

FIGHTING FASCISM

THE NATIONAL
FRONT ARE NOT
NAZIS.... WE ARE
AY ORDINARY...
"DEMOCRATIC...
...PARTY...!"

"IF YOU DON'T..."
PAMPHLET No.1



12_p

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

THE THREAT OF FASCISM

BARRICADES IN LONDON 1930s (illustration)

THE COLLAPSE OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY

FASCISM - WHAT IS IT?

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM

IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION CONTROLS

IMMIGRATION HAS OFTEN MEANT CHEAP LABOUR (illustration)

AN OUTLINE OF IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION

WHAT'S TO BE DONE WITH POWELL

Mr ENOCH POWELL MP - ON LOVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR

RACIALISM AND THE WORKING CLASS

EXHIBITION AGAINST FASCISM (illustration)

THE LEFT AND THE NATIONAL FRONT

FASCISM AND RACISM IN BRITAIN:
THE NEED FOR A REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

SEXISM, RACISM AND FASCISM

MADISM AND FASCISM

THE DANGERS OF COUNTER CULTURE

Thanks to: ANARCHY No 20: The Left and the National Front
RACE TODAY: Powell. UNDERCURRENTS No 21: Counter Culture.

IF YOU DON'T
MAY 1977

FIGHTING FASCISM is pamphlet number one of the Nottingham-produced political newsletter "IF YOU DON'T HIT IT ... IT WON'T FALL".

The interest for such a pamphlet is because of the recent revival of racism and fascism aided - although not created - by far-right and fascist organisations like the National Front and National Party.

More specifically, the crisis has provided the situation in which fascist solutions to working class people's problems can seem attractive so that during the Summer of 1976 several incidents like the stabbing of young Asians in Southall (London) reflected a general rise in racism ... the need to understand how to oppose racism and fascism now comes from this. At the same time there are many complications in the fight against fascism. Important among these is the totality of underlying fascist ideas. Whereas racism is the biggest support-getter at the moment for groups like the National Front, fascists encourage many reactionary aspects of capitalist society. Among these is Nationalism; a rigid authoritarian view of life; the suppression of women's autonomy and the suppression of any sexuality outside the kind most useful to the continuation of exploitation (especially clamping on gay love); a reactionary position of Ireland, Work etc.

Antifascist committees are one present form of organisation of struggle against fascism and the Nottingham Antifascist Committee has achieved little, been full of conflict and dispute. At the very least this pamphlet should help to air some of the different points of view around.

"This pamphlet contains various articles for discussion. "The Threat of Fascism" identifies the corporate state and the Labour Party as main dangers whereas 'What is Fascism' whilst also exploring the role of reformism, stresses the ideological fight against racism and fascism and criticised the crude 'Smash the Front' approach of the Socialist Workers Party and the International Marxist Group.

Roger of Nottm AFCommittee has supplied us with some 'Notes on Fascism' and an 'Immigration Laws' summary. A no doubt controversial article on Chinese Foreign policy 'Maoism and Fascism' has been included, as well as a couple of peices on the racist demagogue Powell. Two short peices by Trotsky locate fascism in an historical perspective and suggest its base is mainly petit-bourgeois.

An article from the magazine Unercurrents discusses the Counter Culture, one from Anarchy discusses the Left. The need for a revolutionary strategy is raised again and Notes for a meeting on Racism, Sexism and Fascism are reprinted.

Perhaps most important are aspects of racism/fascism we have not had the resourses to research into. For example the most vital struggle facing Britsih revolutionaries: Ireland. What precisely is the relationship which the NF/NP enjoys with UVF, RUC, Roman Catholic Church and the British Army? How deep is fascist infiltration in the Civil Service, Trade Unions, SPUC, Prison Service, Police, Customs, Immigration TAVR, RC Church and so on? What relationship do the fascists have with the Economic League, NAFF., Aims of Industry, Institute for the Study of Conflict... How important is the Fascist International? What can psychology (Reich, Fromm, etc) tell us about fascism? The list is endless from the role of the State to euthanasia and genetic engineering, to Chile and Spain.

This has turned out to be a discussion pamphlet, it cost a lot to produce and the 12p cover price is less than what it cost. All contributions are welcome. For further communication contact IF YOU DON'T

THE THREAT OF FASCISM

Once again, Western capitalism is sinking into a deep economic depression. Mass unemployment is steadily rising, living standards are falling and social services spending is being ruthlessly cut. The effects of the world depression are most acute in Britain because here we live under the oldest and thus most decayed capitalist system. The contradiction between the social character of production and the individual ownership of the means of production is in a state of conspicuous change and is becoming increasingly antagonistic.

These are the objective material conditions that have given rise to an intensification of the conflict between the working class and the capitalist class during the last ten years, as has been exemplified in the successive waves of industrial militancy. The same changes in material conditions also account for a small but significant movement of some workers towards a revolutionary outlook. However it is equally the case that the forces of extreme reaction have been strengthened in response to a decaying capitalism. The growth of revolution and reaction are both products of the same circumstances. They constitute a dialectical unity of opposites.

THE NATURE OF FASCISM

If the threat of fascism is to be successfully combatted it is necessary for us to make an accurate materialist analysis of it. In order to do this our analysis must not be confined, as often is the case, to the ideology of fascism. We must penetrate through its ideological smokescreen to its material basis and identify the class out of whose practice it arises and thus serves.

Fascism is a political strategy resorted to by the monopoly capitalist ruling class when confronted with grave economic crisis and growing working class unrest, as in Germany in the early 1930s. Its real aim is to perpetuate the system of decaying monopoly capitalism. Its means are the building of a mass movement on the basis of attracting demoralized sections of the working class and petit bourgeoisie, through nationalistic and racist ideology, who are then used to support the seizure of state power and the establishment of an authoritarian dictatorship. Once in power, the fascists proceed to crush all opposition to their regime, especially that of the working class, and establish rigid state economic control in the interests of monopoly capitalism.

RACISM AND FASCISM

One common misconception among opponents of fascism is to assume that its essence is racism. In fact, racism is an ideological tool frequently, but not always, used as a means of mass mobilization by the fascists. Racism was not a significant factor in the rise of Italian fascism to power. Furthermore, in the case of Portuguese fascism great efforts were made to try to encourage the peoples of the African colonies to regard themselves as "Portuguese". Intermarriage between blacks and whites was officially sanctioned. But this attempt by the Portuguese fascists to combat growing sentiments of national liberation was unable to suppress the racism inherent in colonial domination.

Racism is a much older ideological phenomenon than is fascism. Racist beliefs are a direct outcome of imperialism. Racism arose as a moral justification for the colonial oppression and exploitation of the peoples of Asia, Africa and America. It also had an important function in motivating the working classes of

the European capitalist countries to fight in wars of colonial conquest. Imperialism is, of course, still very much alive and thus so too is racism.

Just as under capitalism there is continuous economic and political struggle between the working class and the capitalist class so also there is continuous ideological struggle. On the one hand, we are all influenced by the ideology arising out of the practice of the ruling capitalist class. This is disseminated through the educational system and the mass media and incorporates racism as a component part. On the other hand, we are subject to ideas arising out of our immediate experiences, our own actual practice, and these tell us that all workers are oppressed and exploited by the capitalists, regardless of nationality and skin colour, and that all workers have the same interests in common.

So there is a contradiction within our thinking. One side of all of us is racist and says whites are superior to blacks. (This is the case for both white and black people, as Frantz Fanon pointed out.) The other side of us says that all workers, regardless of place of origin and colour, are oppressed by capitalism and thus should unite in common struggle against it.

Whether or not racism is on the increase depends upon which side of this contradiction is the strongest, which is the principal aspect. Under capitalism, it is not a case of whether people are racists or not. Rather it is a case of which aspect of the contradiction between reaction and revolution in general, and bourgeois racism and proletarian internationalism in particular, is growing in strength.

In Britain today it does seem that among some sections of the working class and petit bourgeoisie racism is on the increase and certainly growing more quickly than any upsurge of revolutionary consciousness among other sections of these classes. The growth of racism, which the National Front and other fascists use as their main agitational weapon, will not be curtailed simply by disseminating arguments exposing the fallacies of racism. In the final analysis, the only sure way to defeat racism is by acting so as to strengthen the proletarian, revolutionary side of this ideological contradiction. In short, the only way to lastingly defeat racism is through revolution.

THE GROWTH OF CORPORATISM

Exactly one hundred years ago, Friedrich Engels wrote in his Anti-Duhring:

"...the official representative of capitalist society - the State - will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production."
and:

"But the transformation, either into joint-stock companies and trusts, or into State ownership, does not do away with the capitalist nature of the productive forces. ... The modern State, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit."

Since Engels wrote these prophetic words the State certainly has played an increasingly important part in economic affairs, first of all by means of occasional and limited interventions in the national economy, e.g. monetary policy, and more recently as the planner and director of the economy. Incidentally, the Groucho

-2-

"Marxists" of Militant, with their silly demand that the Labour government should nationalize the largest two hundred firms, would do well to heed Engels.

In Britain, tendencies towards a state-controlled but privately-owned monopoly capitalism have been growing more pronounced since the early 1960s. The National Economic Development Council, the National Enterprise Board, the Industry Act, the Social Contract and the Bullock Report are but a few examples of this trend. But there is nothing new about this type of capitalist economic organisation. In pre-war Italy and Germany it was known as corporatism. As Sir Oswald Mosley, the father of British fascism, wrote back in the 1930s:

"The main object of a modern and Fascist movement is to establish the Corporate State."

Benito Mussolini outlined the key elements of the corporate state as follows:

1. State control of wages, prices and foreign trade.
2. Prohibition of free collective bargaining.
3. State direction of industry and commerce.
4. State subsidies for large-scale private firms.
5. Establishment of industry-wide corporations with compulsory membership for owners and workers, i.e. "industrial participation".

Now these policies sound familiar because they are precisely those which have been introduced by recent British governments, especially Labour governments. In Italy and Germany the setting up of the corporate state followed the fascist seizure of state power. In Britain it has been happening the other way round. The emergence of a corporate state apparatus has preceded the establishment of a fascist regime. So far, the monopoly capitalist class have been able to maintain the facade of parliamentary democracy and have not yet found it necessary to turn to authoritarian dictatorship, to outright fascism. Corporatism is fascism with a human face. Its chief architect has been and is the Labour Party.

THE ROLE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

The governments formed by the Labour Party since 1964 have taken the leading role in gradually assembling the corporate state machine. The Tory government of 1970-74 also played its part. But the Labour politicians have an advantage over their Tory colleagues because Labour leaders such as Michael Foot and Anthony Wedgwood-Benn proclaim their anti-working class corporatist measures as "socialist"! They try to deceive us, the working class, by claiming to serve us with "socialist" legislation when in fact they act in the interests of the monopoly capitalist class. Of course, there is nothing original about this type of "socialism". It was forcibly imposed in Germany during Hitler's time and was called "national socialism", or for short - Nazism. Here in Britain, it is introduced by stealth and called "democratic socialism".

Not only has the Labour Party been in the lead in bringing in corporatism but it has also consistently pandered to racism. To give just one of many examples, in 1968 the Labour government introduced an Immigration Act which denies the right of residence in Britain to British passport-holders without parents or grandparents born in Britain. In other words, it is just a cunning way of keeping blacks out of the country without actually mentioning the terms "race" or "colour". What is more, Labour administrations have taken no measures to stop fascists holding mass marches, with the deliberate intention of provoking violent clashes, through areas where black people live.

One important point must be made clear. It is not a case of the Labour leaders consciously being racists or wanting to bring about fascism. But their anxiety to gather votes in General Elections leads them on the one hand to give in to racist demands for anti-blacks immigration laws and on the other hand to mount feeble and insincere campaigns against racism so as to try to pick up the black vote. Labour, which has been losing support for the last twenty-five years, need all the votes they can get and are not very fussy about how they get them.

