BASH THE FASH (1)
ANTI-FASCIST RECOLLECTIONS 1984-93
K. BULLSTREET

This is literally a no-punches pulled account of Anti Fascist Action's fight against fascism in Britain by a grassroots anarchist member of AFA. It is important, not because he makes any pretence at being a leading light but because the many small (or not so small) contributions such people make are key to the success that AFA achieved.

Written with honesty and a sense of humour, the tale of challenging the fascists for control of the streets — and winning — never descends to political cliché or reads like a pools forecast.

Obviously, a changed political environment requires different tactics from the anti-fascist movement, but it's equally clear that, if we don't record our recent success (because it is the success of AFA that changed the landscape,) our enemies will write us out of history. Here's an insight into the true story.

"It must be said that the fascists don't have a very good record in the courage department. They often like the skinhead haircut, bomber jacket and Doc Martens to look hard, but they rarely 'walk the walk'. Of course large groups of them like to attack vulnerable targets, but if they expect some opposition they are not so brave. At Hyde Park once three coachloads of them (ie 100 - 150) jumped off their buses and came screaming towards 20 AFA comrades who stood their ground. As the fascists got nearer some started to lag behind, then the leaders slowed to a jog, then a walk, then they just stood at a distance shouting abuse until the police arrived. Wankers."
Albert Meltzer I Couldn’t Paint Golden Angels:
Sixty Years of commonplace Life and Anarchist Agitation
Starting out as a schoolboy Anarchist at the time of the Spanish civil war, to
involvement in anti-nazi plots, this autobiography records them all, including
Albert’s last physical – but not political – fight against fascism at Lewisham in
1977.
Albert Meltzer was involved in so many struggles that this autobiography
represents a large helping of European (and further afield) anarchist history,
too.
Written with wit, and showing the dedication which kept him going for those
sixty years of activism, this book is a great read – and if you think it’s too pricey,
order it from your local library.
A gentle and generous soul who is one of the leading figures in British anarchism (Duncan
Campbell)
The doyen of the British anarchist movement (Special Branch)
AK Press & Kate Sharpley Library, 1996. 386p. ill. 22cm. 1-873176-93-7 paperback
£12.95

Kate Sharpley Library
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and translations of articles from our archives and overseas publications that
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BASH THE FASH (1)
ANTI-FASCIST RECOLLECTIONS 1984-93

K. BULLSTREET

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Antonio Tellez Sabate: Guerrilla Extraordinary
The story of the last of the anarchist guerrillas, who carried on the struggle against the Franco regime from the end of the Spanish civil war until his death in action in 1960 - A struggle that a new wave of militants was to continue in the 1960s and '70s.
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A selection of essays covering early anti-fascist combat groups, attempts on the life of Mussolini, partisan operations in the war and post-war assaults on the fascists.

Not a lengthy, dry or dusty tome; it is a fresh, well-researched collection of articles on resistance and gives a graphic description of the Italian anarchists' struggle against Mussolini... (Direct Action #12)
Kate Sharpley Library, 1999. 37p, 21cm. 1-873605-47-1 pamphlet
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Further Reading

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class resistance at a national level

pre-continuing the resistance, helped to spark the creation of anti-fascist networks

Waterloo - 17th September 1992

Fascists and police arrested by AVA
1991 put anti-fascism back on the national agenda. In November 1991 a 4,000 strong AFA demonstration against race attacks marched through the BNP heartland of Bethnal Green unopposed. An event that led directly to the relaunch of the ANL.

By now, BNP activities were being confronted by AFA the length and breadth of the country. In Scotland where, prior to 1990, the BNP had been allowed a free run, the AFA launch saw the tables turned figuratively and literally. On one notable occasion, BNP leader John Tyndall was forced to escape an AFA siege through a sewer. This was swiftly followed by a series of devastating setbacks for the BNP both in Manchester and the satellite towns surrounding it. A method of operation soon taken up by the AFA Midlands region. By 1994 the BNP were now losing 'the battle for control of the streets' not just in London but nationally. A fact they publicly acknowledged in April that year when announcing that there would be "no more marches, meetings, punch-ups". It was a decisive moment.

For a brief period C18 picked up the physical force gauntlet. Heavily hyped by Searchlight (magazine) and subsequently the media, the "charismatic street fighter" myth was quickly exposed by AFA stewards. All the major initiatives which came under their protection were confronted with relish. At the B&H gig in London in January 1994, and UVF marches in both Bolton and London in 1996, security was breached and C18 humiliated. A retaliatory bombing campaign of which London AFA was a target exposed its State links (MI5), and C18 effectively collapsed.

