



Mobilise the anti-racist majority against the BNP

BY KEN LIVINGSTONE, CHAIR UNITE AGAINST FASCISM

The British National Party (BNP) will be aiming to gain more council seats in next year's local elections. They may also stand candidates in the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly elections also taking place in 2007, although their votes in both are considerably lower than in parts of England. They will have their medium-term sights set on winning seats on the London Assembly in 2008.

We should be clear that the BNP is a fascist organisation, not a legitimate political party. We cannot wait until election time to campaign against them. We must campaign against the BNP, and challenge the racism they thrive on, all year round.

With 49 BNP councillors across the country, this represents the highest vote for a fascist party in local elections in British history. Overall, a regional breakdown of the BNP vote shows that votes for the BNP rank highest in Yorkshire, with over 88,000 votes cast. The West Midlands saw 64,000 votes cast, the North West over 23,000 and London over 22,000.

There are 21 wards within a 5% swing of BNP victory in Yorkshire and 22 wards in the West Midlands, compared to 11 in both the North West and London.

However there is a concentration of the BNP vote in outer east London and Essex, which could have serious implications for the London Assembly elections. The election of 12 BNP councillors, following vicious racist myths about African people and housing in Barking and Dagenham, is an extremely concerning development.

The level of the threat posed by the BNP must be fully understood. With the London Assembly elections less than two years away and given the BNP's performance in 2004, when they narrowly missed gaining a seat on the Assembly by less than 6000 votes, the BNP is hoping they will win a seat or two in 2008. The anti-fascist and anti-racist movements, the Black, Asian, all ethnic minorities, faith, lesbian, gay and disabled communities together with the labour movement must wage a vigorous campaign to stop this from happening.

A BNP victory in a London-wide election would attract international attention given both that London is the capital city and that it is home to Britain's highest concentration of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. It would send an entirely false impression of London.

A breakthrough by the BNP onto the London Assembly would not only be a disaster for London, it would poison British politics.



When the BNP gets elected, racism and racist attacks increase. We have seen this in many instances since the election of Derek Beackon in the Isle of Dogs in 1993. Beackon was defeated as a result of a massive anti-racist campaign by the trade union movement together with the local Black communities and anti-fascists. In Oldham, where they failed to make a breakthrough despite continued attempts since 2001, a similar strategy has prevented the BNP from making a breakthrough there.

This is also possible in London and will require a colossal campaign, which unites everyone against the BNP's attempts to emulate their European counterparts.

Concessions to racism will not defeat the BNP as they can only be opposed head on, and their racist lies and politics of hate must be exposed and challenged.

A recent opinion poll showed that two thirds of London's population see multiculturalism makes London a better place to live in. Londoners refuse to be divided. It is this positive attitude to London that our movement must harness and mobilise.

Barking and Dagenham: local communities united against the BNP

BY THOMAS MUSAU, SECRETARY BARKING & DAGENHAM ALLIANCE AGAINST RACISM & FASCISM

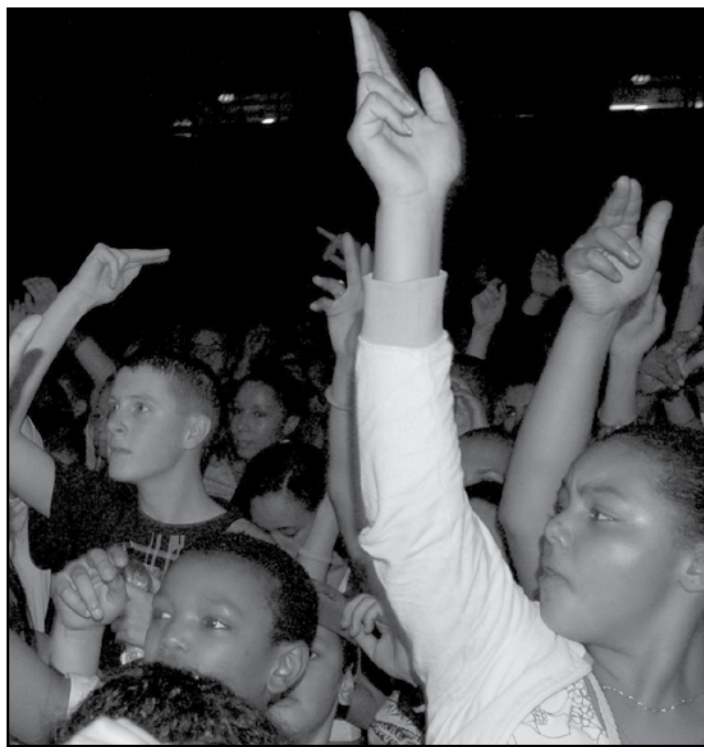
The newly formed Barking and Dagenham Alliance Against Racism and Fascism (BDAARF) has called a protest outside Barking and Dagenham Council on Wednesday 11th October from 5.30pm onwards, coinciding with the full council meeting.