Also, the Labour leaders do not see their corporatist measures as being fascist in tendency. Instead, the circumstances of declining capitalism, a system which they have tried to preserve, have forced them along the corporatist road. But what matters is not what the Labour politicians say they are doing but the objective material consequences of their actions. And what they have actually done is to open up the way for full-blooded fascism. Labour's immigration laws have had the effect of making racism respectable. Their economic measures have gone a long way towards implementing the economic policy of fascism. As a result, one thing is at last becoming increasingly clear to the working class - the Labour Party is not our friend but our enemy. It does not serve us but them, the monopoly capitalist class. Social democracy does indeed pave the way for fascism.

THE ONLY WAY FORWARD

The working class in Britain has only one main enemy - the monopoly capitalist class. But the guises in which monopoly capitalism appears are various. Its major political expression in Britain so far has been through the Labour politicians and the section of the Tory Party led by Edward Heath. These "moderates" have tried to control the working class more by deceit, with the willing collaboration of the trade union leaders, than by intimidation. Their method has been that of democratic corporatism. They have been quite successful insofar as they have succeeded in reducing working class living standards and have neutralized the trade unions. But all of these measures have not been sufficient to reverse the decline of British capitalism. And now our class is showing clear signs that it has put up with enough. The revolt against the Social Contract is beginning.

If within the next few years the working class so intensify their resistance to the corporate state then the monopoly capitalists will turn to outright fascist organisations such as the National Front. Big firms will step up their financial contributions to the NF and the courts will interpret the law in ways that favour unrestricted fascist attacks on any working class resistance. The monopoly capitalist class will ditch the democratic corporatism of the Labour Party and turn to the dictatorial corporatism of the National Front.

There is only one way forward for the working class in Britain and that is the revolutionary road. The only final solution to our problems is to rise up and overthrow the monopoly capitalist class and begin the task of constructing a socialist society. The alternatives are, at best, passive submission to the Labour Party's stagnating corporatism or, worse, sporadic, half-hearted and uncoordinated revolt that would push the monopoly capitalists into the arms of rampant fascism.

At the present time there is no Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movement in Britain, let alone a revolutionary party. Most of the organisations claiming to be revolutionary do not clearly and forcefully present the revolutionary alternative to the great



BARRICADES IN LONDON IN THE 1930s.

mass of our class. Instead the Revisionist CPGB and the various Trotskyists opportunistically fawn upon the Labour Party. There is nothing these people like better than to find themselves sitting on the same platform as a Labour M.P. And at General Elections they say, "Vote Labour but for real socialist policies" or "...but with no illusions" and suchlike confused nonsense. These ladies and gentlemen do not seem to notice that they are the ones with the illusions; that the working class has been steadily deserting the Labour Party since the early 1950s. No, when the revolutionary rhetoric is stripped away the Revisionists and Trotskyists are revealed as nothing more than left social democrats, supporters of state monopoly capitalism.

The struggle against fascism can only be won by rapidly developing the struggle for proletarian revolution. Both Labour Party corporatism and National Front fascism must be completely exposed as the twin agents of monopoly capitalism. Time is growing short. There is not a moment to be lost. The need to build a revolutionary movement based upon the just resentments and aspirations of the working class in Britain has never been greater. Brothers and sisters, let us set in motion this great reserve of revolutionary energy. As Mao Tse-tung said:

"The masses have a potentially inexhaustible enthusiasm for socialism. Those who can only follow the old routine in a revolutionary period are utterly incapable of seeing this enthusiasm. They are blind and all is dark ahead of them."

Our task is to help develop and strengthen the revolutionary side of working class consciousness. We can do this by following the mass line:

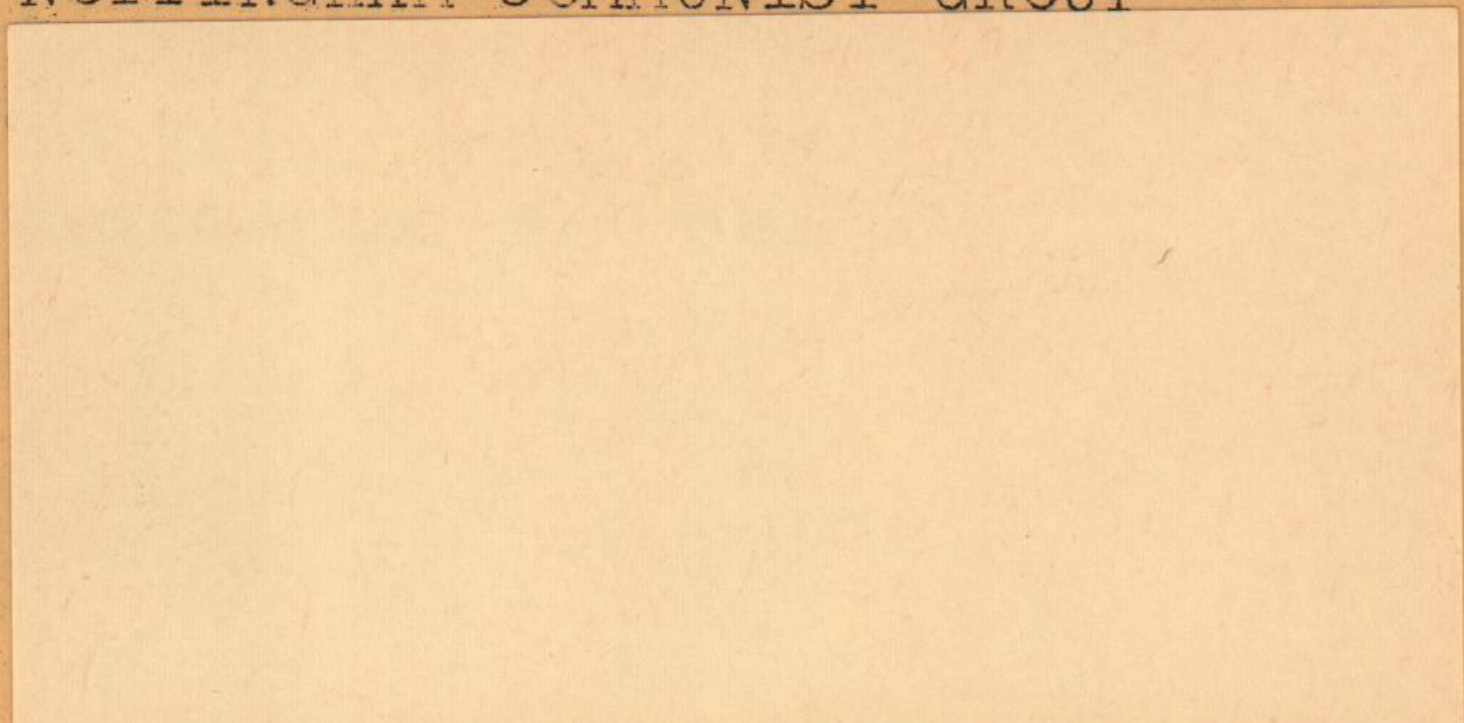
"Take the ideas of the masses and concentrate them, then go to the masses, persevere in the ideas and carry them through..."

In this way fascism can be defeated and socialism emerge triumphant.

Dare to struggle!

Dare to win!

NOTTINGHAM COMMUNIST GROUP



THE COLLAPSE OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY

After the war a series of brilliantly victorious revolutions occurred in Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and latter Spain. But it was only in Russia that the proletariat took full power into its hands, expropriated its exploiters, and knew how to create and maintain a workers' state. Everywhere else the proletariat, despite its victory, stopped halfway because of the mistakes of its leadership. As a result, power slipped from its hands, shifted from left to right, and fell prey to fascism. In a series of other countries power passed into the hands of a military dictatorship. Nowhere were the parliaments capable of reconciling class contradictions and assuring the peaceful development of events. Conflicts were solved arms in hand.

The French people for a long time thought that fascism had nothing whatever to do with them. They had a republic in which all questions were dealt with by the sovereign people through the exercise of universal suffrage. But on February 6th 1934 several thousand fascists and royalists, armed with revolvers, clubs, and razors, imposed upon the country the reactionary government of Doumergue, under whose protection the fascist bands continue to grow and arm themselves. What does tomorrow hold?

Of course in France, as in certain other European countries (England, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries), there still exist parliaments, elections, democratic liberties, or their remnants. But in all these countries the class struggle is sharpening, just as it did previously in Italy and Germany. Whoever consoles himself with the phrase, "France is not Germany," is hopeless. In all countries the same historic laws of capitalist decline. If the means of production remain in the hands of a small number of capitalists, there is no way out for society. It is condemned to go from crisis to crisis, from need to misery, from bad to worse. In the various countries the decrepitude and disintegration of capitalism are expressed in diverse forms and at unequal rhythms. But the basic features of the process are the same everywhere. The bourgeoisie is leading its society to complete bankruptcy. It is capable of assuring the people neither bread nor peace. This is precisely why it cannot any longer tolerate the democratic order. It is forced to smash the workers by the use of physical violence. The discontent of the workers and peasants, however, cannot be brought to an end by the police alone. Moreover, it is often impossible to make the army march against the people. It begins by disintegrating and ends with the passage of a large section of the soldiers over to the people's side. That is why finance capital is obliged to create special armed bands, trained to fight the workers just as certain breeds of dog are trained to hunt game. The historic function of fascism is to smash the working class, destroy its organizations, and stifle political liberties when the capitalists find themselves unable to govern and dominate with the help of democratic machinery.

The fascists find their human material mainly in the petty bourgeoisie. The latter has been entirely ruined by big capital. There is no way out for it in the present social order but it knows of no other. Its dissatisfaction indignation and despair are diverted by the fascists away from big capital and against the workers. It may be said that fascism is the act of placing the petty bourgeoisie at the disposal of its most bitter enemies. In this way big capital ruins the middle classes and then, with the help of hired fascist demagogues, incites the despairing petty bourgeois against the worker. The bourgeois regime can be preserved only by such murderous means as these. For how long? Until it is overthrown by the proletarian revolution.

thly

FASCISM - WHAT IS IT?

What is fascism? The name originated in Italy. Were all the forms of counter-revolutionary dictatorship fascist or not (that is to say, prior to the advent of fascism in Italy)?

The former dictatorship in Spain of Primo de Rivera, 1923-30, is called a fascist dictatorship by the Comintern. Is this correct or not? We believe that it is incorrect.

The fascist movement in Italy was a spontaneous movement of large masses, with new leaders from the rank and file. It is a plebeian movement in origin, directed and financed by big capitalist powers. It issued forth from the petty bourgeoisie, the slum proletariat, and even to a certain extent from the proletarian masses; Mussolini, a former socialist, is a "self-made man" arising from this movement.

Primo de Rivera was an aristocrat. He occupied a high military and bureaucratic post and was chief governor of Catalonia. He accomplished his overthrow with the aid of state and military forces. The dictatorships of Spain and Italy are too totally different forms of dictatorship. It is necessary to distinguish between them. Mussolini had difficulty in reconciling many old military institutions with the fascist militia. This problem did not exist for Primo de Rivera.

The movement in Germany is analogous mostly to the Italian. It is a mass movement, with its leaders employing a great deal of socialist demagogy. This is necessary for the creation of the mass movement.

The Genuine basis (for fascism) is the petty bourgeoisie. In Italy it has a very large base - the petty bourgeoisie of the towns and cities, and the peasantry. In Germany, likewise, there is a large base for fascism.

It may be said, and this is true to a certain extent, that the new middle class, the functionaries of the state, the private administrators, etc., can constitute such a base. But this is an new question that must be analyzed.

In order to be capable of foreseeing anything with regard to fascism, it is necessary to have a definition of that idea. What is fascism? What are its base, its form, and its characteristics? How will its development take place? It is necessary to proceed in a scientific and Marxian Manner.

Leon Trotsky

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM.

