

Harmonising racism

UK: new police tactics

'Arabicide' in France

Germany: Left moves right

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EDITORIAL

Another Racism, Another Fight

Thirteen years of Tory racism! Plus another five. Eighteen years: a whole generation brought up on Tory racism. A whole generation brought up on a national curriculum which lauds the achievements of *the* nation to the exclusion of the achievements of other nations, other peoples. Just one world, a Western world, in which the Third World and its people are only a venue for exploitation, an excuse for charity.

An education system which is geared to material success, through City Technology Colleges linked to businesses, through tests designed to sift the elite from the non-elite, the rulers from the ruled. An education in which justice and imagination and learning about other peoples is written out.

An information society where press and TV and book-publishing are controlled by a handful of media barons who decide what information people deserve and how it should be presented, who decide how people should think and relate and feel and vote. Not an information society but a dis-information society.

And so, racism enters into an entirely different dimension. It is no longer an aspect, an attribute of British culture, but something tied into the very fabric of British society under Tory rule. It is a well-known fact that why the fascists have never succeeded electorally in Britain is because the Tory Party has stolen their clothes.

Thirteen years of Thatcherism have gone a long way towards weaving racism into the values, customs and morality of people. Another five years should make it endemic.

Our struggles against racism and fascism, therefore, have got to be informed by, and alerted to, the knowledge that much of the new racism is government-sponsored and government-led, and that the government is not alone in this, but is in cahoots with all the other governments of Western Europe in creating a persistent, pervasive and pandemic European racism. ■

Appeal

CARF readers are urged to make a generous donation to the John McDonnell Appeal Fund. John McDonnell, who stood as a Labour candidate against pro-patriation MP Terry Dicks in Hayes and Harlington, faces debts of £50,000 following a libel action against him by Dicks. Dicks held on to his seat by 53 votes. Interviewed recently in the *Sun*, Dicks reportedly said: 'Most people regard homosexuality as a perversion. People like Freddie Mercury who ignore the danger of AIDS deserve to die of it.'

Meanwhile, the defeat of Tim Janman, Conservative MP for Thurrock, is a big blow for the Monday Club, which holds together the Conservative Associations of South Essex. On the other hand, the far Right of the Party will be welcoming into its midst former *Sunday Express* columnist Lady Olga Maitland, who won Sutton and Cheam. In the past, Lady Olga set up the anti-CND 'Women and Families for Defence'.

■ Cheques to the John McDonnell Appeal should be sent to Brian Neighbour, Secretary Hayes & Harlington CLP, Issue Communications, 3 Hanson Street, London W1P 7LJ.

Targeting demonstrations

CARF has asked Mildred Gordon, MP for Bow and Poplar, to table a parliamentary question over the policing of an anti-fascist demonstration, organised by the Stop Tyndall Committee, the Tower Hamlets Ad Hoc Committee and Anti-Racist Alliance, which culminated in a picket of York Hall in east London, where the BNP was due to hold an election meeting on 6 April 1992.

Following an anti-racist march in Bermondsey last August, when the BNP ran amok in Southwark Park, the Metropolitan police undertook an internal review of the policing of anti-fascist demonstrations in the capital.

The large-scale police operation on 6 April, including the use of specialist squads and snatch squads, reveals that it is, as ever, the anti-fascists who will feel the full force of any review in police organisation. No BNP members were arrested, but at least six anti-fascists were charged, some with offences of disorderly conduct and affray. As Ranjit Lohia of CAPA Legal Advice, which is coordinating the defence of those arrested, told CARF: 'The police operation was totally geared towards protecting the fascists. When the BNP held an impromptu march down the Roman Road on 9 April, election day, waving union jacks and intimidating shoppers, the police were nowhere to be seen.'

Anti-fascists outside York Hall on the evening of 6 April initially took plainclothes police on its flat roof for nazis out to rile the crowd. But, later, as police snatch squads made sporadic forays into the crowd, it was clear that they were radioing to coppers on the ground information on who to single out for arrest. After less than 100 BNP supporters went into York Hall, the anti-fascist mobilisation began to dwindle.

The protest was finally wound down and as the last few protesters made their way home, a CARF reporter witnessed the most disturbing incident of the evening. At least five policemen jumped on a young man, who was walking away from them, and beat him senseless. The officers then attempted to revive him by smacking him around the face. When the police were asked

Ten years ago, the SPG was disbanded. Now the use of its successor, the paramilitary Territorial Support Group, for the policing of demonstrations is coming under scrutiny.

why the young man was being arrested, they replied that at 7.05pm he had kicked a police barrier!

Police attack on Kurds

On 24 March, Kurdish demonstrators outside the Turkish embassy in Belgrave Square were subjected to an unrestrained and ferocious assault by the police. The protest was against the recent wave of repression by the Turkish military. (Reports detail many hundreds of casualties, including over 50 dead, as well as widespread arrests and detentions in Kurdish areas.)

Independent eye-witness accounts of police actions talked of a 'totally unprovoked' attack. Beginning within minutes of the demonstrators assembling, it was instigated by the arrival of a special Territorial Support Unit and involved up to 100 police officers with dogs, who charged the crowd with batons. Accounts of the incident indicate an organised, pre-planned strategy by the police, belying their claim to have been taken unprepared and by surprise.

At least 30 people were injured, including women and young children, and nine were hospitalised. One man suffered a fractured skull and was in intensive care for three days, and a number of others had nasty cuts and abrasions to the head, as

well as severe truncheon beatings to the shoulders, arms and legs.

Of the 20 demonstrators arrested, nine were kept overnight in police cells – four had to wait eight hours for the medical treatment that they needed. Eleven people were eventually charged, with serious public order offences and assault of police.

At the same time, a tandem demonstration at Bush House against BBC Radio coverage of events in south-east Turkey was also violently broken up by the police, and 10 arrests were made.

Within 12 hours, the Police Complaints Authority called for an investigation into the events. The Crown Prosecution Service has so far adjourned the hearings so as to review the charges brought.

The brutality of the policing of this demonstration and the savage denial of the right of the Kurds to protest peacefully – as well as the lack of any public outcry at the events – cannot be separated from the racist and anti-refugee propaganda and hostility that has been whipped up by the government and the press.

The Asylum Bill presented to the last parliament would have allowed adverse inferences to be drawn against those seeking asylum who participate in political activities in Britain. If this provision is repeated in the new Bill, it will serve to compound this kind of police action against asylum-seekers – preventing them from drawing attention both to their treatment in this country and to the character of the regimes from which they have fled. ■

If you were arrested, or know of anyone else who was, at the anti-fascist mobilisation in Tower Hamlets, please contact CAPA, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E1; 071-729 2652.



A Kurdish protester who received a severe head wound during the embassy demonstration



Arabicide in France

Racial violence in France is of epidemic proportions. Over 200 North African men have been killed on the streets or in their homes, the result of racial incidents, between 1980 and 1990. CARF is now working with the French organisation MRAP (the Movement against Racism and for Friendship between Peoples) to analyse the extent of racist murders in France.

Preliminary analysis of MRAP's information shows, not unexpectedly, that the regions where the highest number of attacks take place are also those where the Front National has most support. In one-tenth of all the murders on the streets, assailants were either members of extremist parties or clearly racist sympathisers who wore nazi regalia or volunteered the fact that they did not like 'these layabouts', 'these yellow people', or, like the savage attackers of Mohamed Nasser Arabat in Nice on 27 November 1981, had just 'decided to do an Arab'.

Trigger-happy

The most striking thing is that, for a people which prides itself on its enlightenment and culture, the French appear to be so trigger-happy. It is not just the police who are armed in France. Everyone, from bar-owners to pensioners and the unemployed, in any neighbourhood or housing block, seems to have access

to a gun of some sort. And these are used with impunity against Maghrebian people to settle any quarrel, however petty – be it about noise at night, children throwing pebbles, someone knocking a car mirror, or living with a white woman.

In Nevers, in June 1987, 18-year-old Abdel Abonis refused Gilles Blin and his 34-year-old uncle, Claude Donnet, a cigarette. Donnet went to his car, found his pistol and shot Abdel through the head.