Fully aware of the differing fortunes of anti-fascism on the continent AFA hosted an International Conference for militant anti-fascists in October 1997. Despite being banned by the Labour run Camden Council at the last minute (a decision which resulted in a four-figure out of court settlement), the

1. Introduction

Writing these words I am acutely aware of my small contribution to the history of anti-fascism. I’m sure I have forgotten many incidents, but even so this little booklet of anti-fascist activity must look very slim compared to the volumes certain people I know could fill with their experiences. Nevertheless, I think it can be useful for the ‘small fish’ such as myself to chronicle these events, warts and all, in case nobody does it and then the history would be lost, or distorted by right-wingers or liberals.

By crushing the fascists at an early stage I think it is reasonable to assume that Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) has prevented numerous racist attacks and even saved lives. For if the fascists were given the chance to freely march, sell their papers, and appear as a respectable political force they would just grow and grow. Fascists’ number one aim while they are growing is to appear to be respectable and rational, but, to quote Matty Blagg ‘fascism does not start with gas chambers, but it ends with them’.

One criticism sometimes aimed at anti-fascists is that we are from ‘outside the area’. In a tight-knit place like Brick Lane this is often true. On the other hand, neither do the fascists have very large numbers in any particular area. They bring people in to consolidate their forces, as we do, as the police do. In an ideal world local communities would rise up and expel the fascist menace, etc. etc. But in the meantime we shall have to tackle them. It is a delicate subject though, because various lefty groups have a history of arriving in certain areas, patronising the locals, making the situation worse, then pissing off when the shit hits the fan.

I am not a violent person by nature. I do not enjoy the idea of walking up to strangers and punching them, even if they are fascists. It is just something that needs to be done. I’ve had enough scary moments to realise that I am no braver than the next person.

Nor do I possess the gift of the gab, as some anti-fascists do. I wish I did, because on some occasions that can be more effective against fascism than a good left hook. I really admire those people who stand up to them alone at places like football grounds or in their High Street. These verbal put-downs, often with passers-by looking on, are just as humiliating to a fascist as a kick in the bollocks.

Anti-fascism involves risk. Risk of getting a battering from fascists and risk of arrest. Most of us have been arrested at least once. Dealing with the legal system is invariably time-consuming, expensive and stressful. Getting sent to prison can mess up your whole life if you have a good job, home and/or dependents to consider. Nevertheless, quite a few anti-fascists have done time
minutes later the police arrived to attack the remaining strikers who were still standing. See *Up Against The Odds* by John McArthur, available from AK Press.

**Appendix 3: Joe Pearce**

The case of Joe Pearce is an example of how the Race Relations Act can have the reverse of its intended effect. Pearce was imprisoned for Inciting Racial Hatred by publishing a magazine called *Bulldog*. He instantly became a *cause celebre* for the National Front. Loads of graffiti went up everywhere saying “Free Joe Pearce”. We spent many evenings going round painting that out, or the more creative anti-fascists would simply add “…with every packet of naziPop!” Nevertheless, the NF at last had their own martyr and that gave them a real boost. A better solution than imprisonment would have been if he had just suffered a terrible accident.

**Appendix 4: Survival rules**

A few suggestions about survival rules.

(i) Never leave anyone behind.

(ii) Never talk to the police. If arrested don’t make a statement. You can almost guarantee they will say “your friends have told us x,y,z so you might as well admit your part”. Say nothing. When the heat is off, next day hopefully when nobody has said anything, things won’t look so bad.

(iii) It is better to do one serious thing then get right away from the area and live to fight another day.

(iv) Empty your pockets in the morning. If arrested while carrying a bit of dope, a small penknife or an address book your life can get much more complicated. Carry enough cash to get taxis in an emergency.

(v) Keep yourself fit, and sober.

(vi) Four people who know what they are doing can be much more effective than four hundred useless paper-sellers. So, try to find a small group of people you can trust not to run away or blab when things get heavy, and stick with them.

(vii) Try to prepare in advance – tactics, local geography, emergency phone numbers, etc. As Joe Thomas used to say “...the best spontaneous revolutionary actions are always in fact well planned beforehand”!

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2. **Us...**

To be fair, a great deal of the credit for the militant anti-fascism in the 1980s and 90s deserves to go to Red Action. Thanks to a Red Action initiative Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) was formed in 1985 which brought together the Direct Action Movement (DAM), Red Action, Workers Power, and various other groups and individuals. Red Action were striking terror into the hearts of British fascists years before I started, and were still doing it years after I became inactive. I can’t say I agree with all the finer points of their politics, but I will always have massive admiration for their anti-fascist bravery and dedication.

Red Action had concentrations of membership in North London, Manchester and Glasgow, and were better organised to mount national activities. However, anti-fascist activities in Liverpool, Yorkshire cities, Bristol, Norwich and elsewhere were overwhelmingly dominated by local anarchists. Also anarchists, in particular the DAM, were the first to question the motives and tactics of the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight* (See Appendix 1).