1. Fascism is a phenomenon analysed first from the experience of developments in Italy and Germany in the 20's and 30's. Therefore we must recognise both the problems and advantages of historical comparison.
2. Common features of fascism in its 'classic' form are:
 - a. A situation of social/economic/political crisis.
 - b. A failure of working class revolutionary struggle.
 - c. A failure of reformism to squash or divert the workers struggles.
 - d. The organisation of a mass movement of the petit-bourgeoisie (and sections of the working class) based on a general reaction to the crisis in both vague anti-capitalist slogans and tied to nationalist, racist, sexist etc. ideology of bourgeois society. And such a movement fights both International Finance (Jews) and International Communism; and aims to physically smash the organisations of the working class.
 - e. The seizure of ~~power~~- state power by this movement means the temporary loss of control by the bourgeoisie directly in controlling the state power, though sections of the ruling class back the fascists..... and this situation implies an extreme crisis indeed for any section of the ruling class to choose this option.
 - f. The fascist state sets out to smash the organisation of the working class (~~-not--~~ (not merely integrate them)-since this is always the reality of trade unions under capitalism), and impose corporatist unions, etc.
3. Situations like Spain, Portugal, Hungary in the 30's must be seen as variations from this 'classical' pattern.
4. The situation in Britain and Western Europe today fulfills the first criterion but not, as yet, the rest.
5. At the moment the ruling class does not use the fascist 'solution', but a two-sided strategy of confrontation and integration. Integration... through the social democratic parties and trade union leaders, with the Social Contract, Equal Pay Act, or Race Relations Act. Confrontation/repression..... Immigration Acts, Shrewsbury Pickets, Conspiracy laws, Agee/ Hosenball, Special Patrol Group.
6. No major section of the ruling class sees the fascists as a serious option as yet... though there is a significant turn to the right (the edges of bourgeois democracy) with the pushing of NAFF etc.
7. The role of the fascists today (NF, NP) is in several forms:
 - a. Repression/confrontation..., in ~~xx~~ certain areas the police are restricted, politically, in the use of force; here the fascists can play a role (from individual terror... the Guerrillas of Christ the King in Spain or AAA in Argentina) to attacking trade unionists, minorities (Ordre Nouveau of NF),
 - b. Ideological Role... structuring the racism, sexism, etc. in the working class/petit bourgeois embedded in an unstructured way due to the conditioning and structure of capitalist society, and failure of the reformist organisations to really challenge this.
8. The National Front can be called fascist because of:
 - a. Its dynamic is outside the central organisation of bourgeois parliamentary democracy (even in their use of the electoral machine).
 - b. Their aim is to build a mass movement- not an electoral machine.
 - c. Their ideology is traditionally fascist- not merely in the historical links that their leaders have with fascist organisations of the past, but ~~xx~~ also also in the applications of the lessons of Main Kampf etc.... the link of anti-finance capital and anti-communism with the dominant theme of ultra-nationalism and racialism,..... Also seems ~~xx~~.... Also seen in the orientation in the Trades Unions towards superficially anti-capitalist demands of workers control, for shop stewards committees etc.
9. Here we must stress the difference from Powell- who holds to the arena of bourgeois democracy.... while using the political muscle of mass agitation around racism.

10. The implications for Britain are:

- a. the NF's orientation to mass work especially affects its serious work in the trades unions, community groups, (due to the class structure of Britain)
- b. Its orientation towards 'mass' work through the reactionary movements of Festival of Light, SPUC, anti-IRA, etc
- c. The especial importance of the danger of the failure of reformism to give a clear alternative to the ideology of the ruling class over nationalism, racism, sexism, etc.

11. Also as a physical threat- direct now against minorities (against gays in Leeds, against blacks more widely).... and in the future can be seen in the role of the Portuguese fascists around '74 (bombings, the policy of tension), or possibly in the integration of the fascists into state repressive organs (as in the British fascists moving into the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies in 1926 in Britain).

The NF's orientation to mass work especially affects its serious

work in the trades unions, community organisations (due to the class structure of Britain)

IMMIGRATION + IMMIGRATION CONTROLS.

Immigration, as an European wide phenomenon, has been determined by the economic needs of the capitalist economies- requiring labour during the economic boom of the 1950's and early 60's, and requiring both less labour and greater control of migrant labour during the recession since the late 60's.

Immigrants have come to work in industries which the indigenous workers were leaving because of bad conditions, or low pay (Health, transport, foundries) or to booming industries (cars).

"The existence of this immigration gives our economy greater flexibility since the immigrants are very mobile, are willing to switch factories and regions, and if it becomes necessary to become compensated unemployed"
(*'Usine Nouvelle'*- a French employers magazine)

"Thanks to foreign workers, real wages are maintained at a lower rate than they would have been without them"

(*'Journal des Associations Patronales Suisses'* 1963)

As these employers papers point out, immigrant labour, if unorganised, can be used to keep down wages; it does not require spending on education, pensions, etc since most immigrants are young workers; and they are more flexible (not by choice).

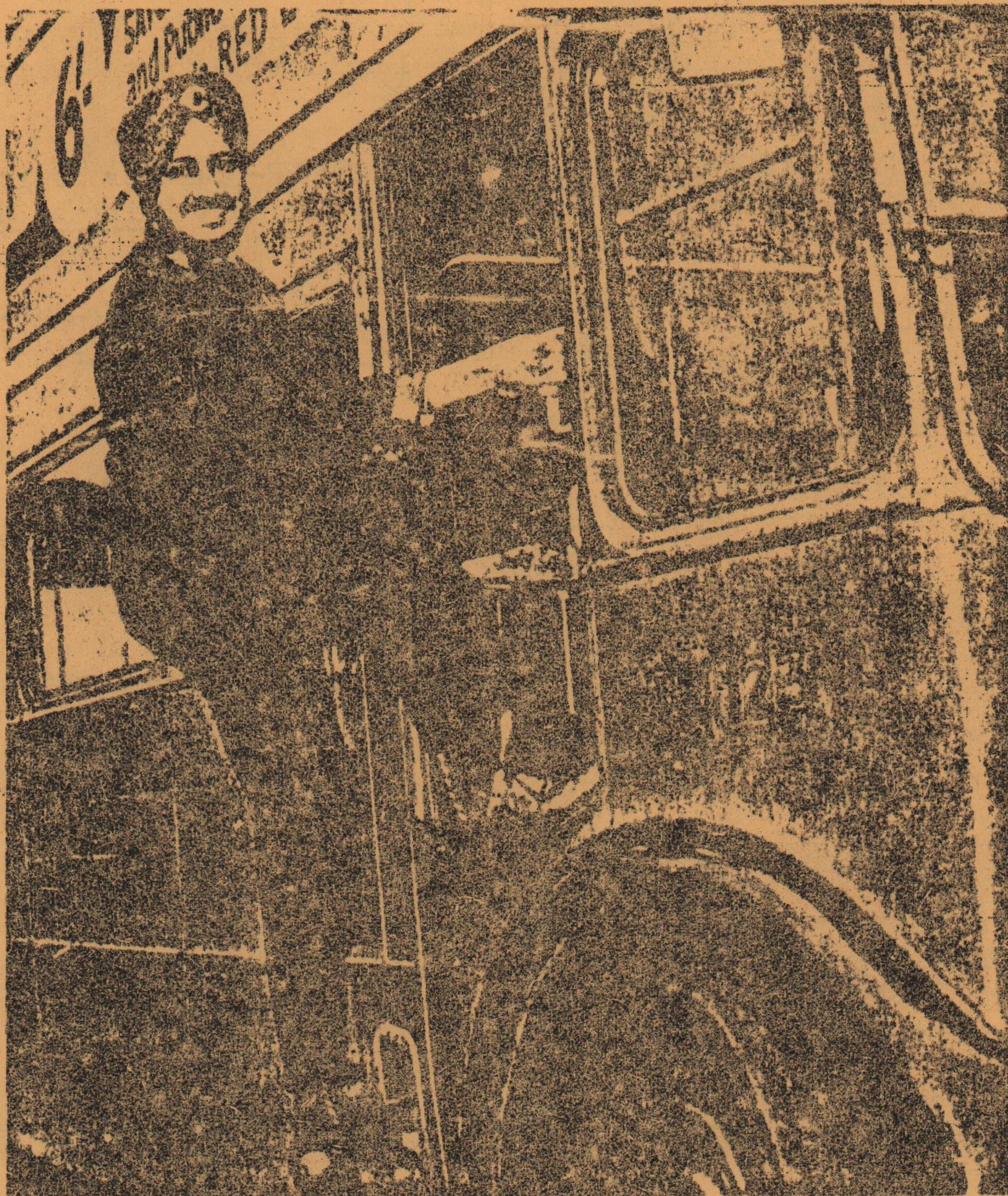
The normal mechanisms to control this situation are seen in the 'Contract' system in France and Germany, where workers from Southern Europe or North Africa enter the country on a one year (or less) contract, to a specific job. The employer must re-sign the contract or the worker is deported. It means the migrant worker will be deported if he or she joins a political organisation or trades union, or protests in any way against bad conditions, speed-up, wage cuts, etc. (1,000's were deported from France who joined their fellow workers in the 1968 strikes) Workers are also kept in 'hostels' sealed off from the indigenous workers, to increase isolation and control.

In Britain the existence of the Commonwealth, and broader citizenship has confused matters for the ruling class. Since the early 1960's though, we can see a range of attempts to draw immigration law closer to the pattern of the French or German contract system

The 1971 Immigration Act ended the right of Immigrants to settle with their family, now they can only enter for a fixed period, for a fixed job, and have no right to bring in dependants.

Under the 1962 Immigration Act deportation of Commonwealth citizens was introduced (if an immigrant broke a condition under which entry was allowed) Under the 1971 Act the ground for deportation was if the Home Secretary "deems his deportation conducive to the public good".

IMMIGRATION HAS OFTEN MEANT CHEAP LABOUR



It is also more difficult to obtain citizenship. Before 1971 a Commonwealth citizen who who was resident in this country for five years or more was entitled to become a British citizen. Under the '71 Act he must 'prove he is of "good character" and has "sufficient knowledge of english". The Home Secretary can also arbitrarily refuse applications.

There are further 'controls' on immigrants, in the fostering of racism at various levels; 1. through direct racist violence (fascist attacks, etc)

2. through racist demagogues (Powell)

3. through the racism in trades unions etc to the failure of the labour movement to oppose racism at all levels

4. through 'institutional' racism....from police violence to built in discrimination in education in education, housing, etc.

These all help to demoralise and isolate a whole section of the working class.

Our opposition to all immigration controls must be to oppose the creation of a layer of workers isolated and super-exploited, and to oppose the racist assumptions built into these laws that it is to some extent or other the existence of immigration that causes problems such as unemployment, housing waiting lists, or whatever, and not the real causes of the contradictions of a capitalist economy, built on profit and not people's needs.

AN OUTLINE OF IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION.

1905 ALIENS ACT - the first modern major restriction on immigration. It was introduced following a wave of hysteria directed against the 'hordes' of East European Jews who entered the country as 'refugees'.

1914 ALIENS RESTRICTION ACT- introduced against 'enemy' nationals in Britain.

1919 ALIENS RESTRICTION (AMENDMENT) ACT - continued the right to deport 'undesirable' aliens after the war. (Applied in recent legislation, such as the Pakistan Act).

1925 SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS (COLOURED ASIAN SEAMEN) ORDER- further restricted employment in the shipping industry. (Further restricted:1935 British Shipping (Assistance) Act).

1920 ALIEN ORDER ACT. - introduced after rioting in seaports against coloured seamen; restricting the right of coloured seamen to get jobs on British vessels.

1948 BRITISH NATIONALITIES ACT.

~~XX~~

1962 COMMONWEALTH IMMIGRANTS ACT.- The main provision was to limit the entry of commonwealth workers to those holding one of the three types of employment voucher:-

Category 'A'- Commonwealth citizens with specific jobs to come to in the UK

Category 'B'- Persons with recognised skills or qualifications in short supply in U.K.

Category 'C'- All other persons: priority given to those who served in H.M. Government forces in the war, and then 'first come come, first served'.

1965 WHITE PAPER 'IMMIGRATION FROM THE COMMONWEALTH' -abolished vouchers of category 'C', cut the numbers of categories 'A' & 'B'. Stricter tests of eligibility for the entry of children 16-18, introduced,

Home Secretary given powers to deport at his discretion, without a court ruling, any immigrant of less than 5 years standing, who he considers had flouted the immigration regulations.