Police killings

Killings by the police (and there are over 40 in MRAP's dossier) show a consistent pattern. A young black man is stopped on suspicion of being about to commit, or having committed, a robbery or a trivial motoring offence, or for not stopping at a road-block. Somehow he ends up shot dead. And the police, who plead self-defence (or manslaughter when that fails), almost always get off scot free. On 26 August 1983, a policeman

shot Mohamed Abdelali in his chest after he had allegedly threatened another officer with a piece of glass when caught pickpocketing outside the Madeleine in Paris. The magistrate said that the police had no charge to answer.

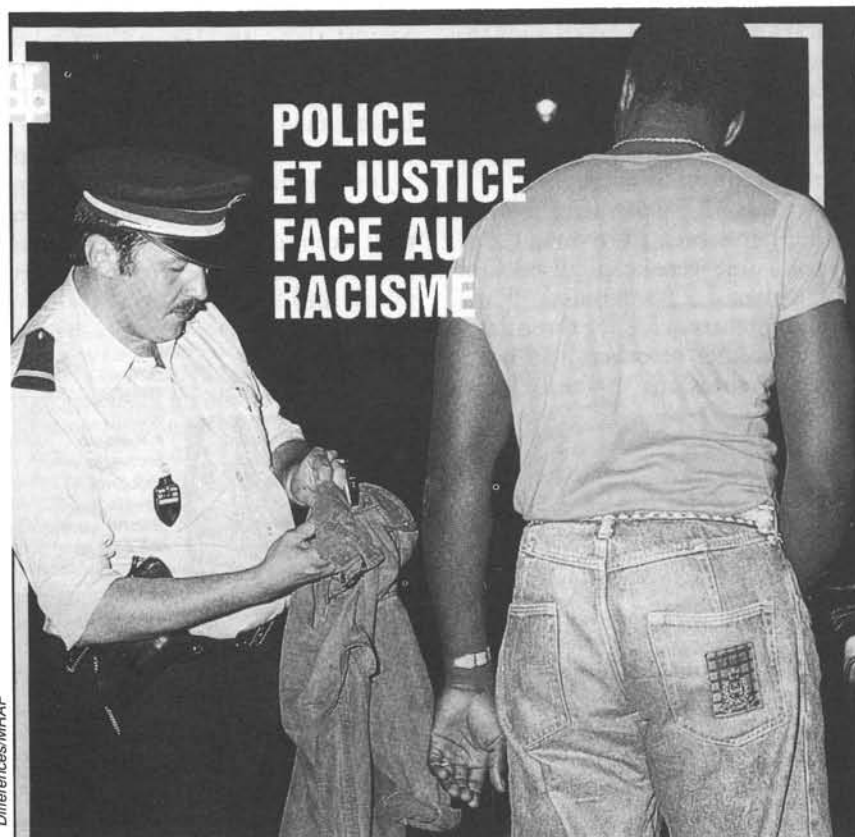
Like the British experience

There are many cases in France that uncannily mirror Britain's black experience. MRAP's dossier includes, for example, five suspicious suicides where the families of the deceased are not satisfied with the official explanation of death. Then there are the four cases where bodies were found floating in the river, with no explanation of how they died. There are also the high-speed police car chases which end fatally.

And, as in Britain, black people appear to die in custody through neglect and brutality. At least six such cases are recorded. Mohamed Laouer, a 17-year-old Algerian, was taken to Bondy police station where he was kept until the next lunchtime without receiving any attention, despite the fact that he was dying an agonising death caused by a drugs overdose. Another young man, awaiting trial for stealing a car, died mysteriously in a prison hospital – he had unexplained bruising and was bandaged. After being arrested for making noise at night, Farid El Orabi died in La Rochelle police station. The cause of death was given as cardiac arrest, but witnesses said he had been beaten.

French-style violence

MRAP also lists deaths which appear to be particular to France. First, there are the attacks on Sonacotra, the hostels built for French migrants in the 1960s. At least three men have been shot by racists in the entrance to their housing. Second, at least six deaths are recorded which took place during or following police identity checks. The French were the first to introduce internal immigration controls via their notorious street



Differences/MRAP

checks (similar to Britain's 'Sus' laws), which have led to frequent allegations of harassment.

Guards and guardians

There is also a very disturbing pattern emerging whereby anyone with a degree of power or authority (and some sort of weapon) decides to take the law into his own hands. At least 11 killings have been committed by non-police 'guardians', such as firemen, customs officers, night-watchmen, store detectives, plant security guards and bouncers at clubs. The official guardians of France—the army and police—once in civvy street or off-duty, appear to be one of the most violent sections of the population. An off-duty policeman who had just left a Front National meeting in Noisy-le-Sec killed 13-year-old Malika Moulai with a stray bullet. (Though found guilty of manslaughter, he was never imprisoned.) A further seven murders have involved serving or retired soldiers. For example, three legionnaires travelling by train from Paris to Vintimille lynched Habib Grimzi, an Algerian on holiday in France, and threw his body out of the window; three young parachutists chased and killed Senoussi Bouchiba in Castres in November 1987, and, in 1988, a retired legionnaire shot dead a 47-year-old Algerian in an Albert-

ville bar following a racist argument.

Some of the most callous attacks have involved policeman. In 1990, Brigadier Claude Martin shot Saad Saoudi three times in the back whilst he was handcuffed. Nacer M'Raidi was disabled for life after a police brigadier, with double the permitted alcohol blood level, shot him after a police check. In November 1984, a young Algerian man, who had been taken in for questioning by the Annonay police for an attempted burglary, was found in police custody with a hood over his head, hands cuffed behind his back and evidence

of torture and burns from electric bars on his body. He was subsequently sentenced to 40 months in prison. The police commissioner charged with beating and wounding him served just 14 months in prison.

As we watch all those comfortable, comforting adverts for ferries to France, in which impressionist-style paintings summon up French culture, remember that the real France—like the real Britain—is a violently racist place for black people. It is the place where the new word *Arabicides* is finding its way into the French vocabulary. ■

Paris nightmare



Houcine and Tanya Bougdah.

Computer game protest

'Yes! You can wipe out a small middle-eastern town and win a Metro!' is the slogan that *Amiga Format* magazine uses to advertise a racist computer game, 'Operation Thunderbolt'. CARF has referred the advert and the magazine to the DPP and the CRE. For the advert includes these phrases: 'Don't try to bottle up that latent xenophobia ... Let it all come out ... Lightly but firmly grasp the joystick. Now allow your machine-gun fire to wash over the mock 30 figures who rush past your view. That's it. See how they die? Move the sights over those middle eastern gentlemen. Keep firing ... Relax. And just let the hatred flow through you.'

Join our campaign against such blatant anti-Arab racism. Write to Amiga Format, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW; tel 0225-442244.

Imagine detectives bursting into your Paris hotel room on the second day of your honeymoon. Imagine being pushed on to the bed, having your room ransacked and passports seized, before being taken, handcuffed, to the police station. At the station, while you are being interrogated, without an interpreter, without legal representation and without being allowed to make a phone call, your husband is accused of theft at the hotel and other hotels in the area.

This is no imaginary scenario but exactly what happened to a Manchester couple, Tanya Bougdah and her Algerian-born husband Houcine, when they were on their honeymoon in Paris. After three hours under arrest (all the time in handcuffs), the couple was released.

'We were told by the hotel manager', says Tanya Bougdah, 'that on the morning of our arrest, two officers came to our hotel asking to

see a list of all arrivals on the 24th as they were looking for someone, travelling by himself, in connection with a series of thefts. They went down the list, stopped at our name, Bougdah, and said that's who they wanted. The hotel explained that Mr Bougdah was travelling with his wife on a package holiday from England, booked six months ago, and that it couldn't be us as we had not arrived in the country until Tuesday evening. To which they replied, "That doesn't matter, we'll take them anyway."