Over 60 people attended the previous protest against the borough's 12 BNP councillors in early September, supported by among others South East Region TUC, TGWU Region 1 (South East and East Anglia), the local Faith forum, Ethnic Minorities Partnership Agency, Unite Against Fascism, National Assembly Against Racism, the Anthony Walker Foundation, Operation Black Vote, the 1990 Trust and the Black Londoners Forum.

BDAARF is a black organisation of community activists, public and voluntary sector workers, trade unionists and many others concerned at the rise of racism and fascist activity in the borough.

Barking and Dagenham has the largest group of BNP councillors in Britain. In their campaign in the run up to the general election in 2005, and after this, the fascists have used and spread racist myths about African communities receiving up to £50,000 government grants to buy houses in the borough, which is not true.

Challenging this and other racist myths the BNP thrive on to confuse and win sympathy from the members of the public, is one of our priorities. Since the BNP targeted the borough in 2001, racist attacks have increased by around 30 per cent. In



the aftermath of May local elections, there have been several serious racist attacks in the borough including the near-fatal stabbing of an Afghan man.

Building a broad and sustained campaign against the BNP and racism in Barking and Dagenham is crucial.

Fascism and the far right in Europe

BY GLYN FORD MEP

For over two decades Europe has seen a rising tide of racism and xenophobia threatening to engulf its politics. Since 1984 this has manifested itself in the growth of neo-fascist and far-right parties propagating anti-Semitism. To a degree this has been held in check by the 'historic memory' of the horrors of Hitler's Germany. However since 9/11, Islamophobia has grown as part of the perception that Christendom is at war with the Dar al Islam, allowing far-right parties to claim a popular resonance and repackage themselves in a way that jettisons much of their historical baggage. Europe now faces the danger of the extreme right becoming mainstream.

In France, Jean Marie le Pen, leader of Front National (FN), who recently said the Nazi occupation of France was essentially benign, finished second in the Presidential Elections of 2002 with nearly 20% of the vote. He has announced he wants to be a candidate for the French Presidency in 2007 but this time he might not manage the five hundred signatures of elected officials needed to stand. In the wings waits Philippe De Villiers, leader of the deeply conservative Movement pour la France, who ran a viciously racist campaign during the Referendum on the Constitution against Turkish membership of the EU, who believes FN votes could propel him into the second round and the Elysee.

In Belgium the leader of the extreme right Vlaams Belang (the largest party in Antwerp), Filip De Winter, has recently

proudly announced that the Vlaams Belang is an Islamophobic Party.

The recent Italian elections saw Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who called the leader of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament 'a Nazi', incorporate Italy's fascists and extreme right into his electoral coalition. Alessandra Mussolini, Il Duce's grand-daughter, was measuring herself up for a cabinet post, which would have allowed the terrorist Roberto Fiore to take her place in the European Parliament. Micko Tremaglia who had proudly fought with the Repubblica Sociale Italiana — the Salo Republic's equivalent of the Waffen SS — was already a minister. Thankfully Romano Prodi squeaked in by 26,000 votes to take the Italian leadership.

In Poland the ruling Law and Justice Party has since last year's elections been in an informal coalition with the far right League of Polish Families. The government is now using the infamous Radio Maryja with its ultra-nationalism, homophobia and anti-Semitism, as its semi-official mouthpiece. The Law and Justice Party have some pretty unsavoury characters of their own. Michal Kaminski MEP was a former member of fascist National Rebirth of Poland Party and is now part of Roberto Fiore's European National Front, while Marcin Libicki MEP — former member of the fascist National Right, a sister party of Le Pen's Front National — recently called for Poznan's synagogue to be demolished.

In Britain it is crucial that we prevent such a breakthrough into national politics by the BNP.