I belonged to the DAM, an anarchist organisation, with some excellent anti-fascists in it. The DAM has a proud record not only concerning anti-fascism, but also supporting striking miners, printers and others. I could wax lyrical about the fine comrades I have come to know and respect in the DAM, but why give M15 any clues? You know who you are. However, on AFA call-outs when the DAM would muster 5-20 combatants then Red Action would normally field three times that number. So we were normally the ‘junior partner’.

However, I believe the DAM’s input into AFA was crucial for two reasons. Firstly, while various lefty and independent groups drifted in and out, only the DAM’s presence gave credibility to AFA being a ‘broad church’ instead of merely a front for Red Action. Secondly, the DAM’s physical-force policy helped save the anarchist movement from its complacency and
Appendix Z: Formulation

Appendix Z: Security


devote more seconds than needed.

This is the worst of the working class done, so we can fight our own
down and class war (!) to save any hope once and for all. The confusion of
redaction is a necessary evil that will ensure our survival. This is the worst of
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down and class war (!) to save any hope once and for all. The confusion of
redaction is a necessary evil that will ensure our survival.

The reason this book is called Red Action (1) is because historically,
but because (2) not only done better, but also more.

Red Action and other have launched this in the Red Action
as well as the red action.

Opening ceremonies in Kyoto and the East Midlands.

撥出が届く前から、日本海に

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In no time bricks were flying through the windows. Uncharacteristically most of Red Action ran into the back room leaving the anarchists to defend the place using pool cues, furniture and those heavy pub ashtrays. In fact our heroes probably smashed more of the pub windows with those ashtrays than the fascists did! There was one hilarious moment as a certain DAM comrade fulfilled a lifetime ambition and used the bar as a springboard just like in those Wild West movies. The cops were there pretty quick, just as the anarchists were getting into their stride, but nobody was arrested fortunately.

In the early ’90s the BNP candidate Derek Beackon was standing for the post of councillor in Tower Hamlets. AFA comrades had noticed that he walked across his local park every Sunday morning, on his way to the BNP paper-sale at Brick Lane. So 3-4 comrades dressed up in tracksuits one Sunday and pretended to be warming-up/training in the park. Unfortunately Beackon was later than usual that morning so the comrades felt really foolish jogging about for an hour or so. Eventually Beackon came into the park and the AFA comrades came up behind him, masked up, carrying iron bars. As he turned round he screamed like a pig as the first blows started to fall. However, two men passing by (one black, one white) thought Beackon was the victim in a mugging attempt and steamed in to help him (the irony of it). Beackon ran away with one shoe and was saved the humiliation of standing at the hustings in bandages and plaster. At the election the following week he was victorious by 7 votes after three re-counts. There were rumours and substantial evidence that vote-rigging had occurred (eg vote early and vote often).

On the subject, what must the fascists think as their wounds are being tended to in hospital by different coloured nurses, or horror of horrors, Jewish medical staff!

Occasionally AFA would come across the BNP transport parked up – usually a transit van. Every conceivable thing was done to those vans, externally and under the bonnet. Once a load of recordings of Hitler’s speeches were found in the back. Needless to say, they went straight into a nearby canal.

A life-long anarchist and anti-fascist called Jim (now deceased) from Bolton told me a story from the ’70s. The NF were due to have a march through the town the following Saturday and there was considerable excitement about this. Jim’s teenage son, fancying a bit of action, gingerly said to his Dad that he was thinking of joining the NF march. Jim thought for a moment then said “have you asked your grandmother about this?”. Jim’s son was puzzled, and asked disciples were all Jewish. They usually hate immigrants, ignoring the fact that all British people are descended from one immigrant group or another. They usually hate trade unions, ignoring the fact that life without them was “nasty, brutish and short”. They usually hate homosexuals, ignoring the fact that probably ten per cent of their membership are gay. They usually hate Irish Catholics, ignoring the fact that most European fascists sympathetically regard the Irish Catholics as the ‘Nationalist Freedom Fighters’. They usually hate Indians and Africans, ignoring the fact that if all the English who have emigrated to Asia and Africa (and Australia and America) came back there would be about 100 million more people squeezed onto this island. And in modern times they usually hate asylum-seekers ignoring the fact that right-wing policies like theirs caused all the problems in the first place.

To be honest I don’t think you can ever reason with fascists. They believe, in their hearts, in inequality – as we believe, in our hearts, in equality. Maybe it is something we learn on our Daddy’s knee. It is like the foundation of your personality which few people ever change, and no amount of skilful argument will alter. Our job is simply to keep the fascists disorganised and defensive, not hope to convert them. Nevertheless, a few ex-NF have come over to our side, and they tend to become the best type of anti-fascists.