1968 COMMONWEALTH IMMIGRATION ACT. (in response to the racist agitation around the entry of Kenyan Asians) -removed the right of entry of British Passport holders unless they had a 'substantial connection' with the U.K. (i.e. at

least one grandparent born here (the introduction of a "racial distinction in citizenship").

1969 IMMIGRATION APPEALS ACT - introduced to set up appeals procedures for intending immigrants who are refused entry to the U.K. But it contained a clause making it obligatory for intending immigrants to obtain entry visas- certificates from the British Authorities in their own countries..... where no appeals machinery was provided. Thus a substantial number of appeals were effectively denied a hearing.

1969 THE HOME SECRETARY ruled that Commonwealth citizens engaged to women living in the U.K. could not enter to marry and settle. The woman must leave the country and live with her husband.
(June 1974- this ban was lifted)

1971 IMMIGRATION ACT

1. Removes all controls of immigration of Commonwealth citizens who have at least one British-born grandparent (Patrials)
2. No others have the right to enter the U.K. (non-Patrials). they need permission to enter and need a work permit for a specific job with a specific employer. Admitted for one year and permission may be renewed for three more years at the Home Secretary's permission.
3. Dependents have no right to enter but may be admitted for the duration of the work permit only.
4. Commonwealth immigrants subject to control have to register with the Department of Employment.
5. The power of deportation extended and 'deportable' offences made retrospective. One-time illegal immigrants, no longer subject to deportation, may be deported.

(1971- Police set up Immigration Intelligence Unit)

1972 EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES ACT - extended to the UK the EEC's 'liberal' provisions for ensuring the free movement of people within the community. Modification of two of the cardinal principles underlying the 1971 Act was necessary to comply with EEC law;- 1) All non-patrials should for immigration purposes be treated alike, irrespective of nationality. 2) that the admission of workers and the conditions attached to their leave to remain should be closely related to current labour demands.

1973 Pakistan Act. - Following the exit of Pakistan from the Commonwealth, Pakistanis resident in the U.K. given the opportunity of taking British citizenship or being subject to the restrictions of non-Commonwealth citizens.

1973 LORDS RULING ON THE IMMIGRATION ACT. - made retrospective the 1971 act rulings on illegal immigrants- until April 1974

1973 PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ~~XXXX~~ (TEMPORARY PROVISIONS)- important bearing in relation to deportation, powers of police to hold, etc.

????? NEW NATIONALITY ACT - floated by Labour Government, to reshape the 1948 Nationality Act, to enable the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ removal of Commonwealth citizenship and the reduction of those affected to the same level as 'contract' workers in the EEC.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE WITH POWELL



Powell is the one politician in Britain who has a battery of amplifiers and an army of shorthand writers to transmit and record his cries from the wilderness of political isolation.

Time and again he returns to the theme of immigration, and the theme of the political threat posed by the existence of black people in the cities of Britain and in key sections of the British economy. He is the one voice among the party politicians of Britain on whom the lessons of Notting Hill and the political potential of the uprising of black workers is not lost.

Listen to the man: "The coloured population of over two million ... which is predominately concentrated in the central areas of the metropolis and other key urban and industrial centres of Britain does possess ... a power which would not accrue to a mere random sample of two million persons similarly located but not perceived or perceiving themselves as distinct from the rest."

Enoch has not always sung this hymn to black political power. As a Minister in the pre-Labour government of the 50s and 60s, Powell's Ministry of Health was actually responsible for importing and maintaining blacks from the West Indies, from India and Pakistan in the National Health Service. In 1964, when the Immigration Bill, which limited and controlled the movement of workers from ex-colonial countries to the heartland of capitalism, was being debated, Powell was silent. Then, in 1968 he made his 'rivers of blood' speech, attempting to tap, in the mass of the working class, those elements of opinion and support which would attack black people, our presence and our rights in this country, in a nationalist revival.

Today, Powell is not a dreaming nightmare. He is not conjuring from a fevered imagination the blood that may stain the green grass of England's pleasant land. He is describing, as an enemy describes, the strength of a section of the working class which has proved its ability and intention to turn this potential into a visible and viable political power.

Listen again "I have been describing forces which invest the new Commonwealth immigrant and immigrant-descended population in England with the sort of power which cannot, in the nature of things, remain unexerted. The consequences of the New Commonwealth immigration are not static, they are dynamic.....the picture is not that of a province or corner of the country occupied by a distinct and growing population, that would be perilous enough. It is of the occupation, more and more intense, of key areas - and, it may be added, of key functions - in the heartlands of the Kingdom."

Powell makes it clear, to critics and admirers alike, that he acknowledges this power of black people with extreme reluctance. The antidote for him is the force of white nationalism that exists in the working class. There are two alternatives he proposes, to this drive of black working class power: the state must take a stand and not be driven to affording the black population and concessions, real or sham. It must make no acknowledgement of concessions through fear. The frustrations of the white working class must be turned into a movement to stop the blacks.

Harping on the second and final solution, Powell predicts 'civil war'. The whites must not join us in our assault on the police in Notting Hill, in our demand for an extension of the social wage, in the struggle around housing, in our refusal to do shit work, in our opposition to the social contract in industrial employment. They must fight us. They must not stand by bemused or confused by the battle between blacks and the state. They must unite behind the slogan to chuck us out of the country so as to promote the conditions for civil war and heavy state intervention.

Apart from this call to civil war, Powell has nothing to offer the white masses whom he addresses through his loudspeaker of the British press. His economic policy of the nineteenth century free market cuts no ice. As an Irish M.P. (he represents the Protestants of South Down at Westminster) he has failed to represent the anti-British sentiments of the Irish Protestants who want to break away from direct British rule. He is the most popular leper in Conservative politics, flirting through his black speeches with fringe groups like the National Front, who draw power from his sentiments, and votes from his endorsements of their programmes of repatriation.

Powell has been the most famous loser in the Conservative Party, refusing to serve under Heath, being denounced now by the newcomers in Conservative politics such as Winston Churchill Jr. who have accepted the influence of the black vote in their constituencies and are seeking to organise it under Conservative Asian and West Indian leadership.

What's to be done about Powell? Various organisations within the race relations industry have called for his prosecution under the Race Relations Act. A Labour MP has construed his words as provocation likely to a breach of the peace. The editorials in the press, following his speech, concluded that Powell had put himself beyond the pale of respectable politics and debate by seeking to stimulate antagonisms between blacks and whites.

And yet, prosecutions under any Act will not stop Powell. Neither will denunciations of his logic in the Guardian or criticisms of his views in the Spectator. Here is a man whose political power and future depends on the white working class reaction to his call to arms, against the black population. He has described the potential of the black movement in terms which no politician has dared to use. The defeat of Powell means the defeat of the nationalism that is still part of the exploitable cultural consciousness of sections of the white working class. That defeat cannot be brought about by any 'ideological' effort, by any 'raising of consciousness' through leaflets and resolutions. It can only be brought about when white workers recognise, as a contribution to their own struggles, the power, the method, the very mood of blacks who make a move on the streets of Nottingham, in the Asian ghettos of London, on the shop floors of factories, in the industrial centres of Babylon.

RACE TODAY COLLECTIVE.

In a Sunday "Anno domini Interview" the well known Christian Mr. Enoch Powell gave his views on loving ones neighbour. The interview from which we print a short extract below was printed in 'The Listener February 10th 1977.

. would it not be true to say that one of the assumptions it might well be worth making in our society is the assumption that our fellow citizens, of a different colour, for example, have an equal right, with us, to be here?

But that was a legal assumption that you made, you introduced the expression 'right to be here'. A right to be here for a person, not a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by birth, is something which is created by law and can be destroyed by law.

My relationship towards a Frenchman because 'he is as I am' will be the same as my relationship towards an Englishman because 'he is as I am', but our juridical position is different; and if you ask me 'has a Frenchman the right to the franchise in a general election in England'? Then I shall say: 'Hold on a minute I've got to look up the statute'.

Let us suppose that my assumptions about a fellow human being lead me to the conclusion that he has no desire to be part of the society in which he temporarily finds himself, and that, even if he had, such is human nature that, in given circumstances, his presence here, through no desires of his own, will contribute to conflict. Now, that could be derived from an entirely respectful and an entirely candid attempt to value and to understand another human being. Indeed, very often I find myself in a tube train, sitting opposite to people who manifestly come from the Far East and saying to myself: 'Now, there must be a framework in which that man sees himself and his life and his future and his children, a framework in which he sees good and evil How remotely inaccessible that is to me, how remotely inaccessible mine must be to him'. In a sense, here it is the realisation of mutual incomprehension which is part of loving one's neighbour as one's self.

"A right to be here for a person not a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by birth", is something which is created by law and can be destroyed by law. "

This is of course what Powell did in Practice. When Tory Health Minister he resolutely defended the right of people to work in the 'mother country'. Now these same people wanted not so long ago as super-exploitable labour power have become "surplus" to the capitalist economy, Mr. Powell therefore believes their right to live in Britain "can be destroyed by law". As no doubt it could without effective opposition from the working class who do not share Powell's fetish for bourgeois laws enacted in the interests of the capitalist class. It is clear Powell sees no contradiction in the bourgeois ideology of Christianity, and the philosophy of using "fellow human beings" and then discarding them like a crushed egg shell. Neither should he - there is more. He merely updates the Christian doctrine which designated black slaves as "sub-human".

cont

Further on Powell's "assumptions" lead him to certain conclusions about his fellow human being. "In given circumstances, his presence here through no desire of his own, will contribute to conflict". Presumably the "given circumstances" is Mr. Enoch Powell's polite euphemism for the present economic recession.

Powell is correct when he says it is no desire of his fellow human being (Powell's euphemism for black worker) to contribute to conflict. The desire for (racial) conflict lies entirely with disgusting racist demagogues such as Powell. By this inflammatory speech he attempts to incite reactionary racial prejudices inherent in the working class. Racial prejudices inbuilt into the class by bourgeois society itself. By using black workers as a convenient scapegoat Powell attempts to divert workers' attention from the economic failings of capitalism. The fact that he has been at least partly successful in the past is a warning that must be taken seriously by the revolutionary left.

Powell goes on to talk about his fellow human being from the Far East who he surveys in the tube. This person in Powell's view must have a "framework" in which he sees "himself", his life, his future, and his children's. Powell finds this person's "framework" remotely inaccessible as the person must do his. Leaving aside what Enoch Powell M.P. was doing slumming it in a tube train, no doubt he would find any workers' lifestyle "remotely inaccessible". Incapable of understanding class differences. By doing this Powell hopes to make important sections of the working class become tied to the bourgeoisie, rather than identifying and perceiving their own class position, which is fundamentally and absolutely opposed to the interests of capitalism. It must be the policy of the revolutionary left that he will not be allowed to succeed.

Ted

CONCERNING POWELL

Anyone interested in Powell can read Paul Foot's book "The Rise of Enoch Powell". A shorter critique of Powell is presented in the excellent "Workers Fight" - Phoenix Pamphlet No. 3. "Racialism and the Working Class". As well as an open letter to Powell it contains an article of the same name by Joe Wright an extract of which we print below. . . .

RACIALISM AND THE WORKING CLASS

IT'S NO USE ARGUING WITH a hard-core racist. Mere words are of no use. They are sick people who need to focus their hate on another group of people.

Let's look, though at some of the common, reasonable-seeming arguments of many white workers. The Bosses' newspapers plug these ideas and arguments about the social services, the 'overcrowding' island' etc. - with one thing in mind: to divide the working class against itself, to drive in the ruling class wedge of racialism.

They are arguments that must be taken up every day. How must militants answer them

cont. . . .

WHY IMMIGRATION AT ALL? WHY NOT EVERYONE TO HIS OWN COUNTRY?

Well, "everyone to his own country" has hardly been part of the British philosophy. In Rhodesia, for example, the British immigrants, unlike the harrassed and exploited immigrant population of this country, form a minority which exploits and dominates the rest of the population.

