist Unity Gig:

(Fundamental, Blaggers ITA, and others): watch out for details including transport from Nottingham

Sunday 5th September: Green Festival:

Nottingham Embankment (NAFA stall booked)

Monday 4th October: Ray Hill:

venue to be confirmed (contact NAFA via PO Box 179 for details): NAFA meeting with Ray Hill: ex-mole within the far right, and author of 'The Other Face of Terror Inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Network'

Monday 11th October: Morris Beckman and the 43 Group:

7.30 p.m. at Friends Meeting House, Clarendon Street, Nottingham. A joint meeting of NAFA and the Jewish Socialists' Group. An exhibition of photographs and press cuttings from the campaign will be at Mushroom Bookshop (see advert) in the weeks leading up to the meeting.

STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS... Racial Attacks on the increase in Notts.

The Racial Equality Council AGM reported 300 racial incidents brought to the attention of Notts Police and Nott'm City Council in the year up to last March. Racial harassment of ethnic minority Nott'm Council tenants increased by 73% in 1992, and a city council report highlighted 133 reported cases compared to 77 in 1991. Verbal abuse was the most common form, but there was also more serious criminal damage to property, and violence.

Winston Churchill MP recently made a speech attacking immigration. In it he echoed the sentiments infamously voiced by Enoch Powell.

The current Asylum Bill says very clearly that black refugees and asylum seekers have no right to enter Britain, and in Europe there are secretive inter-governmental committees set up to co-ordinate a Europe wide anti-immigration /refugee policy. For 'Fortress Europe' read 'White Europe'. These are all clear attacks on the black communities in this country, because in the language of the State, -refugee' and 'immigration' mean black people and all black people are thus seen as automatically suspect. This is all very sobering for the anti-fascist movement. The organised racists of the BNP et al are not an isolated lunatic fringe so much as a concentrated form of a much wider problem. Most racist attacks are not carried out by BNP thugs, and the



What We're Fighting Against

BNP are certainly not responsible for the still widespread racism of today. Let's be honest here, white anti-fascists enjoy a privilege. They can take on the small groups of the far right - they can choose to do this. Black people, on the other hand, have no choice and face a daily grind of discrimination, harassment and state sponsored suspicion. NAFA has recognised that the anti-

fascist struggle has to be part of a much wider struggle against racism. It has made a small (perhaps too small) contribution by organising against the Asylum Bill and by supporting demonstrations such as the one in memory of the murdered black teenager, Rolan Adams. Of course, fascism is more than racism. It is homophobic, anti-women, and anti-worker. Again the views of the BNP are not so much the lunatic fringe as the concentrated form. Over the last 10 years or so we've seen a whole series of state led panics - over gay people, unmarried mothers, 'enemies within', New Age Travellers, infant criminals, and the standard of the English language - to name but a few. All this lends force to the far right, and creates a climate in which far right views (whether or not voiced by the BNP) can grow. **The anti-fascist struggle has to be part of the anti-racist struggle. It also has to be part of a broader struggle against intolerance and oppression of any kind, and for the kind of society in which such things are completely unacceptable.**