The couple took down the details of the arresting officer and contacted the British embassy. Now, thanks to the efforts of Glyn Ford MEP, who has taken up their case, the French government has promised an inquiry. Is this the kind of treatment that black community nationals travelling throughout the EC on holiday can expect in the new united Europe? ■

Tory press plays race card

'Kinnock won't curb flood of bogus refugees' (*Standard* 26.3.92), 'Labour's madness on migrants' (*Daily Mail* 2.4.92), 'Labour will soften the rules' (*Star* 3.3.92) – with headlines such as these, the press was out to remind us that the Tory Party was the only one which would stand firm on immigration. It would bring in an Asylum Bill, so necessary to curb the immigrants who were out to 'defraud Europe's generous social and welfare system'. Any story the press could find (and plenty of old ones were revived) of 'cheating immigrants' became instant news in the run-up to the election.

The big scoop came on 23 March, when a police helicopter and tracker dogs were used to hunt down a van-load of 'illegal immigrants' who had fled from an M4 service station. It was the 'Great M4 migrants chase', cheered the *Standard* (23.3.92). The 'stowaways' were daubed the 'Punjabi "Paras"' by the *Mail* (24.3.92), and the Labour-leaning *Mirror* wryly commented: 'A very nice scam' (24.3.92). The *Sun* thoughtfully provided us with photos of a ship, a tanker, a dinghy, a camper van – the various methods of illegal entry deployed by the tricky immigrants. Meanwhile, the *Times* (31.3.92) found a more up-market theme to dwell on. On the basis of no evidence whatsoever, it warned that 'Algeria is displacing Nigeria as the biggest source of illegal immigration to Britain as fears of fundamentalism grow'. 'Evidence' that 'London will be swamped by refugees in five years' (*Times* 30.3.92) was provided by a speech given by a Conservative Westminster councillor, David Weeks.

Scare-mongering about illegal immigrants in the press is, of course, nothing new. What is novel, however, is the way old racist arguments are repackaged in pseudo anti-fascist language. Taking its cue from a speech by Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, the press – from the *Sun* to the *Times* – repeated Hurd's warning that strict immigration controls were Britain's last line of defence against the onward march of European fascism. The *Standard* (24.3.92) put the argument most succinctly when it wrote: 'We have all been complacent about the rise of the far Right in France... But

Labour was prepared to support the Conservatives over the Asylum Bill to prevent them from using the 'race card' to their advantage during the general election. Labour needn't have bothered. It forgot the trump card in the Tory Party's pack – the press.



if the right of people to travel freely within the European Community is routinely abused by illegal immigrants, Britain too could witness the rise of extremist, racist parties like those of France, Germany, Italy and Austria. Europe should place the immigration question at the top of its list of priorities for attention.' That old campaigner, Gary Bushell, in warning of the risk of fascism, was

obviously reminiscing on his Marxist past when he wrote: 'A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of mass immigration' (*Sun* 4.4.92).

A week later and the argument was refined even further. This time taking the cue from a speech by Kenneth Baker, the press used European election results, where the fascists had made significant gains, to argue the case against proportional representation – which, just in case anyone has forgotten, the Tory Party was the only party to reject out of hand. 'Nazi riots will hit Britain – PR aids Fascists, claims Baker', warned that bastion of anti-nazism, the *Sun* (7.4.92)! ■

Press file

CARF is making challenging racist articles central to its campaigning work. When we wrote to the Press Complaints Commission about a cartoon in the *Sun* (see below), it replied that it 'takes the view that cartoonists, like columnists, have the right to comment on matters of news or public interest, even if those comments offend some readers'.

CARF also took up a *Times* editorial (24.3.92) that included: 'To call a French housewife a racist because she is driven to distraction by the midnight smells of Arab cooking from the apartment of her Algerian neighbour is simply not fair.' ■



Make your voice heard: The Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom has produced a useful pack, *Right of Reply: everything you need to know about tackling the media* (£3.95, CPBF, 96 Dalston Lane, London E8 1NG).

Useful numbers include Press Complaints Commission, 1 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8AE, 071-353 1248; Independent Television Commission, 70 Brompton Road, London SW3 1EY, 071-584 7011; Broadcasting Complaints Commission, 35-37 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0BS, 071-630 1966. (Newspapers also have their own ombudsmen to whom you should direct complaints.)

Lost amongst the dispossessed

Politicians have been congratulating themselves on Britain's treatment of refugees compared with other European countries. Here, Mary Dines, of Rights and Justice, reports a very different picture.

The sight of neo-Nazis on our TV screens demonstrating against foreigners on the streets of Germany, along with the horrific attacks on people and refugee hostels, have produced a smug reaction in Britain. We have been told that Britain's race relations legislation and its 'firm and fair' immigration policies have so far enabled us to avoid this sort of xenophobia – with the rider that, without new legislation to prevent the 'hordes' of people seeking entry disguised as refugees, there will be strong public reaction.

It is also pointed out that, in Britain, refugees are free to live where they like and are, therefore, less likely to be a target for racist attacks.

Terrible housing

It is true that those with relatives already in this country, if not detained at Heathrow or elsewhere, can go and live in the same area. But, for the majority of the new arrivals, this is not an option.

Mr and Mrs C arrived from Turkey in January 1989 and claimed political asylum. They stayed with friends for 6 weeks in an already overcrowded flat. Then they had a room for 2 months but were asked to leave when Mrs C was heavily pregnant. They moved into a flat in Hackney. Although assessed as unfit for human habitation, they stayed there for a year, leaving only when their baby's health began to be affected. They paid £250 to get into a squat. Once there, they were abused and harassed – racist graffiti was scrawled outside their door, and excrement and stones thrown at it. They also received racist letters, saying 'You're dead meat you turks fucking cunts'. After 3 months, they were evicted and put in a reception centre while the local council decided whether to house them. In February 1992, it refused, saying they should not have left the flat, as, although it was unfit for human habitation, it was 'typical of houses of multiple occupation in the area'. Mr and Mrs C took the council to court, and won the right to have their case reconsidered.

For the past few years, most refugees have no choice but to go to the poorest and most run-down parts of London, where they live either in bed-and-breakfast hostels or, increasingly, in multi-occupied houses run by accommodation agencies and estate agents whose purpose is to make the maximum profit out of their lettings. Often the accommodation is run down and the houses lack all but the most basic of services – and even these are inadequate for the number of people living in the house.

Local authorities, strapped for cash and in fear of capping, cannot cope with this huge increase in private rented property, so landlords have little fear of being inspected and forced to improve standards. Some agencies now specialise in housing refugees, taking block bookings from the ports of entry.

It is significant that most of the accommodation used for refugees is located not just in poor boroughs, but in areas of poor boroughs where the local community itself is in low-standard housing. For these residents, often black, there is also no choice about how and where they live.

Settling in made harder

It is not just the housing that is run down in these refugee-receiving areas (recently, these have mainly been in north London). Penniless councils have cut back on education (most significantly, further education), social services and recreation; even libraries have been closed or have reduced opening times. This means that refugees cannot even take English classes. Receiving only 90% of the basic income support until they have been accepted by the Home Office (a process which often takes more than two years), they are unable to travel to other areas for courses, or even to visit friends or relatives.

The hardship experienced by many refugees has to be seen to be believed. In one multi-occupied house in Tottenham, a visitor found two Eritrean women, sitting in bed together wrapped in blankets at midday. Heating in the cold and damp house had been transferred to a key

system by the landlord. The women, who could not go out as they had no money, not even for food, were trying to conserve their energy.

It is not surprising that many refugees become depressed. But those who do find little help. In some areas, they cannot get on to the local doctor's list, especially if they are suffering from the long-term effects of their experiences or torture.

Joining the dispossessed

While blaming local authorities for poor housing and facilities, the government has deliberately ignored these problems. Nor will it acknowledge that there is a deliberate policy of directing new arrivals to the most miserable parts of London. A study of areas of Haringey, Hackney, Walthamstow, Newham and, now, Edmonton in Enfield would demonstrate, however, that it is actively seeking to hide the refugees away in deprived areas where they get lost amongst the already dispossessed. ■

ID cards for refugees

Since November 1991 a new screening procedure for asylum-seekers has been in force. Like the doubling of fines on airlines carrying passengers without documents, it was introduced with no parliamentary debate.