The movement of workers from the poorer countries to the richer countries is an essential part of capitalism. Integral to capitalism is the existence of 'free labour' - workers moving from the countryside and small towns into the big city employment centres.

As capitalism became a world wide system, so did 'free labour', and today there is hardly a capitalist country in the world which does not have an immigrant population.

But the big increase in post war immigration came as the deliberate result of government policy. There was a labour shortage in many basic industries after the war and this became acute in the early fifties. The government mounted lavish recruitment campaigns in Africa, India, Pakistan and the West Indies.

Indeed, such people as Duncan Sandys, who now call for repatriation toured Uganda and Kenya, appealing to the African Asians that they should take British passports and come to Britain. Potential immigrants were promised a fuller life in the British 'motherland' and many took up the offer.

HAS'NT IMMIGRATION CAUSED UNEMPLOYMENT

In 1966 the average monthly unemployment figure was 360,000; by 1970 the average had risen to 603,000 and as we well know by the end of 1971 it was running near the million mark.

What had happened to immigration during that period? The answer is that taking into account ALL immigration 415,000 more people had left the country than had entered. How is it possible to say that immigration causes unemployment?

THAT MAY BE SO, BUT THE FACT STILL REMAINS THAT THERE ARE 1 MILLION BLACK PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY AND NEAR ENOUGH 1 MILLION UNEMPLOYED HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THAT?

But you might as well say that there are one million people with ginger hair, and freckles, and that it's they who are causing unemployment.

In the 1930's there were 3 million unemployed - who would you say was responsible then?

Unemployment is part and parcel of capitalism; with every slump in the economy, unemployment rockets. It is sheer lunacy to think that unemployment can be solved by a campaign against black people, since this would disrupt the working class unity which is essential to fighting unemployment. We must demand the right to work as a right for the whole working class and in PARTICULAR for black workers who are, more often than not, the first to be made redundant.

CONT

WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL SERVICES? WE'RE TOLD THAT BLACK PEOPLE ARE A STRAIN ON OUR SOCIAL SERVICES?

Why do you talk about 'our' social services? It's not 'ours' - we don't control it do we?

But the working class as a whole PAYS for social security. And black workers pay MORE for social security, because they often come to this country already trained, because they come when they are young and thus a higher percentage are employed (and there are, for a whole period, very few pensioners).

Bearing in mind the higher proportion paying contributions (and creating wealth generally) look at the figures for what's spent:

Average for total pop:	£62.4
Average for immigrants	£48.7

(Figures, for 1966, from Colour & Immigration in the U.K. Institute of Race Relations, 1969)

Thus black immigrants, proportionately, pay more AND take less from social security than whites. If there were no immigrants, the social services would be WORSE.

These figures amount to a scandalous cheating of the immigrant population.

All workers are cheated by the state. Of the wealth which the working class Created (bosses and machines by themselves produce nothing) and is taken by the state, only a part comes back through social services. A whole lot more is actually spent on purposes directed against the working class, like the police and the army.

But these figures show without a doubt that black workers are especially cheated.

WE'RE ALSO TOLD THAT BLACK PEOPLE CAUSE THE HOUSING PROBLEM

How many black building workers have you seen? Quite a few? And how many black property speculators are there? Probably not one. Who caused the rise in prices? The building workers or the speculators and land owners? and how many of those black workers that you see building modern houses are going to live in them? Not very many.

Most black people are forced by low wages and discrimination to live in the old slum areas of the city centres. Again, they are the worst hit victims of the housing crisis.

The sort of logic which blames black people for bad housing and unemployment also blames the working class for rising prices. Most trade unionists know full well how to answer that argument. They would vigorously reply that it is the government and the barons of capitalism who cause rising prices.

Isn't the answer to the racist lie that black people cause unemployment and bad housing EXACTLY THE SAME?

Joe Wright.



Richard Braine

AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS,
CARTOONS, WORDS AND OBJECTS
AGAINST FASCISM - ANCIENT AND
MODERN - IS AVAILABLE.

contact Gay Workers, c/o
People's Centre, 33 Mansfield
Rd., Nottingham.

THE LEFT AND THE NATIONAL FRONT

"Only one thing could have stopped our movement - if our adversaries had understood its principle and from the first day had smashed with the utmost brutality the nucleus of our new movement." - Hitler

Counter-demos. Pickets

How has the left shaped up to the National Front? The answer is, usually, in the most abject fashion imaginable. For instance . . . whenever the NF has held a demonstration or a rally the left opposition consists, for starters, howls of protest to the appropriate local government authorities, "Don't let the fascists use the Town Hall". Then, after their protestations have been rejected, they stage the predictable counter-demonstration picket, which occasionally ends with a bust-up involving the police (who protect the fascists with such determination that, so far, there has been no major clash on the streets between left and right). As a sideline, adventurist elements such as International Socialists might furtively depart from the main march and in a vain attempt to enhance their "Street-fighting" image try to tackle the NF by themselves, which results in a number of arrests and injuries with as always the unfortunate "breakaways" coming off far worse than the NF. Meanwhile as another sideline, tiny cliques of screaming Maoists attack police lines Kamikaze style, and this time they and everyone unlucky enough to be in the immediate vicinity end up getting their heads kicked in by zealous cops. Every shade of leftism is represented during these manifestations, the smaller groups in order to increase their tiny stature adopting violent phraseology which they are incapable of fulfilling with actions.

The platform is always controlled by an ad-hoc committee, with usually the CP in control behind the scenes. The CP doesn't use the platform for advocating the use of violence against the NF; sometimes, in fact, in order to convey the impression that they are just as respectable as the Labour Party, they even go so far as to say that anybody using the platform to propagate the use of violence against the NF will be slung off. (As at Hyde Park, where the left successfully occupied Speakers Corner to prevent the NF from marching there.)

Tackling the Front on the street

The left, in challenging the NF on the streets, has for the most part fallen flat on its face, although by the images projected in their papers you would think that every time the NF ventured into the streets they were defeated decisively by a mass turn-out of the working-class left. Unfortunately, or fortunately perhaps, each time the left attempts to reach the NF they are prevented by the police. The truth of the matter is that the left is unable to make a real physical impression on the police or fascists. What happens sometimes is that we have the spectacle of police beating the shit out of the lefties, while the NF looks on from a safe distance, sniggering or cheering, depending on how vigourously the cops are laying in. All that's achieved in these struggles is hundreds of arrests and injuries, and at Red Lion Square (an example of what I'm thinking of) an anti-fascist was **killed** by the police. I think that this because the left is unable to devise tactics and strategy to suit the situation.

Propaganda

Propaganda directed against the NF has taken on the appearance of a small industry, with even the most obscure left groups churning out a mass of pamphlets. Despite the tremendous amount, all these pamphlets and articles are of a low calibre. They all, for instance, lay stress on the criminality of the leaders of the NF. We are treated to the same old photographs of Tyndale in his nazi uniform. They never go much further never attempt to analyse why the working class never turns out en masse to smash the Front, or even why large numbers of working-class people subscribe to Front-type ideas. They are at pains to point out that NF leaders strutted in nazi uniform, embellished with swastikas, but who has any use for that emblem now? Today the British fascists parade around using the Union Jack, and it's "unpatriotic" to insult the flag, isn't it? (This is the view of the CP more than other left groups.) In a book written by a CP hack, Tony Gilbert, called "Only One Died", which deals with the government inquiry into the Red Lion Square riots, the author in giving evidence claimed that the NF placing the Union Jack on leaflets was a "Misuse" of the flag. But this isn't isolated - witness the revolting behaviour, the chauvinism, of most of the groups involved in the latest anti-fascist movement, during the EEC referendum. Most of these groups regard

the imperialist bloodbath known as World War Two as - anti-fascist! How many times have we been subjected to speeches containing such gems as "Free speech for fascists? That was decided on the streets of Stalingrad . . . or Berlin" and nauseum at anti-fascist events? Too many times, I think.

With the growth of fascism in the country (and indeed, worldwide), with the struggle against it, a magazine exclusively anti-fascist has emerged, "Searchlight". The contents are detailed and informative (and I recommend it for this) but on the other hand its tone is legalistic, "patriotic", trade-union oriented. For examples, there are open letters to Roy Jenkins requesting him to ban the NF, and articles urging the government to create stronger laws against racism - laws which, as we know, end up being used against the anti-fascists, like the 1936 Public Order Act. Writers for Searchlight range from IS hacks to right wing Labour MPs.

Left and Anti-fascist Tactics

One of the many weaknesses of the left has been shown by their misunderstanding of the use of force. It's all right for the trots to don their boomer boots and chase a few fascists around the back streets (a task which they find heavy going at times). But what happens when the agro reaches proportions of another dimension? They are, I'm afraid, left high and dry. In London's Camden High Street the lefties held a meeting to discuss tactics for opposing a Front march. As the delegates arrived they were menaced by NF heavies who told them they would be back later. They were, firing a shotgun Chicago style from a car and shattering the window of the building. The reaction of the lefties inside? They called the police. And then? Why, they are surprised by the lack of interest shown by the police! All these left groups knew where the NF headquarters were at that time (50 Parsons Rd, Croydon) but they remained un-attacked. Such is the respect the left has for conventional methods. A couple of weeks after this event, the IMG instruct their members to turn up at the Hyde Park rally wearing crash helmets, but even this minimal effort is rendered useless when a police snatch squad pluck an unfortunate from the centre of the IMG defensive circle and arrest him. After the rally has finished the IMGers put their helmets into plastic bags and sneak away in the most nervous fashion. Worse still, when the NF held their vile "march against (black) niggers" in London's East End last summer, the opposing anti-fascist march, outnumbering the NF by more than 4 to 1, formed up only five minutes from the fascists' departure point. Yet when the anti-fascists marched off in the opposite direction even Searchlight commented, "The counter-demonstration was attended by nearly five thousand people . . . but this rally had failed to grasp the fact that it was in their power to have halted the fascist provocation, by just non-violently standing in its path before it got under way. Whilst at Searchlight we are against violence and see no point in fighting with the police, we must respect the handful of youngsters who stood in the path of the march only to be batoned by the police."

But more recently, April 24th to be precise, things showed a turn for the better, as at Bradford where counter-demonstrations faced 1000 Front marchers. The NF were protected by large numbers of police (as usual); they provoked the violence by damaging Asian-owned shops while police stood by and did nothing. The anti-fascist, though, showed they could fight with some success: bricks bottles and beer cans were hurled at the Front. Barricades were dragged across the street in an attempt to halt the fascists, and when the police attacked the anti-fascists, they too were showered with stones and bottles, police vans were overturned, and attempts were made to set them on fire, numbers of police were badly injured including numbers of the mounted police. The number arrested was 30. Contrast this with events in London the same day, when 200 marchers mostly from the Nazi "British Movement", were challenged by about 500 anti-fascists. There was a battle in Trafalgar Square between the anti-fascists and the police - mostly members of the Special Patrol Group, who brutally beat up the outnumbered anti-fascists, injuring many while police casualties were virtually nil. I think we have things to learn from both events on the 24th.

Fascist tactics

Front tactics are more brutal than the left's: anonymous attacks in back streets on militants and immigrants, and even worse, pouring paraffin into immigrant workers letter-boxes and setting light to it: the list is endless. Then, on another level, attacking the small bookshops and headquarters of sectarian left-wing groups (like Macists) owing to the distance and size of these groups, few, if any, reprisals need be expected. Pacifists and liberals make excellent targets - they don't hit back. When all these attacks are combined, the fascists gain a formidable reputation. The NF are also

becoming more daring in that they attack left-wing demonstrations such as the Troops Out Movement demonstration which was fairly successfully attacked by the NF on 21st Feb. at Sheperds Bush Green. There is evidence that some ultra-rightists, members of the NF included, are training in forests with members of the Territorial Army - and that during these manoeuvres they are armed. On another level the Front pick up most of their members by running in elections; during the last General Election they picked up 113,000 votes, (mostly in working class areas). The Front claim that next election they will field over 300 candidates.

Is it worth it?