British fascists themselves seem to be a proper hotch-potch of weirdoes, paedophiles, social misfits and egomaniacs. These are the sort of people who (to quote Jeremy Hardy) think being born white is some kind of achievement. They are always struggling to unite their forces, then having splits because there are too many Chiefs and not enough Indians (well you know what I mean!). It is odd that they always go on about being ‘tough with law and order’ because by that criteria half their membership would be in prison.

It must be said that the fascists don’t have a very good record in the courage department. They often like the skinhead haircut, bomber jacket and Doc Martens to look hard, but they rarely ‘walk the walk’. Of course large groups of them like to attack vulnerable targets, but if they expect some opposition they are not so brave. At Hyde Park once three coachloads of them (ie 100-150) jumped off their buses and came screaming towards 20 AFA comrades who stood their ground. As the fascists got nearer some started to lag behind, then the leaders slowed to a jog, then a walk, then they just stood at a distance shouting abuse until the police arrived. Wankers.

Nevertheless, the various fascist organisations still manage to attract quite a few lads who like having a ruck. They are very useful to the capitalist system particularly in times of industrial strife (divide and rule). Throughout the world fascist groups are used unofficially by governments and/or employers to attack
could say "freedom for London", the presence of people from all walks of life was 90% of the thing. The major part of this "freedom" was in the mixture of people, in the mixture of scenes, in the mixture of events.

In 1999, Emma's book, "London's Private Life", was published. She described how the city had been transformed by the influx of tourists, and how the city had changed since the 1960s. Emma's book was a bestseller and it became a classic of its kind.

In 1960, the LSD experiment was conducted in London. The results were published in a series of papers, and the findings were controversial. Some believed that LSD could lead to a new sense of reality, while others were concerned about the potential dangers of the drug.

In conclusion, London is a city that is constantly changing, and it continues to be a source of inspiration for people from all over the world.
landlord had locked the doors. A massive scrap ensued with pint glasses, fists and boots flying everywhere. After a few minutes loads of police vehicles screeched up, so everyone dispersed.

A well-known member of Red Action was walking away down a quiet road when a car with two blokes in it pulled alongside and one of the occupants shouted “that’s him!” The anti-fascist ran but the car chased him until he was knocked off the road and gave him the biggest kicking imaginable. I saw him the next day and his face was a mess. Obviously he thought that all this was the work of the fascists, but somehow it was discovered that they were plain-clothes police (I think witnesses took the car registration and identified them later). I think the incident did result in an official police apology, and the comrade got a compensation payment.

Another comrade, who was arrested, overheard one of the fascists, a soldier, in the police station giving a pitiful account of the incident. He whinged on like a big baby “…it was them who started it… it’s not fair… etc.” The Master Race my arse.

In the National Front’s heyday from the early ’70s until 1979 one of the anti-fascist movements bravest souls borrowed away as an infiltrator. This anarchist comrade did such a convincing job that he became the head of security protecting the leadership. To reach this position NF members have to fight each other to see who is the toughest. Well, our anti-fascist hero was quite handy in this department (I think he had had unarmoured combat training previously) so it was quite a pleasure to batter various arrogant fascists, a bit like killing two birds with one stone. On the occasions when the NF leadership actually needed some protection (ie when they were being attacked by anti-fascists) our hero would take a dive and feign injury.

Our comrades career as an infiltrator came to an end one day when he drugged all the leadership and was preparing to steal all the National Fronts documents and money from their safe. Unfortunately one of the fascists woke up early and called the police. The police arrested the anti-fascist comrade on charges of administering a noxious substance and he had to do several years in prison.

Incidentally, during this period our comrade would privately advocate to anti-fascists that they should open a branch of the National Front because each new branch was given £250 as a start-up grant. This policy would have gradually bankrupted and demoralised the NF, but I don’t know if anybody did it.

4. Maidstone, 1984

My first anti-fascist demonstration was in Kent in 1984. I heard at the London Workers Group (a mish-mash of anarchists, communists, etc.) that the National Front were marching through Maidstone the following weekend, and that there would be a counter-demo. I had no idea what to expect and didn’t know anybody else going.

So on the day I caught the train down there and started wandering around town. From a poster I found out there was a Labour Party-lead march to ‘oppose’ the NF. I joined that because I didn’t know what else to do. I was bitterly disappointed after we trudged round town and it became clear that the Labour Party march was not going to try to stop the fascists, but purposefully marched around the other side of town to avoid them, then finished with a rally near the cattle market in the suburbs. At the rally a load of boring speakers ranted on about the evils of fascism etc etc which is all obvious anyway, then they advised everyone to go home. About a hundred people were still sitting on the grass so I stood up and said that we should go into town and look for the fascists. About half-a-dozen people agreed with me, so we set off for the town centre again, a bit nervous I must admit!