The procedure requires asylum-seekers to attend an 'identification interview' in which their travel documents are checked and they are questioned about their route to the UK. The interviews are conducted with no privacy, by junior officials with no specialist knowledge of refugees. At the end of the interview the asylum-seeker is given a Standard Acknowledgement Letter (SAL), which is a document on passport paper bearing the holder's photograph, name, date of birth and nationality.

Increasingly, DSS offices are demanding the SAL from asylum-seekers before issuing benefit. Since it can take several months to obtain the document, there are thousands of people who are unable to claim benefit and who are destitute.

After Hoyerswerda: the new political consensus in Germany

Regional elections saw the neo-nazi Republikaner Party gain 11% of the vote in Baden-Württemberg and the DVU obtain 6% in Schleswig-Holstein. On 24 May, the Republikaner will test its strength again in local elections, where a new nationalist party, 'Die Nationalen', which has revisionist historian David Irving's support, is standing. CARF's correspondent in Germany argues that there has been a fundamental shift to the right in German politics, with even some sections of the Left now joining the Right's ranks.

1991 was not only the year of the burning of refugee hostels all over Germany, but also of a new alliance between a conservative government and most parts of the opposition, inside and outside the parliament.

In September, while the racist mobs in Hoyerswerda were still celebrating their 'victory' – they had 'freed a German town from bogus foreigners' – the politicians came out with statements blaming the abuse of Germany's 'liberal' asylum law for the rise of violence and neo-fascism.

They used Hoyerswerda to argue for a change to the constitution, which currently guarantees the right of every refugee to enter Germany and apply for asylum. The large number of so-called 'economic refugees', represented as such a threat, particularly to former East Germany with its high unemployment, was again seen as a major national problem.

Waning concern

If you had expected a broad coalition of church, welfare and human rights organisations, trade unions, Greens and Social Democrats to oppose that view, you were to be disappointed. Numerous 'Be friendly to foreigners' campaigns, some supported by the state, may have been launched, but, at the same time, refugees fleeing from places of racist terror were being sent back by the immigration police – only to be attacked again.

Eight months later, the constant

attacks on refugees, immigrants and foreign students have not stopped. The media are no longer interested. Apart from a small number of anti-racist and anti-fascist activists and some groups in the PDS (the successor to the Communist Party in the GDR) – who are blamed for polarising the situation, rather than waiting for the fascists to 'disappear' – the German Left has decided to make its peace with the German state.

The Greens, who used to be the only West German party in the 1980s whose programme included 'the right for every refugee to stay in Germany' and who were part of the struggles against deportations, voted at their 1991 party conference to give up their former policy. They claim that the increasing conflicts between the German population and more and more foreigners coming to live in Germany show the need for 'new' political solutions. Instead of using their resources to support the anti-racist movement, the Greens promote a reactionary immigration law – with quotas to be set by the state according to the needs of private capital for cheap labour – as a progressive step towards a peaceful multi-cultural German society.

A new consensus

A large number of trade unionists go along with the idea. The new political

consensus between the ruling conservative party and the liberals, the opposition social democrats and the Greens is that something must be done about the burden of an increasing number of asylum-seekers.

While some Green politicians still oppose a constitutional change, Björn Engholm, the social democrat candidate who might replace Chancellor Kohl after the 1994 general elections, made the policy of his party quite clear. In interviews, he has admitted openly that he will not defend the German asylum law if a European-wide solution can be achieved. That there is nothing left of a liberal asylum law anyway – since the leading parties decided in January on a new bill that includes collection camps, cutting the decision-making process to six weeks and restricting appeal rights – is no longer a matter for political debate. Nor is the racist aliens' law that defines German citizenship by blood relations and withholds the most basic democratic rights from millions of people born in Germany.

One of the worst aspects of the shift of the debate further to the right is that large parts of the German Left have proved that they still lack a basic understanding of the racist character of the German state. It is a bitter irony that they should propose to fight racism with an immigration law which is racist in itself. ■

Election results

The Italian general election on 5 April resulted in a hung parliament, with the four-party coalition government failing to achieve a majority of votes.

The good news is that the Italian fascists of the MSI lost one of their 35 seats. It polled 5.4% of the vote (as against 5.9% in 1987), despite the personal success of Mussolini's

granddaughter, Alessandra, in Naples, which pushed the fascist vote up to 10% in the Campania region.

The bad news is that the racist League of the North, made up of separatist groups from Lombardy, Piedmont and Vento, has gained enough ground to give it bargaining power. The League received only 8.7% of the vote nationally, but it

A new report by the PDS (Bundeshaus, D-5300 Bonn 1, Germany) chronicles racism and extreme right terror in Germany between August 1991 and January 1992. Incidents documented include:

- An attack on 30 Vietnamese in Dresden by 60 skinheads armed with iron rods and chains.
- An attack on a refugee couple by a gang armed with knives and carrying nooses.

gained 17.5% across the north and a staggering 24% in Lombardy. It has increased its seats in the Chamber of Deputies from one in 1987 to 55. This puts it in a key position in the coalition horse trading. However, Northern League leader Umberto Bossi has predicted: 'We will be going back to vote in six months.' If he is right, the anti-immigrant movement in northern Italy stands to take yet further strides forward.

One important consequence of the French regional and cantonal elections, held on 22 March 1992, is that anti-racist organisations mobilised as never before.

At the start of the campaign on 25 January, more than 100,000 people marched through Paris protesting against the increase in racism, including the increasingly repressive immigration policy of the Socialist government. (The French Asylum Bill fell foul of the Constitutional court after it had been improved by the National Assembly.) Throughout the campaign, wherever the FN held an election meeting, demonstrators have been on their tracks holding protest marches and rallies. There have been many (largely unreported) peaceful demonstrations, but, as the campaign progressed, violent confrontations increased. In Caen (21 January), the prefect banned the FN meeting as he could not guarantee peace; at Grenoble (23 January) riot police intervened between Le Pen's henchmen and demonstrators. At the end of February, the FN leader's visit to Corsica was blocked by demonstrators and his meeting cancelled. At Bellegarde (Limoges) in early March, 300 peaceful protesters occupied a runway and prevented Bruno Megret's plane from landing for an election meeting. The FN claimed an 'undemocratic conspiracy' against them, and began to arm, with stewards wearing helmets and using truncheons and teargas bombs.

The reaction of many on the Left to the cancellation of meetings (especially after the Mayor of Lyon refused the FN a room in the town hall) was to worry about the 'ethics' of banning or blocking such meetings.

In early March, Kamel Hached was killed in Epinay (a run-down northern suburb of Paris where the FN came top of the cantonal poll with 26%) as he tried to intervene in a row over a stolen scooter. Although

the murder is not believed at this stage to be an organised affair, anti-racists are monitoring the case carefully. Then, on 21 March, an anti-racist demonstrator, Gael Peltier, was shot and wounded in the chest by a

FN steward at a small protest outside a FN election meeting in Bagnols-sur-Cèze, near Nîmes. The FN steward immediately went into hiding, but was arrested on the night of the election. ■

Letter from the Netherlands

Mieke Hopper writes:

It was September 1991 when the Dutch Home Secretary, Ms Dales, announced that there was going to be a 'national debate on minorities'. Though underlining the importance of the issue, she was vague about her intentions and how the debate would be organised.



But the Dutch Home Secretary had spoken and suddenly rubbish was elevated to the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It is now considered normal for politicians and people in the street to spew out their prejudices in documentaries and current affairs programmes.

This could all be expected if you are having a 'national debate about ethnic minorities'. What is surprising, however, is the eagerness of the public bodies to join the debate.

There was the Dutch Secret Service working paper warning us against 'tribal wars of rival Muslim (eg religious) organisations. There will be bloodshed', it says.

There was the public statement of a police chief superintendent of an Amsterdam district, who said that 10,000 illegal immigrants from Ghana were living there. Immediately, the chairman of that district and the managing director

of the housing corporation provided evidence that the number was false. The superintendent, though, sticks to his figure and actually goes on to say that all these Ghanaian 'illegals' are involved in criminal activities.