Is it? Well, for groups like International Socialists it provides a fine chance for recruitment, as a reading of "Socialist Worker" a couple of years ago would prove. For example, it gave coverage to small local demonstrations against the Front.; after the demonstration the IS would hold a small meeting where "six young workers" or "five Asians" then joined IS. At Leicester the IS even erected a platform after the large march (with its star speakers) to advertise a meeting that they were holding in the evening - a straightforward recruiting effort. But, as for fighting them? After all the NF are not supported by the capitalist class who prefer the Labour and Conservative parties to run the State and look after their interests. To receive support from even the most reactionary capitalist elements the NF must prove themselves a competent labour-bashing, strike breaking militia, and this so far they have failed to do, although some maverick characters, ex-Military, Striling and Walker, have attempted to form private armies to use against the working class. The Front have been successful in their infiltration of anti-working-class organisations such as the National Federation of the Self-Employed, ratepayers groups, and in some areas are gaining a dangerous foothold in tenants groups and trade union branches. (Searchlight is well aware of this). Liberals and Pacifists say "Leave them alone" "Fighting them is a prevention of free speech" or "If you fight them you are just as bad as them" - head-in-the-sand attitudes which provide a fine argument to do fuck-all. On the other hand real revolutionaries argue that capitalism and the state are the main enemies; true, but the NF are dangerous for the working class in a way that the "legitimate" representatives of capitalism dare not be. It is important to tackle them without negating the class struggle; after all the class struggle is the best way to tackle the NF. Small groups of revolutionaries who because of lack of resources or pressing commitments elsewhere don't attack them directly should make it clear that if they are "bothered" by fascists they will pay them back in an unconventional manner.

Ways to fight the Fascists

For anti-fascists out on the streets this is a question of tactics. I'm not against fighting the fascists in the streets, as you can guess I'm all for it; the trouble is that its totally predictable how they are challenged. Whenever the fascists have a march or meeting, Hey presto! a counter demo or picket. What should be done is say to occupy the hall that they fascists are going to use, before they turn up, or if they have a meeting make it difficult for them to get out. When fighting the police the anti-fascists should (if there are enough of them, and if they are angry enough) follow the wonderful example of the people of Bradford. When the Front march, instead of forming up miles away from them, the anti-fascists should assemble at the same point the fascists are due to march from, thereby ensuring that they find it impossible to assemble, let alone march.

When the NF held its "march against muggers" a small group of anti-fascists (400) broke from the main anti-fascist march and ran off to meet the fascists. As the fascists were well protected by the police, and there were 1000 frontiers anyway, the anti-fascists marched on the sides of the march on the pavements, heckling the fascists and threatening them. Because of this no-one joined the Front's march - because of the constant barrage and because we informed people about what the NF were all about: People did however join the anti-fascists (and we had a lot of fun and talked to lots of local people. There were about 6 arrests at the end of the march, at Hoxton. All other things apart, the only thing that will eventually smash the Front is the very thing that will smash capitalism - a mass revolutionary working-class movement. Revolutionaries must work to build this - the most important task of all. An inkling of mass action was shown at Leicester, where the Front held a march in support of the "white workers at Imperial Typewriters". Only about 700 morons turned up to march with the Front. Meanwhile in another part of the city more than 5000 people, including many Asian workers and whole families, joined the march. It was a great occasion because the whole immigrant working-class community was involved in the strike that led up to the marches. Eventually the only thing that will sweep the fascists off the streets is mass mass working class action.

The Question of Fascism and Racism in Britain: the need for a revolutionary strategy.*

It is not surprising that the NF and other far right formations have achieved prominence during the recent period. British capitalism faces serious problems internationally and at home. The downturn in the world economy and the sharpening of Imperialist competition has taken its toll on the British economy....Racism has become the staple political issue of the right. The House of Lords decision in October 1974 to the effect that a colour bar that prevents blacks from joining a Working Mens Club in Preston is not illegal under the Race Relations Act, actually institutionalises racial discrimination. The recent spate of racist actions, most clearly illustrated by the response of white workers at Imperial Typewriters, highlights the scope of the problem.

The question of fascism and how to deal with it has become a political issue among revolutionaries in Britain recently. Unfortunately, this issue has been discussed empirically in reaction to Red Lion Square, the debate over 'free speech' and the activities of the National Front. Given the confused and emotional assessment of fascism in Britain today by most of the left groups, it is necessary to attempt a clear analysis of this problem and to evaluate the issue from the point of view of revolutionary theory.

What is Fascism?

For many people, fascism represents a dangerous social movement which is associated with memories of Hitler and Mussolini. Fascism is seen as a kind of disease, a force that is separate and unrelated to democracy. This view often argues for a struggle of a democratic bloc against fascism - for example in Chile the CP is attempting to reintroduce democracy by the formation of an anti-fascist bloc. The notion that all classes have a common interest in fighting fascism is a political conclusion drawn from seeing fascism as merely an anti-democratic and pathological deviation from the bourgeois norm, a conclusion superficially supported by the Allies struggle against Nazism. But fascism is not some type of disease that suddenly attacks the body politic of bourgeois society. The development of fascism in Italy, Germany, and Spain...was the outcome of a specific type of economic and political relation between classes in capitalism facing crisis.

Fascism is the political expression of the inability of the bourgeoisie to resolve its crisis through the 'normal channels'. The impossibility of continued capitalist accumulation given the general conditions in the world economy and the balance of class forces internally, provide the starting point for the fascist option. The general historical role of fascism is to transform the existing conditions of production by re-establishing profitable production. In order to bring about the centralisation and concentration of capital and increase the productivity of labour, fascism must destroy the organisations of the working class which, through their activity stand in the way of the restructuring of capital.

Under peaceful conditions bourgeois democracy is the best instrument for reconciling the contradictions generated by capitalism and for maintaining the interests of the capitalist ~~xxxxxx~~ class. But the development of an economic and political crisis disturbs the stable social equilibrium on which the rule of the bourgeoisie rests. Working class militancy and the unrest of the petit bourgeoisie who increasingly lose faith in bourgeois

* This article is an abridged version of one that appeared in the Discussion Bulletin, 3, April 1975, written by Frank Richards. Like all articles published in the Discussion Bulletin it represents the views of the author and is not necessarily a position of the Revolutionary Communist Group - John Kelly.

democracy, lead to the paralysis of Parliament. The sharp class differences can only be resolved outside the institutions of bourgeois democracy. In order to re-establish a new form of political regime, the ruling class relies upon the mass movement of the angry petit bourgeoisie. A pre-requisite for the development of a mass movement of the petit bourgeoisie is a collapse of confidence in their traditional leaders and parties.

The dissatisfied and ~~xxx~~ disillusioned petit bourgeoisie provides the mass basis for the fascist movement. But fascism as a mass force can only grow and develop when the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has reached an impasse, and where the proletariat, owing to the capitulation of its reformist leadership (and the absence of a revolutionary party) is unable to go forward to seizing power. If the leadership of the working class is unable to solve the crisis of capitalism in the interests of the proletariat, the demoralisation of the working class offers the fascist movement new openings. The acceleration of fascist activity during the period of impasse between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat increasingly tips the balance of class forces in favour of the bourgeoisie. Thus a revolutionary situation is squandered by the reformist leadership, the proletariat is defeated and the bourgeoisie opts for a fascist dictatorship. The potential danger of fascism today is a direct result of the inability of the reformist leadership to take the working class forward as the crisis deepens.

The Question of Fascism in Britain

Despite the deepening of the crisis of British capitalism it is clear that we have not yet reached a stage where the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has led to an impasse, nor has there been a collapse of confidence of the petit bourgeoisie in the traditional bourgeois democratic institutions. The struggles of the working class have a local and sectional character and the reformist leadership has hegemony over most of the British proletariat. The relative success of the 'social contract' demonstrates the viability of the bourgeois strategy of class collaboration, at least for some time to come.

We should not however be complacent about the possible threat posed by the forces of the far right. The post-war boom has ended and sections of the petit bourgeoisie, white-collar employees, small businessmen and small capitalists have begun to feel the pinch of the downturn in the British economy. Inflation has given new life to a number of fascist organisations which have existed continually over the past thirty years. The most important of these groups, the National Front (NF) has come into prominence as a result of their electoral and other activities.

The NF has recently supplemented its electoral image with a growing number of demonstrations and physical assaults on members of left organisations and pickets. The areas of race hatred and nationalism, the bread and butter of NF politics, have recently been complemented by active support for the cause of Orangism and the SPUC anti-abortion demonstration. In July 1974 the NF opened its first office in the North of Ireland.

The NF does have a base of support, although this base is far from having a mass character. During the general election of February 1974 in which the NF fielded 54 candidates, they obtained 75,870 votes. This total vote for the NF represented an average of 1405 votes per candidate and 2.3% of the average share of the vote. In 6 seats (all Labour held) the NF obtained more than 4% of the vote. In the October 1974 election the NF ran 90 candidates and increased its total to 112,000 votes - but its average share of the vote was about the same as in February, 1,200 votes per candidate. The electoral performance of the NF demonstrates the potential threat that this organisation may pose for the working class in the future.

Racism and Reformism

Racism and chauvinism have come to have strong roots within the British working class. During the height of the post-war boom, the issue was not

given the prominence that it receives today. A certain degree of racial conflict existed,...but with the end of the boom racism has become an increasingly important force in Britain. Quite clearly, racism is not incompatible with the overall reformist perspective of the Labour Party and the Trade Union movement.

The logic of reformism is based on the appearances of society as it is. Reformists within the labour movement have as their aim the redistribution of 'national wealth'. Trade unions attempt to get a bigger share of the 'national cake' for the working class. However when the national cake stops growing the working class is the first section of society that pays for the problems of capitalist production. In such periods ~~the~~ competition for the working class slice of the cake (jobs, housing, social services etc.) becomes intense. Since reformism accepts the nation and capitalist relations as natural, it is not capitalist production that is blamed for the deterioration in the standard of living of the working class. Reformists seek to explain the crisis facing the workers by pointing the finger at speculators, individual cases of mis-management etc. However, this explanation of crisis provides no alternative to the fascist explanation, as this letter written by an NF member makes clear.

'A manual worker myself, I am all in favour of proposals which make life easier for the working class. But if the Labour Party is serious about its aims for improving the lot of those who face daily drudgery....why do they continue to repudiate those areas where public ownership is really needed?....Public ownership of industry and services cannot give real control unless the financial system is in public hands.....(Bristol Evening Post, 5.8.74)

This letter could have been written by a radical reformist. Depicting the problem of capitalism as one of circulation, i.e. financial greed, rather than as one of production, both fascist and reformist put forward explanations that are strikingly similar. The fascist will then go on to clinch the argument by pointing the finger at Jews, the Irish, or today the black. As the working class finds itself competing for jobs, 'foreigners' will become obvious scapegoats. The reformist perspective based on a 'Great Britain' and an acceptance of capitalist relations of production is unable to effectively counter racist arguments.

The material basis of racist ideology lies within capitalist production itself. In capitalist society the contractual relationship between labour and capital appears to be free and equal. The worker gets a 'fair days wage' for his work. Wage-labour masks the fact that the worker produces more value than he receives in the form of a wage and that workers have no choice but to sell their labourpower. The unequal relation between classes and groups caused by capitalist relations of production does not appear on the surface as the outcome of capitalist production itself. Equality and freedom are the slogans of the bourgeoisie; free wage labour and money exchange would seem to suggest that capitalist production generates equality instead of inequality. So, according to the bourgeoisie, inequality, where it exists, is not a function of capitalist social relations for there is equality of opportunity, but is due to natural differences between individuals. Unequal talent rather than unequal opportunities are the cause of inequality in the 'free' capitalist society. In the early nineteenth century it was argued that the reason why the working class was poor and lived under the most appalling conditions was their natural laziness, their proclivity to drink etc.

Racism above all sees various races as being naturally unequal. The poverty of Africa and Asia is seen not as a result of imperialism, for apparent equal political and economic relations hide the manner in which the West dominates the Third World, but is explained, rather, as the result of the indolence of the natives. The bourgeois notion that inequality is due to natural causes thus provides fertile terrain for racism.