We wandered around the middle of Maidstone for a while then a beautiful thing happened. As we were walking down a wide road behind some shops we saw a group of about 20 lads coming towards us. Somehow we twigged that these were anti-fascists like us and we met up in the middle of the street with loads of smiles and greetings. It reminded me of those photos when the Russians met the Americans while fighting the nazis! I don’t know who the other group were, but I have since wondered if they were Red Action. In any case, they had information where the fascists would be, and now our combined force created a good morale boost. So we all set off, keen as mustard, to intercept the NF march.

We got to the route and saw them approaching about 100 yards away. I think there was about two hundred of them with their banners, union jacks, etc. I was very surprised to see a punk amongst their front rank, because I had always assumed punks were anti-authoritarian and so not inclined to fascism. The whole march was escorted by loads of police on foot, and a police van led the way.

We all stood in the middle of the road to block the march. When the front of the march was about 30 yards away the leading police van driver floored his accelerator and drove straight at us. We had to dive out of the way, but someone could easily have been killed. In this way the police assisted the fascists to march through a peaceful English town.

Since we were the ones who went there, no such thing as a feaun's face. Only a

[Text continues with a detailed account of events involving police and media, with a focus on a particular incident involving a person named Mrs. T.]

In 1998 (the year when Mrs. T. was a candidate in a Dagenham)

[Further text discusses the events leading up to the incident, including the role of the local press and the police force in Dagenham.]

Later the NF were given police protection to make speeches from the
Some of the local lefties mistook us for plain-clothes police because we look ‘normal’. I’ll never forget one of the local comrades, who was wearing some massive motorcycle gloves (on a hot sunny day), delivering a beautiful knock-out blow to one fascist.

Newham/Tower Hamlets Loads of times we’ve been out trying to track down the fascists in these areas because they normally target here for their election campaigns

Plaistow DAM tried to oppose the NF’s Albert Mariner memorial event.

Hounslow The NF have tried to recruit in this area and hold a few meetings. We went along to cause trouble, and Red Action managed to batter some of them in McDonalds.

Holloway Road and Edgware Road Irish Republican marches regularly harangued by fascists from the safety of a police cordon. Sometimes skirmishes occurred.

Barking DAM comrades including myself got tooled up to batter the NF paper sale one Saturday morning, but it was lashing down with rain so they didn’t show up. Part-timers!

Old Street Stand off between AFA and the NF.

West Ham The BNP had a team re-directing their members from West Ham tube station to a meeting at the Tidal Basin Tavern. There was a large anti-fascist demonstration opposite, with the police dividing the two sides. The police used vans from the Racial Incident Unit (a unit supposedly set up to help victims of racial attacks) to transport the BNP to their meeting in the pub (to help them cause more racial attacks).

19. Events where I wasn’t present
The history of anti-fascism in Britain has countless other significant, and sometimes comic, episodes. Here are a few I’ve heard about.

During a large AFA meeting at Conway Hall the fascists sent in a scout. He was spotted by AFA stewards who escorted him to a quiet room for questioning. On the way to the room, expecting an imminent beating, he

The fun started when some of our lot found a few fascists arriving at Bury St. Edmunds train station. They got battered and one of our Liverpool comrades managed to nick the watch of Derck Holland, then an NF bigwig, before he hit the floor. This caused us some amusement afterwards about the stereotyping of scousers!

While we walked back to the town centre the police arrived in vans, blocked the road, and searched us one-by-one. Various of our comrades had screwdrivers, Stanley knives and suchlike on them. It was comical to hear the coppers with strong Suffolk accents say “Why is this spanner (for example) inside your jacket?” The reply would always be “I use it at work.” Then the cop would say “OK, off you go”. So nobody got arrested there for having an offensive weapon, even though this was a weekend and we all lived about 100 miles away!

Later the NF march got underway. A certain DAM comrade, being mad or brave, went alone to abuse them, so I went along to help him if he needed it although I was secretly hoping he would come back to the main group of anti-fascists. The march came by and my comrade methodically counted how many marchers were on it. After he had a total (about 65 I think) he started taunting them at the top of his voice “65 ha, ha!”, “You can only get 65? Pathetic!” “Call yourselves the representatives of England with only 65 people? You tossers!” etc. etc. I was standing next to him wishing he would shut up as I was convinced we were going to die. But my comrade really was a brave man with an excellent tactic, because his lone abuse really humiliated the fascists who were undoubtedly embarrassed that there really were only 65 of them. (When I say ‘...was a brave man...’ the operative word is was. A few years later, thanks to heroin, he threw away a brilliant mind and a body as strong as an ox.)