There was also the hot pursuit of illegal workers employed by a chain of stores. Even a helicopter was needed to catch all of them: a grand total of three. Then there was the Home Secretary's journey to various African countries to try to get Dutch customs officers to check that African refugees have the right official papers to come to Holland.

More incidents happen and are still occurring during the national debate. It is all so obvious that one has to wonder if this outburst of popular racism is part of a strategy. A strategy to hide the government's impotence to provide a decent standard of living for all people in the Netherlands. A strategy of offering liberal sentiments and giving subsidies to anti-discrimination organisations rather than bringing in effective measures against racism.

It is a pity that the Dutch anti-discrimination and anti-racist organisations did not join together to protest fiercely against a national debate in which the ethnic minorities in the Netherlands are identified as the people who are causing the problems, a national debate that proves to be a humiliating affair for all people living in the Netherlands.

Now the damage has been done. Migrant shops have been attacked and bomb attacks on mosques in Amsterdam and the Hague are described by the Home Secretary and the Secret Service as the mindless acts of hooligans.

Hopefully, we will one day realise how we have been manipulated. ■

Fascists in the general election

The general election has shown that the fascists' electoral fortunes are not what they were in the 1970s, when the NF commanded 100,000 votes in the 1977 GLC local elections in London. Nevertheless, the fanatics – of the BNP, in particular, with its 'Rights for Whites' message – need constant vigilance if racial violence is not to escalate further.

Platform denied

One good thing about the fascists' election campaign was that it was more or less ignored by the media. Fascist enthusiasts who sat up all night to catch a glimpse of their heroes addressing the nation, or to watch Peter Snow's swingometer shatter under the impact of a massive swing to the far Right, must have been bitterly disappointed. Even local papers virtually ignored the fascist presence – the *Derby Telegraph* printed a picture of the English football squad and pointed out, in disbelief, that, under the fascists, the black players would be repatriated – 'And they seriously expect you to vote for them', it exclaimed angrily.

Another good thing to emerge was the way in which the anti-fascist movement mobilised to deny the fascists a platform for their election meetings. In Rochdale, the BNP was driven from pillar to post as, first, the town hall (pre-booked), then a pub (closed), followed by another pub (surrounded by anti-fascists who had got there first), were denied them. The BNP may have received its largest vote in Tower Hamlets, but

less than 100 fascists braved the walk past a mass picket that had congregated outside York Hall, where a BNP election meeting was being held.

Platform allowed

There were those, though, who betrayed an appalling irresponsibility to the anti-fascist cause. When an Exeter AFA member phoned up 'Charter 88' to warn it against allowing the NF's candidate for Torbay, Bob Jones, on to its Democracy Day platform, he was given a lecture on 'freedom of speech'. On the day itself, Labour candidate Dr Peter Truscott denounced the NF from the platform and walked off in protest before the NF candidate arrived. Mark Cotterill, the NF's election agent, who spearheaded the NF's William of Orange celebrations in 1988, tried to take on the anti-fascist protest, and suffered a cut

hand and a head injury in the process.

In contrast to events in Torbay, Darlington BNP candidate Dr Donald Clarke (who claims to be a life member of the British Butterfly Conservation Society) was chased out of an election meeting at Darlington Environmental Watch.

Elsewhere, one local clergyman walked out in disgust after the Derby District Council of Churches, which had organised an election meeting, allowed NF candidate Peter Hart, who claims to be an ex-Tory and whose campaign focused on 'humane repatriation' for black British people, on to the platform. CARF is taking this matter up further with anti-racist Christian organisations which recognise that there is a need for a wider debate within the Church about 'No platform'. ■

The NF in Devon: a catalogue of violence and terror, compiled by Exeter AFA, £2.00. Available from Exeter AFA, c/o The Flying Post, Box 185, Exeter EX4 4EW.

Fascist updates

■ NF supporters are believed to be behind a vicious attack on a 14-year-old black youth in Southend. The youth was repeatedly hit with a hammer and kicked in the face and body by a white gang who chanted racist and NF slogans (*Evening Echo* 16.3.92).

■ In Finchley, north London, at least eight homes with Labour posters in their windows were spray-painted with yellow swastikas (*Jewish Chronicle* 3.4.92).

■ BNP supporters David Oakes (of Edgefield Close, Redhill, Surrey), Michael Rudor (of Manor View, Stevenage) and Gary L Robson (of Newton Road, Wembley, Middlesex) have been charged with grievous bodily harm and unlawful violence following an assault on an ANL member (*Jewish Chronicle* 3.4.92).

Breakdown of fascist votes

BNP

Richard Edmonds	Bethnal Green & Stepney	1,310	3.6%
John Peacock	Blaby	521	0.8%
John Tyndall	Bow & Poplar	1,107	2.9%
John Morse	Cardiff North	121	0.2%
Stephen Cartwright	Clydesdale	342	0.7%
Donald Clarke	Darlington	355	0.6%
Lady Jane Birdwood	Dewsbury	660	1.1%
David Bruce	Edinburgh West	133	0.2%
Laurence Johnson	Erewash	645	1.0%
Richard Heaton	Peterborough	311	0.5%
Kenneth Henderson	Rochdale	620	1.2%
Stephen Tyler	Southwark & Bermondsey	530	1.4%
Michael O'Rourke	Uxbridge	350	0.7%

NF

Eddy Wicker	Birmingham Hodge Hill	370	0.9%
Pauline Read	Birmingham Yardley	192	0.4%
Ian Anderson	Bristol East	270	0.5%
Norman Tompkinson	Coventry South East	173	0.5%
Peter Hart	Derby North	245	0.4%
George Cartwright	Dudley East	675	1.2%
Christopher Hill	Ealing North	277	0.5%
John McAuley	Hertfordshire West	665	1.0%
Robert Tenny	Leeds West	132	0.2%
Andy Carmichael	Slough	290	0.5%
Terry Blackham	Southwark & Bermondsey	168	0.4%
Bob Jones	Torbay	268	0.5%
Ken Reynolds	Walsall North	614	1.2%
John Lord	West Bromwich East	477	1.1%

Total BNP vote 7,005 Total NF vote 4,816 Total fascist vote 11,821

'The Other Side of Docklands'

An anti-fascist housing worker in Tower Hamlets sees in a community initiative, documented in a video, a message for the anti-fascist movement.

This film has, on the face of it, nothing to do with fascism. The consortium of six tenants associations who have banded together to form SPLASH (South Poplar and Limehouse Action for Secure Housing) and fight the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) do not work principally around issues of racism. So why is this important to the anti-fascist movement?

Simply because SPLASH represents the other face of the Isle of Dogs – the side that does not correspond to the stereotype of the belligerent cockney East Ender, fighting to preserve his little slice of England against an encroaching 'immigrant' invasion. The real East End is a 'mixed' community. White people of English, Irish and Scottish descent live here alongside Asian, African-Caribbean, African, Chinese and others. And SPLASH is fighting for a better deal for all.

In 'The Other Side of Docklands' ordinary people tell their tale, not mediated through social workers or political activists. They describe, simply and strongly, with humour and sadness, what it is like to live on Europe's biggest building site, where the horrendous noise of construction means banging and clanking from morning to night, where pollution from construction has meant that the demand for inhalers for respiratory problems have risen to five times the national average, where community and family ties have been devastated by the construction of a motorway which has forced 500 families to move to other parts of the borough.

But these residents are not passive victims. Campaigning has led to small victories (over the installation of double glazing, for instance) and bigger ones are, perhaps, yet to come (a compensation claim against the LDDC on behalf of the families is the largest in English legal history). Accused by their private sector detractors of being Luddite, they set about devising a new economic plan for the redevelopment of Docklands.

Unity in action

No one is suggesting that racism never raises its ugly head amongst people



who have so little, when even what little they have is under threat. But, if nothing else, SPLASH knows that the LDDC will

benefit from any division within the community, hence the scapegoating of ethnic groups for the social problems of the Docklands is not tolerated in SPLASH meetings.

It is for these reasons that the BNP's Rights for Whites message cannot take hold in this part of the Isle of Dogs. Who needs the BNP's mythical figures of race hate when you have an almost feudal landlord in the LDDC to deal with?