Racism and reformism are perfectly consistent with each other. The anti-Irish sentiments expressed during the recent Scottish strike wave demonstrate that militant trade unionism does not mean the absence of chauvinism. The response of certain sections of the working class in the midlands to the Birmingham bombings shows the scope of the problem posed by chauvinism. In one case, the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers supported white strikers against the promotion of blacks at Mahsfield Hosiery. At Newby foundry, West Bromwich, an AUEW official allowed different rates to be paid for blacks doing the same job as whites. As long as these chauvinist traditions remain in the labour movement, the growth of fascism under the crisis conditions remains a possibility.

The Struggle Against Fascism in Britain

Fascism is objectively speaking not an important threat to the working class today. But the domination of reformist ideas over the working class opens the door to fascism in the event of a severe social crisis. The struggle against fascism must have a two-fold character; the fight against reformist ideology, which in this case means taking up concretely those areas where fascism can breed, that is racism and chauvinism. And secondly by taking up concrete struggles around issues which confront the working class and to which fascists address themselves. The first seeks to introduce an internationalist standpoint within the working class, the second attempts to counterpose a revolutionary strategy to the reformist and fascist solutions on particular issues. In practice the two levels of struggle are closely linked.

The fight for Internationalism

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Irish question is one of the main issues facing socialists. The close relationship between the far right and Orangism demonstrates the reservoir out of which chauvinist ideology flows. The building of a movement in support of the selfdetermination of the Irish people and the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, represents the central thrust of an independent class policy against the far right today. The formation of a movement in opposition to the racist immigration laws is a necessary corollary to an internationalist perspective of undermining the basis for future fascist activity.

The Political fight against the British Fascists

The National Front responds to the issues that develop and preoccupy people: they put forward their solutions to the major political questions. Through articles on the EEC, inflation, unemployment, trades unions, housing, women and racism, the fascists attempt to show the relevance of their ideas. These ideas have to be fought against politically. The left has often tried to fight the National Front by labelling this organisation as fascist; indeed, rather than confronting the NF politically many of the left appeal to anti-fascist sentiments dating back to the thirties. This can be a dangerous course to pursue. The link between the National Front and Hitler is politically irrelevant today. What is important is to fight the NF in relation to today's crisis.

In places like Leicester the growth of the NF is due not to a sudden infatuation with Hitler on the part of the white population. The strength of racism and the influence of the NF in Leicester is due to the reflection the crisis has on jobs, housing, social services etc. The anti-fascist struggle in Leicester can succeed only if revolutionaries wage a serious campaign on issues such as housing and counterpose a real, independent class alternative to fascist demagogy.

Today there is a widely held view that fascism can only be defeated through physical confrontation. 'Smash the Fascists' become the key slogan of this approach - an orientation which offers no political

alternative to the fascists. The name 'Cable Street' is evoked ad nauseam to demonstrate the truth of this thesis. Politically this orientation is wrong and factually there was much more to Cable Street than smashing the fascists. The CP in the East End (despite their political weaknesses) recognised the need to fight fascism on its own ground. Piratin, a CP activist from Stepney recalled:

'I remember well the constant discussion in the Stepney branch committee of the Labour Party. There were those who said..."Bash the fascists wherever you see them". Others among us asked ourselves - How was Mosley able to recruit Stepney workers?'

(P. Piratin Our Flag Stays Red. London, 1948, pp. 17-18)

Mosley and the fascists were able to recruit ~~fax~~ workers from the East End by taking up the questions of housing and unemployment. The CP took up these questions and organised effective Tenants Associations and unemployed committees. By intervening in these issues and demonstrating in practice who was responsible for the conditions of the workers in the East End, the CP was able to erode the working class base of Mosley. This is the central lesson of the anti-fascist struggle in the East End.

The success of the CP in using the questions of housing and unemployment against the fascists should not blind us to a fundamental flaw of the Stalinist strategy - the absence of internationalism. By taking up the fascist concretely the CP made short term gains, but without fighting for proletarian internationalism these gains could only be ephemeral.

The British left has been incapable of seeing the threat of fascism in any sense other than an organisational one. Despite the various one-sided approaches to this question, all the groups on the left have one common denominator: an inability to grasp the need to fight reformism as part of an anti-fascist strategy - in other words a failure to understand reformism and chauvinism. The political issues on which the NF is mobilising are not taken up directly against the NF. The NF is approached organisationally rather than politically and the assessment of the NF is abstracted from its concrete character within the conflict between classes and the political ~~xxxxxx~~ problems to which the fascists address themselves.

The IS approach the fight against fascism organisationally and moralistically. The struggle against the NF has to be waged against the organisation as such, not in terms of winning the working class away from chauvinism. This orientation is based on the abstraction of the NF from living forces and ~~xx~~ reducing the role of this group to that of the shock troops of the bourgeoisie. IS argues that 'Fascists only understand violence', This may be true, but revolutionaries have as their aim the destruction of any potential political base for fascism. IS turns the issue upside down. They urge, 'never mind the fact that ~~xxx~~ in certain situations the fascists will grow in any case given the hegemony of the reformists - let's make life difficult for them now'.

'If we can deny them the use of the streets then the Front becomes a much less exciting group to join. If joining the National Front means not exciting para-military parades and intimidation of black people and trade unionists - but instead rotten eggs and broken bones - then support will be lost'

(The National Front; the new Nazis. Socialist Worker Pamphlet, p. 10)

Support for the NF is because of their 'exciting para-military parades' and not their political approach according to IS. This is the mistaken view of seeing fascism in purely organisational terms. Since the feature of the NF is its 'determination' to win, the way to fight them is by taking being tougher than the fascists.

'It is not the ideas of the National Front which attracts most

supporters - it is the feeling that they are going to get something done. The key for the left is to show ourselves even more determined than the fascists.' (ibid.p.10)

It is not seen as a question of ideology or political strategy, just of being better militants than the NF. The dangers of this position are all too evident. IS emphasises fascism as a cancerous growth rather than thinking about the conditions that gave rise to fascism. In practice, the fight against fascism is reduced to a series of physical assaults.

The IMGs orientation on this question is to call for opposition(or mobilisation) against fascism. Their argument is that the left cannot wait until fascism becomes a major threat and we must fight them here and now. Thus the IMG substitutes mobilisation against a fascism abstracted from the concrete political issues for a serious attempt to win the working class away from reformism and to commit it to an anti-racist and anti-imperialist position. Of course they say it must be combatted politically, but in terms of their actual approach politics falls by the wayside.

'To emphasise this (physically attacking the NF - JK) at the expense of the political and ideological struggle would be suicidal. Nevertheless it is necessary to give special emphasis to the 'military' side of things when dealing with fascism, because it is in this side of the coin that the greatest political weaknesses, even of the far left, are to be found.'

(Fascism. Smash it Now! The case for no platform. IMG Pamphlet p.13)

By laying special emphasis on the 'military' side of things the IMG falls into a position which they themselves have characterised as 'suicidal'. For the IMG what is special about fascism is its violent nature, therefore the need for a physical response.

'We have pointed out that there is little in the programme of the fascists which is unique. What is essential(sic) to a fascist movement is its capacity to carry out violence, and to do this from the very earliest days of its development.' (ibid.p.13)

This is an abstract notion of fascism which draws an apolitical conclusion from a dangerous political phenomenon.

Hence the IMG, like IS, believes that the fascist threat can be destroyed by a type of psychological shock treatment. To be fair to the IMG, in their latest pamphlet, 'Fascism and how to Smash It' the military side of things has a less important place in the argument. No doubt the debacle at Red Lion Square had some influence on this shift in emphasis, but nevertheless the 'bully-boy' version of fascism still lies at the core of their argument.

'Without being able to march through the streets - and especially to conduct acts of public intimidation by marching through black areas - the Front will not be able to act as a pole of attraction.' (ibid.p.9)

Why does the IMG manifest such valiant fighting spirit against the NF? The clue to the IMGs orientation lies in the following passage.

'The workers' movement hates fascism, and rightly so. The Front does not present itself as a fascist party, but cultivates its 'respectability' by posing as a 'workers' organisation' through taking up political issues on which workers often quite spontaneously take reactionary positions. By exposing the Front for what it is - a fascist organisation - it is possible to lead the workers' movement to question many of its own backward traditions by showing how dangerously exposed it actually is to fascist infiltration.' (ibid.p.11)

What the IMG is saying here is that many people hate Nazi Germany etc and that if only we can draw the link between the brown shirts and the NF then we would build a bigger movement. Rather than taking up today's issues, the IMG wants to take the working class on a sentimental journey to the days of

Dunkirk. And in fact, the IMG, like IS spend their time exposing the NF as fascists in the hope of striking a positive chord.

The IMG argues that fascists 'aim...to strengthen the state' and 'provide one of the cutting edges for the acceptance of strong state methods by the masses'. The simplistic notion of the NF as the bully boys of the bourgeoisie leads to the view that the central threat of fascism comes from their role as the shock troops of the state. The IMGs failure to analyse the material basis of reformism and other forms of bourgeois ideas leads them to a crude and mechanistic version of the class struggle. Today, the danger that faces the working class movement is not the strong state or the fists of the NF, The greatest threat facing the labour movement is its own reformist consciousness. The hegemony of reformism over the working class undermines any moves towards independent class action. As the aftermath of the Birmingham bombs illustrates, the ideological assault of the bourgeoisie found a ready response in the trade unions. For the IMG the most significant development is the repressive legislation passed by Parliament. For revolutionary communists the main danger is not 'Jenkins law' as such, but the chauvinism generated by it within the working class which allowed the law to be accepted with such minimal opposition.

The fight against the NF has to take up their arguments concretely, not merely by calling for opposition to them. Nor do we shrink from physical confrontation where the defence of the working class is really posed as in the attacks on Republican marches or the bombing of black organisations. We seek, indeed, to mobilize the labour movement in defence of these interests. But for us, the physical side of combatting fascism is a political question, based upon what is objectively necessary, not as a means to raise consciousness. Only the independent organised force of the working class, led by its conscious vanguard, can provide a guarantee against the fascist threat. We must fight the reformist leadership that is an obstacle to this class independence.

Revolutionary Communist Group.

SEXISM, RACISM AND FASCISM

Some points for discussion:

Opposing racism is not taken very seriously by the Antifascist Committee.

Opposing sexism is almost totally ignored: it tends to be thought of as a 'fringe' issue, but it is of central importance.

In the total fascist view of the world sexism is completely tied up with racism and nationalism.

Fascism is a form of capitalism, but they are not the same thing.

We need to examine the different kinds of fascism and the different situations within which they develop.

Sexism and racism existed before capitalism and won't simply disappear with the nationalisation of factories and banks under workers' control: on the other hand we will get rid of neither until capitalism is ended.

The family and the oppression of women and gays

The family is the first place where the identity of the individual develops; it services the waged worker, organises the conditioning into male and female sex roles and promotes heterosexuality as the only acceptable form of sexual experience. Fundamental to this is the oppression of women and the suppression of gay sexuality.

Racism, imperialism and the international division of labour

The oppression and distortion of mainly non-white cultures is the result of imperialism. It has used the people of various races and countries in different ways thus organising the exploitation of people right across the world.

Nazi Germany

While most of the left ignored sexism, the Nazis combined sexism racism and nationalism so that the 'perfect' German mother and the Aryan man would produce 'pure' children for the Master Race and the Fatherland. This involved first of all a certain amount of controlled sexual liberalism and then a fierce repression of independent women and gays.

Conclusions

Divisions of race and sex are dampers on working class struggle; fascism exploits these divisions; we need to develop working class solidarity.

The basis of the Antifascist Committee needs to be questioned. How far does it come out of the self organisation of women, black people and gays?

How can we understand the appeal of the NF in the crisis of daily life?

These points are controversial even among ourselves, but we hope they will spark off discussion.