Later, as the NF march proceeded through the town the main group of anti-fascists started to attack. Half a dozen of us went into a building site just as the march was passing and lobbed loads of bricks over at them. Some hit cops too. The fascists started to pick up some of the bricks that we had thrown and hurled them back at us. So the sky was filled with bricks and other building materials going in all directions. It was pandemonium. At this point a contingent of anti-fascists attacked the back of the march and managed to get one of their banners. The mayhem went on for a bit longer, but the police started to get a wee bit upset, so all the anti-fascists went back to the town centre to re-group.

We hung about the town centre until late afternoon. About 10 of us were in a fish and chip shop when we realised that a group of fascists were coming down the road intent on revenge. Some of our lot immediately started grabbing various iron implements etc that were lying about at some roadworks just
A couple of tips here when the NF started doing paper sales in the
Shrewsbury. We arrived 2 hours late so they had run out of the NF and their friends.

Blackburn

Manchester

Local firms: Businesses

Manchester's Half-a-dozen tips here for the Manchester shoppers.

Leverpool Chasing around the city centre. Never catch up with the races.

Cregs Face-off with the NF in the city centre.

Bridgford DVM secured an AVI public notice book explaining the reasons to

of the nearby.

some local businesses.

18 Near misses

Presume the last 90.

1. Cross the town centre.

2. Steer clear of the NF stalls.

3. Avoid the local O+.

4. Enjoy the local Bargains.

5. Go for a stroll.

6. Find a seat.

7. Eat locally.

8. Drink locally.


10. Enjoy locally.

11. Return home.

12. Repeat.


14. Repeat.

15. Enjoy.

16. Repeat.

17. Enjoy.

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159. Enjoy.

160. Repeat.
two hapless fascists. (Rumour has it that they might have been, in fact, plain clothes coppers).

We spent the rest of the afternoon ambushing groups of fascists as they arrived, and trying to avoid the police. For example, four fascists arrived by car and were set upon until every window was broken, and the rest of the car was not exactly in showroom condition. The battles raged in all the surrounding streets. A comrade from Norwich and myself piled into a group of three fascists by the Waterloo roundabout. One of them turned to attack my comrade and I stuck my foot out to trip him up and with wonderful luck it was perfectly timed and he keeled over and hit his head, crack, on the pavement. He was unconscious I think, but in the heat of the moment I went and booted him in the head as hard as I could anyway. In fact I was a bit worried afterwards in case I’d killed him. I kept checking the TV news for a few days. The two other fascists were still there and I suppose we could have steamrollered them some more, but we ran back to the main group.

Cheeky persons have summarised the anti-fascist events at Waterloo by saying “we closed more stations than the IRA”!

16. Welling, Kent 1993
In about 1993 there was a massive lefty march, more than 10,000 strong, against the BNP office/bookshop in Welling. Conveniently for the fascists hundreds and hundreds of tooled-up police were on hand to protect their shop. An Auschwitz survivor led the march and requested that the police let us through, but they refused. A massive riot ensued, which didn’t achieve anything but its always a good laugh when everyone is chucking paving stones and other stuff at the cops. However, media photographers subsequently passed their photos onto the police which resulted in several dawn raids and arrests. Apparently Red Action found the BNP hiding in a pub a few miles away that day, and had a ‘free and fair exchange of views with them’!

17. Dagenham, 1993(?)
One day I noticed that “Paki’s Out” had just been painted in giant letters along the side of Dagenham Swimming Pool. I decided to go and paint it out that evening. About midnight I was happily painting over it when I noticed a man with an Alsatian and a woman out of the corner of my eye. Better safe than sorry, I thought, so I decided to walk round the block and finish the painting afterwards. I turned into Morris Road, then THUD! I received a massive punch on the back of the head which sent me sprawling forwards onto the pavement. I jumped up and got into a furious fight with the man who had seen

8. Brick Lane, London
This was a long-running sore for the anti-fascist movement. The fascists had been selling their newspapers at the corner of Brick Lane and Bethnal Green Road on-and-off since Mosley’s time in the 1930’s. Despite being in the middle of the East End Bangladeshi community and opposite a Jewish bakers, the fascists used that place as a focus to fraternise as well as sell their propaganda every Sunday morning. They seemed to receive a warm welcome afterwards in local pubs such as The Blade Bone, The Sun or The Weavers Arms, all under the benevolent gaze of Bethnal Green police force.

AFA and DAM had numerous attempts at knocking them off that pitch. Sometimes it would just be ambushing stragglers, or sometimes we fielded over 50 combatants to take over their pitch, and hold it against all comers. One such battle spilled right across the Bethnal Green Road for several minutes, then the police moved in and arrested more from our side than theirs, surprise, surprise.