The anti-fascist movement talks of fascism having a class component, of fascism being a tool of the ruling class, of 'black and white unite and fight', but too often this talk is confined to meetings where one left group debates with the other as to who has the true revolutionary line or who is the more militant.

Anti-fascists need to relate more to the problems of real people in real communities.

I suspect that for the people of the Docklands many of our arid and dogmatic debates would be as alien and off-putting as those that take place in the closed boardrooms of the LDDC. ■

The Other Side of Docklands: a community video. Available from Docklands Forum, Brady Centre, 192 Hanbury Street, London E1 5HU. (Price £15 for funded organisations and £5 for unfunded groups.)

Racism along the river

CARF is anxious that the BNP's 'Rights for Whites' message might be reaching a wider audience.

The BNP's largest share of the votes in the general election came from Tower Hamlets' two constituencies, Bethnal Green & Stepney and Bow & Poplar. Housing is a key issue on which to mobilise some sections of the local white population, anxious to hold on to privilege in housing allocation procedures.

Housing

Over 100 people attended a meeting of the ironically-named 'Isle of Dogs Action

Group for Equality', launched in March to press for a sons and daughters policy from its neighbourhood (Labour) councillors. (Although Tower Hamlets is Liberal Democrat-controlled, under decentralisation plans, local neighbourhood officers are free to operate their own community policies.)

The new group, which argues that locals are being discriminated against in the allocation of newly-built housing association homes, says: 'The Bengali families are getting every benefit around while local families are being treated

as second class citizens.'

Compare this to Richard Edmonds' election message: 'The Liberals and Labour in this area have an appalling record when it comes to looking after white people – they're much more interested in sucking up to Bangladeshis and Somalis. Have you seen the nice new houses in Bonner Street – and have you seen any white families in them?'

Now the Action Group is threatening to take its case to the Commission for Racial Equality, saying that Bengalis are being privileged over 'locals'.

A question being asked by housing activists is what links, if any, does this new group have to the BNP, or any other political party for that matter? Back in 1989, Richard Edmonds' election agent Eddy Butlar tried to organise a campaign on the Isle of Dogs to stop a Bengali family being moved on to the estate. During the current election campaign, 12 households in the area, which is plastered with BNP propaganda, identified themselves as BNP supporters to Labour canvassers. One of the Action Group for Equality's activists, Rita Benzeley, previously stood for the local council as a Liberal candidate.

What is clear, though, is that if you want to fight racism in Tower Hamlets, the key issues to organise around are

housing and the development of land.

Over in the neighbouring Docklands borough of Southwark, where both the BNP and the NF fielded candidates, housing is also a key issue. There is mounting evidence that black families won't move into certain parts of Rotherhithe and Bermondsey because of their fear of racial harassment.

As in Tower Hamlets, groups of individuals, sometimes fomented by the BNP but sometimes acting on their own initiative, are attempting to ensure that they, and not the local authority, control who is given access to new housing stock.

Abusing race laws

There is also evidence that BNP activists and local racists are attempting to use the Race Relations Act to their advantage. Recently, local youth workers in Thurrock, Essex, with the help of Essex CRC, set up a black youth club in the area, pointing out that Thurrock youth centres are not always the most welcoming place for Asian and African-Caribbean youngsters, who tended not to take up youth provision.

After a favourable write-up for the new club in a local paper, one Richard Graham, of Lampits Hill, Corringham, wrote to the *Thurrock Gazette*, implying

that the new club was discriminating against whites. He then wrote to the head of Essex Youth Service and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), saying that if his children were excluded from the youth club, he would 'contact the BNP to sort it out'. His children never turned up.

But the BNP did. Shortly afterwards, the youth club was plastered with BNP stickers. A visit from local police to Mr Graham resulted in the police receiving a diatribe as to how much better things were in Le Pen-iste France.

But what is beyond belief is that the CRE has taken cranky Mr Graham's threats seriously and has warned the youth club that it would be illegal, under the Race Relations Act, to exclude whites. Youth workers have been told that they must introduce 'ethnic monitoring' of the kids who attend the club.

The CRE has relied on the fact that two white children have been attending to counter the claim that the club is exclusively black. However, this begs the question of what would have happened if no white children had attended. Would the CRE then have advised Graham, through its complaints officer, to take out an individual complaint under the Race Relations Act against the club or the youth service? ■



Jon Walter

A member of Tower Hamlets Homeless Families Campaign, seen here demonstrating outside the National Liberal Club.

Local authorities do not have the right to check a person's immigration status when making decisions about the homeless – so says the High Court following a judicial review sought by Liberal Democrat-controlled Tower Hamlets Council. The decision is an important one for anti-racists as, if the High Court had ruled in Tower Hamlets favour, it would have given local authorities the right to make passport checks on all those perceived as foreign when making applications for housing. Tower Hamlets Council now says that it might appeal against the High Court decision. Meanwhile, the CRE is considering issuing a non-discrimination notice against Tower Hamlets Council. And the Tower Hamlets Homeless Families Campaign sees some hope that up to a 100 homeless families, many of whom were evicted from bed and breakfast accommodation, could be housed.

Tower Hamlets Homeless Families Campaign, Brady Centre, Hanbury Street, London E1, 071-377 1308.

'A Cry for Freedom'

The case against the Cardiff 3 – Steven Miller, Yusef Abdullahi and Tony Paris, convicted in November 1990 for the murder of prostitute Lynette White – is in tatters. Not only has South Wales police been forced to reopen the murder investigation, but evidence to be presented to the Court of Appeal will surely prove, beyond doubt, that the Cardiff 3 are innocent, that they were framed by police, and that racism played a major part in their wrongful convictions. It is only a matter of time before the Cardiff 3 are released – but how long will the system make them wait for their freedom?

The manner in which the police carried out the murder investigation, their failure to examine vital forensic evidence, the unreliability of prosecution witnesses – all these factors form the basis of the Appeal, says the Cardiff 3 Campaign. Lawyers will highlight:

● Partial police investigation:

A white man, with bloodstains on him, was reported near the scene on the morning after the murder. Nine months later, eight men, seven of whom were black, were arrested. It has now emerged that a white man made a statement to the police claiming to be the person pictured in a police photofit, although denying the murder. The police, who did not even bother to take up the man's suggestion that they take a sample of his blood so as to eliminate him from their enquiries, failed to inform defence solicitors of his statement. The man has now made a statement to Abdullahi's solicitor.

● **Forensic evidence:** The flat where Lynette was savagely murdered was awash with scientific evidence, none of which pointed to the three convicted men. Blood tests will soon be available to see whether prosecution witness Angela Psaila was at the flat at the time of the murder.

● **The now discredited confession of Steven Miller, which incriminated himself and the other two men:** An interrogation techniques expert, Dr Eric Shepherd, told a 'Panorama' programme in February: 'Miller doesn't know anything about the case that wasn't suggested to him in the first place.' Steven Miller, who has the mental age of an 11-year-old, confessed on his 19th interview.



Malik Abdullahi has been speaking all over the country getting support for the Cardiff 3.

● **Unreliability of prosecution witnesses:** Prosecution witness Ronald Williams has now retracted a statement which led to the convictions of Tony Abdullahi. At the trial, 13 witnesses said that Abdullahi was working on the *SS Coral Sea* on the night of the murder, but this was contradicted by

Williams' claim to have seen him at a night club. Williams now says: 'I stand by everything I said except for the date. I could also be mistaken about the time.'

Furthermore, the Appeal Court will hear that another prosecution witness was part of a conspiracy to cause GBH to a person who prefers not to be named. A former police officer has also given a statement as to the character of this prosecution witness.

'Frankly awful' was how John Stalker, the former Deputy Chief Constable of Manchester, described the evidence given by prosecution witnesses in this case. ■

On 4 July, a day of action, entitled 'A Cry for Freedom', is being organised by the Cardiff 3 Campaign. The day will consist of a demonstration and rally with national speakers, followed by a disco and plenty of other attractions for the children.

For further information contact: Cardiff Three Campaign, c/o 56 Alice Street, Docks, Cardiff CF1 5LB; tel: 0222-46282. London supporters can order leaflets from Newham Monitoring Project, tel: 081-555 8151.