These notes were prepared for the first of a series of educationals arranged jointly by the Black Peoples Freedom Movement and Gay Workers Nottingham, Autumn 1976

SEXISM RACISM FASCISM - WORKING NOTES

This is a write up of a discussion of some members of the Gay Workers Group in Nottingham to try and prepare for an educational on this sponsored by the Anti-Committee. It could act as the basis for discussion generally (with some points brought out by a speaker) or it can be used by gay groups to consider the relationship between gay and women's oppression, the family, labour power and capital, and fascism.

At an anti-fascist demo some years ago in Leicester some 'antifascists' had a go at the National Front. When they returned to our demo they came back with the cry 'They were cissies - they were like fuckin' women!'.

This attitude towards women is common in the antifascist and left movement, many more examples could be given. 'Be a man, prove your masculinkty & fight the NF'.

We want to show how sexism - which practically means the oppression and the exploitation of gays and women - is unbreakably tied up with racism and nationalism in the total fascist view of the world. We don't think that fighting racism is taken at all seriously in the antifascist committee and the struggle against sexism is almost totally ignored. Opposing sexism - which includes dealing with it within ourselves - is not something of minor importance which can be added onto the major issues of racism and nazism (like the token mention of gays in some AF leaflets), but is of central and fundamental importance to the fight against fascism and to leading to a revolutionary movement capable of leading to a 'fresh society'.

HOW DOES FASCISM COME ABOUT? and what is it made up of?

It would be unwise to linger too long on how fascism develops in particular countries rather than others - these require more intensive attention later. The first thing though is that fascism is a form of capitalism. It's not an unusual and exceptionally nasty event which working-class people and capitalists alike can get together and oppose. When the world-wide capitalist system is in profound crisis, as it was in the 1930's and is now, it can be convenient for international capital to use fascists in particular countries (or is it national capital?). The defeat of the Popular Power in Chile in 1974 which was endangered American plans for Latin America and for profit-making generally was done by one kind of fascist coup. This is different however from the 'Classical' kind that developed in Germany in the 30s which had a mass movement behind it. The National Front and the National Party in Britain at the moment are being used by some parts of capital (e.g. parts of the Government, business the press etc.) to promote racism, encourage the work ethic, and so to widen the divisions that already exist within society. While capital may try to use fascists to do some of their dirty work, this doesn't mean that fascism and capitalism are the same thing, not that as far as capital is concerned that fascism can't sometimes get out of hand.

It would be useful, sometime, to examine the different conditions in which fascism grows, and its various forms. Agricultural and economically dependent Portugal was different from highly-industrialised Germany. The Gorilla dictatorship in Chile is not the same as the mass support in Mussolini's Italy. Why did Italy, Germany and Spain turn Fascist? The reasons might include: defeat of the workers movement in those countries (Spartacists in Germany 1918, the Italian Factory Councils, Spanish Revolution 1937); German 'races' lived beyond the boundaries of the Fatherland; Germany not unified; German capital wasn't allowed any space to expand after the deal of the First World War: how do we see Stalinist Russia in the same period - mass slaughter, very repressive state etcetera.

Fascism offers a nationalist solution to what are, in fact, international problems. As we said earlier, fascism is a particular kind of capitalism - it feeds off and deepens divisions that already exist in capitalist society so that working class solidarity and togetherness is weakened and the daily theft of human activity continues to make profits out of us. Let's look at the divisions of sex and race and consider how fascism intensifies these.

Neither racism nor sexism exist only under capitalism. Both existed before and neither will just disappear with the nationalisation of the bank and factories under workers control. At the same time we're not going to get rid of sexism and racism without making a revolution against capitalism.

Racism is fostered by the international division of labour - that is by a policy of treating different races and countries differently, giving a better deal to say, white north american workers than to black south african workers. Similarly, sexism is fostered by the sexual division of labour where the woman's role of unpaid housewife and mother is kept subordinate to the man's role as breadwinner and boss within the family. She is the slave of the slave. Let's look at sexism in detail, then racism, then see how the Nazis combined both with nationalism to great effect. Then on to some conclusions.

Notes on WOMEN AND THE FAMILY

* See articles on Fascism and Racism in Peace News 2027 and 2028.

* Need to compare different forms of the family and the oppression of women in the international division of labour (Race Today?)

It's within the restrictions of the family that we first develop our identities (Politics of the Family etc etc RD Laing and others). These identities are not based on free individual and collective growth but come about by adapting to the demands placed on us within the family, while the family in turn must adapt to the demands placed on it by society (cutbacks, legislation etc.)

This is no simple matter and will depend on what's happening in that particular society at that particular time. For example: in tribal societies with a mother's brother pattern of kinship, the roles will be very different to those of early capitalism in Britain when the extended family was being challenged to produce a more flexible small family unit for the changing needs of capitalist industrialisation. It would also be different in a country where there was a strong autonomous movement of women,

it's

It's impossible here to go onto much detail but within the family that boys learn to be boys and girls to be girls: it's within the family that we learn to accept sexual, personal and social ways of life that don't satisfy our needs. This acceptance comes to provide an illusionary and distorted security - the only one that is available most of the time. This fitting into a social and sexual identity is fundamental in very many ways (such as?) to the continuation of an exploitative society. It's where Authority is first fought over.

Right in the middle of what the family is all about is the oppression and the exploitation of women. For convenience, restricting the discussion to the industrialised countries (what about Japan, Russia and maybe China?): Where there is a small/nuclear family unit we can see how the family (on behalf of capital) insists on a place for women as unpaid housewife and mother. A woman's place is supposed to be in the home. Although a large number of women go out to work, (nearly) all women as housewives & mothers preparing their husbands, lovers, children (and of course themselves) to go out to the offices and factories and schools the next day.

Even when women are involved in paid work it is usually not seen as permanent: It's "until the first child is born" or "after they've all grown up" or it's 'pin money'. In times of recession, women lose paid jobs first. Further, the kind of work which women do often reflects their housewife and mother identity - it's infant school teaching, shop work, nursing, light assembly work, making garments, jitchen work, cleaning etc. This exclusion from 'mainstream' waged work for most women doesn't mean that the answer lies in women simply becoming waged workers. Anyway.....

This role is servicing the wage labourer. It means gratifying but not satisfying the wage labourer's sexuality, making (his) beds, cooking (his) meals, organising and educating (his) children - the boys will mainly become waged workers while the girls like their mums will usually do two jobs - housewife and mother most of her life and waged worker for a significant part of it.

This work, the reproduction of labour power, is extended and watched over by the school and the welfare system as well as in many other ways.

HETEROSEXUALITY (!)

Why is Gay Workers involved in the antifascist committee and why have lesbian groups and glf's become actively opposed to fascism? The family organises the strict control of sex roles (as well as the ways they change) and is the temple for heterosexual relationships, that is, sexual relationships between women and men. Sexual relationships between people of the same sex is either punished, derided, tolerated or swept tidily into ant of th way places. This is because they challenge the family order - the discipline of masculine and feminine identity (!) Homosexuality and lesbianism in particular assert that sex can be a pleasurable & meaningful act in itself and doesn't have to be about producing children,

The threat that gay sexuality offers to the function of heterosexuality and the family in capitalism has been clarified by the political self-activity of gays since the Stonewall Riots and the subsequent formations of gay liberation in New York in 1969. Similarly, while many women have rejected the role of housewife and mother, the WLM has been explicitly developing an organisation and theory around women's position in society. The fascist right cannot tolerate a challenge to traditional social values and particularly will fight against women's independence and gay sexuality. More about this (and the Nazis) later. It is in times of such as the present when all the relationships are in extreme crisis - economic, social, sexual, political - and when working class struggle is at a low ebb that the fascist right appeals for a return to the old securities - family life, racial and national purity etc.

Because our identities are themselves insecure, are 'false' (being what we've had to accept and adapt to) it is likely that we'll cling tightly onto the family identity, search for new leaders etc.

RACISM AND IMPERIALISM

With an insecure identity comes the rejection and insecurity about other races. To define a tight security comes the finding of scapegoats, especially racism. Attempts can be made to blame the consequences of exploitation and the history of imperialism (housing shortages, lack of resources) on immigrants. This is exactly what the fascists do, or try to do, in a clear political way. It would be wrong to put down here much about racism and imperialism without having discussed it with the BPFM (Black Peoples' Freedom Movement) further. Just a few notes.

The background to racism is the international division of labour and more specifically Imperialism. From the first capitalist country (UK) came expansion - search for markets, labour and resources. The exploitation of the land and people meant exploitation of their culture (Fanon). The very humanity of colonised people was disputed by the imperialists - a debate took place in Spain as to whether Mexicans had souls. When black servants landed in the UK during the period of slavery questions were asked as to whether they were human!

In order to organise the world market, different countries and races are played off against each other.

This has included the immigration of 'fresh labour' (capitalists hoped for cheapness and docility) to the industrialised capitalist countries. These divisions across and within countries are used - different wages, types of jobs, housing, cultural freedom, opportunities - to maintain the flow of profit. Fascists leap on all this and insist that one answer to 'our' problems is to stop immigration and make a 'return' to racial and national purity.

1

In general, the extreme right offers solutions to the frustrations of everyday life; frustrations that have a long historical basis including (but not only) the sexual and international divisions of labour, the organisation of exploitation through the distortion of cultures, immigration and the twisting of daily personal and social life. Their 'solutions' are on the basis of national and racial and sexual chauvinism. The international set-up and the conditions in which labour power is produced are of vital and central importance to capitalism. Similarly a revolutionary strategy can only grow from this basis.

The Left has r rely understood this (see 'where Engells Peared to Tread in Gay Left number ^a one'). The Right, however, has made great use of it.

THE NAZIS AND GERMANY - notes again

The clearest example of this has been the Nazis in Germany. In a crisis-riddled national economy their solution was to make Germany Great. The Master Race. The Fatherland etc. Traditional ideas about the family were raised which both offered a certain security and justified the idea of Aryan purity: a proper German family producing a proper German race. Similarly, the Jews (and other groups) were used as scapegoats, casting out the impure non-Germanic races. Since Germans lived beyond the Fatherland, the idea of the 'nation' could be extended to an expansion - returning certain territories to their 'proper' country. Anyway, the basic idea was a mixture of national, racial and sexual chauvinism. However, the stereotypes of Supermale and Supermum (see John Remy's work on definitions of sexual identity in prewar Germany) - with all their rewards, were only the foreground. The Nazis knew how to use sexuality. For example, gay men were initially encouraged to join the Brown shirts (on an anti-feminine/basis? Important to look at the debates within the Gay groups - see the 'homosexual Rights Movement - Socialist Workers Party pamphlet'), but were later repressed: Goebels (was it?) said that decapitation wasn't good enough for gays! Similarly, the Hitler Youth allowed a lot of controlled promiscuity in their camps and organisation. It attracted the youth. This was at a time when the German Left only considered and families between the sheets.

WHAT CONCLUSIONS

FASCISM has an appeal because of the crisis of everyday life. As such it cannot be simply wiped off the streets or dealt with by passing motions in TU's of Trades Councils, although this is part of it. There is a need to change our daily lives.

SUPPORT for the autonomous movements of black people, gays, women - fascism grows by turning the tide against these groups.

The anti-fascist committees which have been set up have a bad record of even supporting black organisations, alone black people. (Locally the AFC is white-dominated). The Blackburn demo 'in support of black people' included hardly any asians at all, and very few W. Indians.

The relationship between antifascist groupings (AFC's, trad s unions/student union etc) and the black community needs to be questioned?

- * There's little politically understood support for womens/gay organisations.
- * Think about the links between the SPUC/Festival of Light and the NF. These are not simple and need to be looked at.
- * Properly done the a proach of street meetings could bring us near to understanding the contradictions involved in NF support. They need a lot more thinking about.
- * We need to understand better the way in which the Labour Movement lays the ground for the extreme right by its nationalism (eg import controls)
- * To oppose racism and sexism within the left.

READING

Selma James 'Sex, Race and Classes'

'Capitalism, the Family and personal Life' - Eli Zaretsky (pluto Press?)

Various issues of Race Today

Various Reich and Laing.

For more information about the Gay Workers Group in Nottingham and the work around these d educationals, please contact Gay Workers at The Peoples Centre 33 Mansfield Road NOTTINGHAM. Telephone [redacted]