Another occasion about six of us from the DAM got tooled up then went down there to sell our newspaper Direct Action in order to provoke a reaction. After about ten minutes standing opposite, one of them – Martin Cross – wandered over and asked how much to buy a paper. My comrade said 50p, the proper price. I was standing nearby in a bolshy mood and said “It’s a quid for fash”. He looked at me, then quick as a flash headbutted me. I was so surprised I just stood there for a few seconds. Martin Cross turned and walked away. He probably had a good laugh about that later. I didn’t. I was so ashamed at being so slow to react. Oh well, we live and learn.

Another time a couple of us had been checking out the fascists one Sunday morning and decided to head off home when who should be walking towards us? Ian Anderson, leader of the NF! A police van full of cops was cruising past at that moment so we whispered not to do anything. But the cop van passed and a few seconds later we were so close to Anderson that I couldn’t resist booting him. I kicked him in the bollocks as hard as I could, and my DAM comrade started battering him too as he slumped to the pavement. Then we legged it into a nearby housing estate before the police van could do a U-turn.

(In the 1970’s, when the skinhead scene was big, East London suffered a whole catalogue of racist abuse, attacks and even murder – e.g. Altab Ali. Fascist stickers and graffiti were everywhere including slogans daubed all along the outside wall of Bethnal Green Police Station, which they did nothing to remove. In an effort to get the police to do something about the violence community groups held a meeting with Chief Superintendent John Wallis of the Met. He said the only way to stop the National Front selling their papers at Brick Lane was “...to arrive there earlier”. When local Bengali youth groups
The station concourse was nearly deserted. We discovered afterwards that
we were shots of crowds waiting for the next train. Suddenly, one of the
agents of Red Akton went into the station and told us about the
British Rail food, drink, and general works to the day of
suffering. Real fear was black and ashen. Workers of the day of
suffering.

The morning and the afternoon of the incident were at the Old End
in Manchester. This was a common practice at the Old End.

Awaiting section to be re-issued. This was a common practice at the Old End.

Attention: the attendants are now addressing their passengers.

In the evening, we stood on the platform, waiting for the arrival of the
next train. We heard the sound of the train as it approached.

In this evening's express, we can see them more easily than the clouds.

In the evening, the express would be much easier if all the express were
even carried on national Locomotive Network. The idea of a
Bood and Hoffren is advertised that they were holding a mass rally with
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prophets.
road and start to get into his car. We raced down the road towards them, across lawns and picking up rocks from gardens and arrived just as they were frantically trying to drive off. The windscreen was smashed with one rock, and another rock smashed through the drivers window and hit the minder on the side of his head. 180! The little car screeched off pursued by a hail of stones. The polite lefties at the school gates were gobsmacked to see Tyndall roar past in a car that looked like it had just been in the Destruction Derby! A few more bottles were thrown for good measure.

London Bridge is the main train station going to Welling where the British National Party have their office/bookshop/headquarters at Upper Wickham Lane. About 50 of us were on our way there to join a big lefty march when we spotted Tony Lecomber and his wife coming into the station – obviously also on his way to Welling. Tony Lecomber is one of the top dogs in the BNP with a list of convictions for violence and even bomb-making. Anyway we were so surprised to see him stroll up to the ticket window that none of us moved at first. So I walked up to him and with a bit of nifty foot-work sent him sprawling. Then a few of us put the boot in until his wife, who was screaming her head off, took out a CS gas aerosol from her bag and started spraying us all. I did manage to grab the parcel Lecomber was carrying which turned out to be a load of BNP t-shirts. (Lecomber fancied himself, so naturally became a target for AFA’s attentions. He consequently spent so much time on the floor that his nickname became Tarmac Tony!)

I swapped jackets with a comrade because these train stations have loads of CCTV cameras. I stayed out of the station for about 20 minutes in case the cops came. Then I rejoined our group, which breaks one of the survival rules of anti-fascism, namely, only do one thing then go home (See Appendix 4). But I got away with it on that occasion.

Another year at Trafalgar Square a DAM comrade battered a member of Red Action because he didn’t recognise him. He had to apologise afterwards! I believe the Americans call that ‘friendly fire’.

One year we spotted a couple of fascists walking across the top end of the Square. A few comrades and myself went after them. I wanted to wait until the fascists were out of the Square then do them in a quiet street away from CCTV and the police. However the comrades I was with were all fired up and jumped on the skinheads just in front of Canada House. I obviously joined in putting the boot in.

After a good bit of that we left the skinheads in a heap and ran off. We went round the back then rejoined the main group of anti-fascists who were gathered on the steps of St.Martin-in-the-Fields church. This was a mistake, I should have gone home, because a cop who had seen the skinheads getting a beating recognised me and managed to corner me later. My predicament was made much worse because the cop pulled out an 18” iron bar that I had hidden in my jacket, even though I hadn’t actually used it.

The cop talked to me in the back of the police van in a very sympathetic way, saying things like he thought Nelson Mandela should be released, and the NF were a load of wankers, etc. Naively I agreed with him on these matters instead of staying silent, because as it turned out he used all my replies in court as evidence that I was a dangerous lefty!