HM Prison Long Lartin, No E94-164

Dear CARF,

I was convicted of murder at Birmingham Crown Court on 10 June 1987. I feel a great injustice has been done to me, for I was only defending myself from a racial attack. Key witnesses at my trial were not supplied with interpreters. These witnesses were Bengali waiters who were serving in the restaurant on the night in question. The trial judge tried to act as interpreter, which is ludicrous considering he couldn't speak a word of the Bengali language. I believe that had the jury heard their evidence, it would have affected its decision. These witnesses gave statements to the police straight after the incident, they had a good view of what actually happened. In their statements they mentioned how racial language from the deceased's party provoked the incident, and how the deceased attacked me armed with a broken glass, and stabbed me twice, before I retaliated by lashing out with a works-knife. The deceased was much bigger than me and he was also with friends who were throwing plates and glasses at me, while their friend was attacking me. They were also shouting racial obscenities at me. It all happened very quickly. I was in fear for my life. My intention never was to kill anybody...

At my trial I was pretty confused. I had just spent 7/8 months on remand in local prisons, which had taken its toll on me, due to living in such inhuman conditions. I had a Queens Counsel and a barrister. They only came to see me about a week before the actual trial, and they spent about 45 minutes with me, asking me a few questions. The next I saw of them was at the trial, where they informed me that they didn't want me to go into the witness box. I let them conduct my defence, but they ignored the fact of self-defence and they didn't get interpreters for key witnesses.

Yours sincerely,
Satpal Ram

CARF is campaigning for the reopening of this case.

Don't forget Chico Mendes

Environmentalists in the west care a lot about the rain forests of the Amazon. But do they care about the fate of the rubber tappers who work in them? As world leaders prepare to draft an international convention on the protection of the rain forests, at the Earth Summit to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June, the bitter struggle which forced the issue on to the agenda is likely to be forgotten.

Chico Mendes was a *seringueiro*, or rubber tapper, from the Amazon region of Brazil. He learned to read and write in his twenties, in order to organise his fellow workers in the fight for justice. The *seringueiros*, forced to labour under debt bondage, lived without health, education or welfare provision. The collective fight for their rights turned into a fight to protect their forest, on which their livelihood depended, from wholesale destruction by powerful ranching and business interests.

Alongside their main tactic of mass, non-violent picketing of areas of forest about to be cleared, Chico Mendes and his fellow workers set up the National Rubber Council (CNS), which worked out detailed proposals for establishing sustainable extractive reserves under which the forests could be safeguarded and their fruits harvested.

But the ranchers and businessmen fought back and violence against the rubber tappers increased. Chico Mendes knew in advance who his killers would be, and listed the names of those involved, including local politicians. But nothing effective was done to prevent his killing. He was shot dead at his own back door in 1988.

In December 1990, two of his killers, a father and son of a notoriously violent ranching family, the Alves da Silva, came to trial. Over 15 years, the family had transformed some 5,000 hectares of virgin forest into cattle land, dispossessing its former inhabitants in the process. At their trial, evidence was presented of a dozen other killings in which the family was implicated. Both men were convicted of Chico Mendes' murder and sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment, but the conviction of one was later quashed on the ground of insufficient evidence.

The legal battle over the case is still



'Chico Mendes – they have killed our leader but not our struggle', read the banner at his funeral.

being waged, but other questions remain. The network of powerful interests that Mendes indicated was operating behind the Alves da Silva family has not been exposed. And the Brazilian government has not yet decided whether to implement or rescind the CNS's plans for extractive reserves. Meanwhile, leaders of the CNS and of the rubber tappers' union continue to live under the threat of death. ■

CARF readers who would like to know more should read *The Fight for the Forest: Chico Mendes in his own words*, price £4.99, available from Latin America Bureau, 1 Amwell Street, London EC1R 1UL.

De Klerk gets cocky

President de Klerk's proposals for constitutional change in South Africa will, argues CARF, leave effective power in the hands of the white majority. De Klerk, emboldened by the 'yes' vote in the whites-only referendum, is attempting to roll back many of the gains made by anti-apartheid activists over the past year. Now is not the time for anti-apartheid activists in the UK to sit back.

The vote of confidence from all sides – except the extreme white right wing and the disenfranchised black majority – has given the National Party the excuse it needed to steamroller its own proposals for constitutional change through the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa). Ignoring its earlier agreement in Codesa – that a multi-party joint executive should take power to oversee elections for a constituent assembly – the government is now proposing a transitional constitution which would leave it and the existing tricameral parliament in place.

The ANC and other opposition parties are given only a limited role in 'advisory councils', with no authority over the elections.

The working committees set up by Codesa expressed almost unanimous outrage at this plan, but the latest, more detailed, proposals from the government show little change: any

decisions by the proposed 'preparatory councils' would have to be agreed by existing government institutions. The ANC has proposed an 'interim government council', whose proclamations would have legal force, to share legislative authority with parliament.

Nelson Mandela and the front line states have appealed to the two black organisations which have, so far, boycotted the negotiations – the Pan Africanist Congress and the Azanian People's Organisation – to take their places at Codesa and play a part in this process.

Outside the convention, pessimism is the order of the day. According to a poll in December, conducted in the midst of the euphoria of the first round of Codesa talks, 40% – an increase of 14% on a poll taken six months earlier – of black South Africans no longer believe that the future will bring any improvement in their personal situation. Hardly surprising, when black unemployment is rising, homelessness is increasing and the township killings have reached unprecedented levels.

Change is essential – and must come soon. But it is the quality of that change which really matters. The De Klerk regime must not be allowed to use the referendum victory to maintain white power and privilege at the expense of the black majority. ■

Football

European football fans unite

A group of fans from St Pauli, a German second division club based in Hamburg, recently toured Britain to talk to supporters' groups and anti-fascist organisations. St Pauli are based in a multi-racial area of Hamburg, and much of its support is drawn from the anti-fascist squatters' communities there. When racism appeared in German football, the St Pauli fans were not prepared to tolerate it, and launched a strong anti-racist, anti-fascist campaign.

The symbol of the campaign has been the 'St Pauli Fans Gegen Rechts' (St Pauli fans against the Right) stickers, which have appeared all over Europe. Many thousands have been distributed, and now the anti-racist fans of many other German clubs are producing their own versions. The campaign has also made contact with local black communities and paraded massive anti-racist banners on match days. Racist chants from the fans of other clubs are met by thousands of St Pauli fans chanting 'Nazis fuck off'.



This campaign is humorously and movingly chronicled in a new video produced by St Pauli fans. Entitled '...and I know why I stand here', the English-translated version describes how the anti-racist campaign has been part of an attempt to give fans more say, and to make the club a genuine part of the local community. The focus for the fans' efforts has been the St Pauli fanzine, *Millerntar Roar*, Germany's biggest seller.

While in Britain, the St Pauli fans made practical grassroots links with other football campaigns, such as Leeds Fans United Against Racism and Fascism and the Scottish-based Supporters Campaign Against Racism in Football, as well as Anti-Fascist

Action and the Football Supporters Association. ■

The St Pauli video (DM35) and stickers (50 for DM2) are available from Fan-Laden d FC St Pauli, Beim Grunen Jager 1, 2000 Hamburg 36, Germany; tel: 040 439 69 61.

Sunderland should apologise

FA Cup finalists Sunderland FC were presented with Britain's 'Top Family Club' award and a cheque for £30,000 in April. But, for black people in Sheffield, what should have been a quiet family afternoon was destroyed after some Sunderland supporters went on a racist rampage.

It all happened on 5 April, the day Sunderland was due to play Norwich at Hillsborough in the semi-finals. 15-year-old Asma Bibi has written to the Club's manager, Malcolm Crosby, on behalf of pupils at Earl Marshal Comprehensive School, describing the action of fans, who 'shouted out unkind and abominable words because of our colour, like "Black Bastards", "Paki" and "Black Niggers"'. They wound down their car windows and spat at people going by, and on several occasions they started fights with Asian youngsters who 'were just minding their own business', says Asma.