I got Community Service every Sunday for about six months, which to be honest was not unpleasant at all. However after I had been there a few months who should arrive in our Community Service team but Martin Cross – famous nazi thug, lead singer of Skrewdriver, and the person who had head-butted me at Brick Lane a few years before. (He is currently serving life for stabbing to death a fellow fascist in one of their internal disputes, tee hee). So I said to our supervisor that I was here first so Martin Cross would have to go elsewhere or there would be some argy-bargy. Fortunately, they moved him before the next Sunday, as I did not relish the prospect of some aggravation when I was already walking on thin ice.

Incidentally, a member of Red Action told me that on his first day doing Community Service in North London one of the lads burnt down the shed which contained all the tools! Consequently they had a nice relaxing time for several weeks afterwards.

The fascists had a sympathiser who opened a little shop in Riding House Street selling neo-nazi badges, magazines, clothing, etc. During an anti-fascist demonstration outside one Saturday morning a Scottish comrade and myself saw one of their 'customers' skulking away. We let him get about 100 yards down Berwick Street then ambushed him. This was one of several occasions where I saw my comrade do his wonderful technique for getting fascists on the floor. It was a sort of full speed flying leap where his whole body lands sideways on the fascists head/shoulders and knocks them for six. This is followed by a flurry of fists and boots leaving the fascist in a very sorry state.


In 1989 Blood and Honour arranged another large neo-nazi music gig in London. They didn't dare publicise the actual venue partly because it would be targeted by anti-fascists and partly because they normally booked venues using pseudonyms to avoid the management cancelling the gig. So they publicised a meeting-point for their followers to be re-directed from. In this case it was Marble Arch tube station.

The date coincided with the 3-day DAM National Conference in Wiltshire, but a minibus load of us came back to London for the day. It was another one of those occasions when most of us were convinced we were going to be massacred! Everyone knew that Blood and Honour could muster several hundred or even a thousand bodies. If it was left to me I would probably have suggested that we all go home and have a nice cup of tea. But fortunately the 'movers and shakers' within AFA are more daring than me! After we met Red Action and various other anti-fascists we headed down to Marble Arch about 100 strong, and considerably more confident. And what a success it turned out to be!

All afternoon fascists arrived in the area. Sometimes on their own, in groups and even a coachload. And each time they got kicked to shit! It was brilliant. My favourite incident was when three of us 'regulars' and a fellow who at the time dressed as a hippy followed a nazi into a back street and batted him until he was begging. Afterwards the hippy-looking fellow confided to me that he was going to have a haircut and start wearing proper shoes instead of sandals because he really enjoyed this anti-fascist stuff!

A DAM comrade got arrested that day for chucking a rubbish bin through a fascist coach window, but luckily the case dropped because the police are so incompetent. Phew. But while he was in the cells I phoned his Dad to say he had been arrested, and he gave me a right bollocking ie “He always gets in trouble when he goes out with you lot, etc. etc.” There’s gratitude for you!

Another DAM comrade was also arrested that day. He has as much contempt for the British judicial system as for the fascists, so he showed up in court wearing shorts and a sleeveless t-shirt which only said “Millwall Away – Nuff Said”. Luckily he got off with a fine, which the DAM paid.


AFA organised a public meeting in the heart of the East End, what the fascists like to think of as their manor, to 'throw down the gauntlet' to them. My job was to scout the area by motorbike looking for any sign of them. About 50 anti-fascists were massed inside the Davenent Centre (plus members of the public attending the meeting) waiting for them. As I was riding round I did see a group of about 5 lads nearby but didn’t think they were fascists so I didn’t bother telling my comrades back in the Centre. However, soon afterwards a small homemade bomb (made from a collection of fireworks probably) was thrown over the back wall of the Davenent Centre. Fortunately nobody was injured or panicked. AFA stewards gave chase to some lads but didn’t catch them. In hindsight I realise that the lads I saw may have been the ones who threw in the bomb, and I should have reported them to my comrades who could have checked them out properly.

13. Norwich, 1990(?)

This was one of the few events where it was just the DAM doing the business – I think Red Action were at a conference or something that weekend. The BNP were having an election meeting in a primary school in Norwich as they delight in doing in accordance with the Representation of the People Act.

About 10 of us from the DAM hired a minibus from London plus we met a few local DAM members there. When we arrived at the school we found a smallish demonstration of lefties (SWP etc) huddling behind the police lines. It was all a bit pathetic as they chanted in posh voices “Police protect the fascists!”

We decided to hang about further down the road where we found the car of John Tyndall, the leader of the BNP. The tyres were promptly slashed. A while later we spotted Tyndall and his minder come out of the school, walk down the