The attitude of Billy Simmonds of Sunderland FC Supporters' Association does not seem very helpful. 'There is very little we can do - about 20,000 people went down and it could have been anybody', he told the *Sheffield Star*.

Pupils at Earl Marshal, however, seem more in tune than Mr Simmonds with what a football club can and cannot do. In their letter to Malcolm Crosby, they have asked for: an apology to be printed in the Sunderland programme; an announcement to be made over the club tannoy at the next home game; and that the whole incident should be discussed and taken up within the Supporters' Club. The children have nothing against the club as a whole, but believe that unless firm action is taken at the top against this racist minority, it will not be living up to its 'Top Family Club' image. ■

CARF has forwarded the schoolchildren's letter to Sunderland's alternative fanzine, *A Love Supreme*.

UPDATE

CAMPAIGNS AND REPORTS

- Winston Silcott Defence Campaign:** Following the quashing of the convictions against the Tottenham 3, the Winston Silcott Defence Campaign has been launched. Winston Silcott is the only one of the three men to remain in prison, having been found guilty on a separate murder charge. But, according to campaigners, Winston's earlier conviction was heavily influenced by events surrounding the Blakelock case and a strong case for self-defence was not put forward by his solicitors. Winston Silcott, they believe, should have been entitled to an appeal, but this was refused in 1988 by Lord Lane. An appeal has been sent out by the Families of the Tottenham 3 for campaign funds. Further information from the Winston Silcott Defence Campaign, 247a West Green Road, London N15. Tel: 081-809 6483.
- Vandana Patel's husband jailed:** On 29 April, a memorial march from Dalston to Stoke Newington police station in north London was held in memory of Vandana Patel. Vandana's husband, Jayanti Patel, was convicted of her murder in March. Campaigners are calling for a full public inquiry into her death, in particular why Vandana was left alone with her violent husband in the domestic violence unit of Stoke Newington police station. Remember Vandana Patel Campaign, PO Box 225, London E7 9AA.
- Aslam family:** A defence campaign has been launched in Oxford around the case of the Aslam family, who say they have been victimised by the police for defending themselves against a racist attack. Mrs Aslam and her two sons have been charged with grievous bodily harm, following an incident in Cowley on 15 February.
- Murders:** Two men, Gary Hoskins and Anthony Noble, have been charged with the murder of Panchadcharam Sahitharan (see CARF No 7). Both men have been offered bail of £10,000 and will appear in court on 15 May. Contact NMP for details of picket of the Court, 081-555-8151. Meanwhile, the Black People's Alliance has been formed to campaign over the deaths of Siddik Dada and Mohammed Sarwar in Manchester in January. Black People's Alliance, c/o WFA Media Cultural Centre, 9 Lucy St, Manchester M15 4BX.
- STOP PRESS: Irving meeting cancelled** The Palestine Solidarity Campaign and other groups were horrified to learn that the International Centre for Islamic Studies in London intended to give David Irving a platform on May Day to pontificate on 'Questions of Justice in the New World Order'. Their protests paid off - the meeting was suddenly cancelled 'owing to unforeseen circumstances'.

CALENDAR: RACE & RESISTANCE

FEBRUARY

- 28 Five found guilty of violent disorder during riots on Cardiff's Ely estate when Asian shopkeeper was targeted.

MARCH

- 2 Labour Party offers Tories deal to speed Asylum Bill through parliament before general election ... Home secretary announces package to tighten rules for asylum-seekers claiming benefit.
- 3 Two men charged with murder of Panchadcharam Sahitharan in east London ... Home Office says investigation into Delroy McKnight's death in Brixton prison 'revealed serious inadequacies in the quality of care'.
- 4 *Evening Standard* reports that John Major has told 'Tory high command' to keep race out of election campaign.
- 5 Sudanese who fled anti-foreigner attacks in Germany given temporary permission to stay in Britain ... Labour MPs block publication before election of Home Affairs Committee report demanding identity cards to control illegal immigration.
- 6 Belfast Catholic paid £25,000 compensation for 'blatant' religious discrimination in employment by Health Board.
- 7 African asylum-seeker burnt when device explodes at refugee centre in southern Sweden.
- 10 At an inquiry into top security Ashworth hospital, witness speaks of death threats when she asked nurses to remove BNP stickers.
- 12 Home Office ministers criticised for rejecting two black people recommended to join Holloway prison's board of visitors ... Kenneth Baker deports Zairean asylum-seeker, despite torture evidence.
- 13 Asylum Bill not to go through before election ... Planning group set up to establish successor to UKIAS refugee unit ... Appeal Court overturns High Court in ruling that Tower Hamlets Liberal Democrats' bogus Labour election leaflet was legal.
- 14 4 people seriously injured when Le Pen supporters attack anti-Front National demonstrators in Chartres ... Australia's New South Wales police chief orders inquiry after showing of video in which police mock deaths of Aborigines in police custody.
- 15 Scotland Yard investigates reports that police cadets were told to lie in court in induction course at Stoke Newington police station ... Strathclyde's chief constable apologises 'in case' racist joke caused offence.
- 16 24 black candidates to stand for major parties in general election, 5 fewer than in 1987.
- 17 Anti-fascist demonstrators in Stockholm halt meeting to be addressed by right-

- wing French historian Robert Faurisson.
- 19 Hamilton trades council initiates campaign of resistance to racism in Lanarkshire in response to BNP election candidate.
- 20 EC environment ministers agree rules legitimising dumping of deadly toxic waste in Third World countries.
- 23 AAm reports 'illegal immigrants', who travelled in a lorry from Germany, at M4 service station.
- 24 Birmingham fireman fined £550 and given final warning for racially abusing black administrative assistant.
- 26 Police carry out 'illegal immigrants' raid on London's RAC Club.
- 27 Birmingham school accused of turning 'blind eye' to attacks by racist playground bullies, including 'hanging' a 15-year-old Asian boy from a netball post ... Douglas Hurd warns that Labour's immigration policy could lead to rise of racist right.
- 30 One in 20 prisoners could be innocent, says National Association of Probation Officers ... Low Pay Unit report says up to one-quarter of Europe's 50 million poor live in Britain.

APRIL

- 2 Court of Appeal orders re-trial in case of Glen Lewis, who claims West Midlands Serious Crime Squad police fabricated his confession. After his arrest, says Lewis, he was headbutted and racially abused.
- 3 Under a Labour government, Britain would be 'swamped with immigrants', says Tory MP Nicholas Fairbairn.
- 6 Anti-fascists demonstrate against BNP election meeting in Bethnal Green, east London ... Sam Kulasingham ends 8-week hunger strike when Home Office decides to review his murder conviction.
- 8 Martin Sweeney prevented from addressing civil liberties conference after being held at Heathrow under the PTA.
- 9 Tories win general election. Niranjan Deva wins Brentford to become sole Asian Tory MP; John Taylor loses Cheltenham; Piara Khabra (Labour) wins Ealing Southall; Ashok Kumar (Labour) loses Langbaugh ... Lorrette Williams, rejecting £11,000 compensation offer, takes first racial discrimination claim against Home Office.
- 10 Turkish-born policewoman, based at east London's Leman Street station, to take sex and race discrimination case.
- 11 Home Office to deploy extra immigration staff to check for 'fraudulent Nigerian visitors'.
- 14 Appeal Court confirms distinction between asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants in quashing conviction of two men jailed for helping the former to enter Britain on forged passports.
- 15 At first meeting after election, cabinet agrees to give priority to Asylum Bill.

POLICE UPDATE

- PC Alan Mason was jailed for 30 months for assault on black boxer Harold Benn. Mason stamped on his face in the back of a police van after stopping Benn in his Volvo in south London on suspicion of having stolen it.
- Marie Burke, Trevor Monerville's grandmother, awarded £50,000 in civil action against the Metropolitan Police for wrongful arrest, assault and imprisonment - bringing total of awards this year against police in the Hackney area of London to £132,000.
- The case of Mr Deane and his son, Tony (pictured below), charged with assaulting the police, will resume at Newham East Magistrates' Court on 25 June. Contact NMP for details of picket, 081-555 8151.



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