Trade unions and the campaign against the BNP

BY STEVE HART, REGIONAL SECRETARY, T&G LONDON, SOUTH EAST & EAST ANGLIA

The advance of the BNP in the last few years is one of the most worrying developments in British politics. In addition to standing record numbers of candidates in elections, the BNP is also specifically targeting the trade union movement by infiltrating our trade unions and have recently applied to set up a fascist 'trade union' — Solidarity.

Trade unions have been campaigning for the law to be strengthened to protect those unions that expel BNP members in line with their equalities procedures and actively oppose the setting up of the BNP 'trade union'.



If the BNP's vote trend continues it could be on course to make a major breakthrough in British politics. We need to build the biggest and broadest possible movement against the BNP to stop this from happening.

Trade unions have a crucial role to play both in alerting their membership to this threat and uniting with the Black and Asian; Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other faith; lesbian and gay; and disabled communities against the BNP.

We can halt the BNP. In places where the BNP have been defeated, such as in Millwall in 1994, the trade unions played a pivotal role in working with the local Bangladeshi community and others in campaigning against the BNP. A major campaign that challenged the racist housing policy that discriminated against the Asian communities led to the BNP's defeat.

This is the sort of campaign that we must now wage in Barking and Dagenham and indeed nationally.

BNP unfit for public office

BY KITTY USSHER, MP FOR BURNLEY

The BNP is a divisive party that couldn't care less about the future of Burnley and surrounding areas. Most of the time their councillors don't turn up to council meetings and when they do, they haven't got anything to say. When serious issues are being discussed — such as how to allocate money in the next year's budget — they don't bother putting any proposals forward and on one occasion they even admitted they didn't understand what was going on!

The fact is, they aren't a proper political party. Instead they have a different agenda, which is to divide and weaken our town and communities. They want to make us fearful of our friends and neighbours and promote racial tension between us. They would be happy when they see local people fighting each other.

They say they care about local people, but that's not true. In the words of Maureen Stowe, who resigned as a BNP councillor in Burnley when she realised what they were about: "They did not and could not care about the people who voted for them in the slightest. They sat in silence or did not even turn up to meetings... I began to realise it was all a big con... The BNP did not care about Burnley at all!"

I believe we are stronger when we are working together for the things we all need, like better housing, schools and jobs, and that's what we're doing in Burnley each and every day.

Dates for your diary:

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 30th

8pm-late

DIRTY PRETTY THINGS, ROLL DEEP and others at Love Music Hate Racism gig at THE CAULIFLOWER, Seven Kings, London

OCTOBER

Saturday 7 October 10am-2pm,

UAF West Midlands Regional conference

Birmingham Council House, Victoria Square

Speakers include: Richard Burden MP, Steve Beardsmore UNISON regional chair, Tony Kearns CWU deputy gen sec, Roger King Birmingham NUT gen sec, Cllr Syeda Khatun, Cllr Salma Yaqoob, Paul Oppenheimer Holocaust survivor and Mohammed Azam

Wednesday 11

Protest outside Barking and Dagenham council 5.30pm Called by Barking and Dagenham Alliance Against Racism and Fascism (BDAARF)

Monday 30

Protest outside Leeds Crown Court for the start of Nick Griffin and Mark Collet's retrial

● Subject to change — please see UAF website for up-to-date info.

Derby UAF campaigns against BNP activist employed as a teacher

BY DAVE WILKINSON, CHAIR DERBY UAF AND SECRETARY DERBY NASUWT

Derby UAF has been campaigning to ensure that a BNP activist does not get access to our children as a teacher. Clive Jones, a teacher at the Derby City Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and appointed on a permanent contract, unsuccessfully stood in an election in Burton-on-Trent as a BNP candidate. Derby UAF considers that it is completely incompatible for Jones to work at the PRU and also be a BNP activist and electoral candidate, given that the policies of BNP are at complete variance with the aims and objectives of the PRU and Derby City Council.

It is no slur on Derby City Council that Jones is in employment with them — after all, his BNP activities were not known to the local authority when he was employed and, in fact, many trade unions have had to contend with the same problem of BNP activists appearing within their ranks. However, the council should have suspended Jones to enable a full investigation into his conduct to be carried out. How is Derby City Council discharging its statutory duty under the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) by failing to act?

Derby UAF has been campaigning vigorously on this issue. We are urging all anti-racists to contact Derby City Council and urge them to act against Jones. If local authorities take no action under these circumstances, the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000), brought in after public revulsion at Stephen Lawrence's horrific murder and the institutional racism which it exposed, is effectively dead in the water.

Please add your name to the UAF petition at www.uaf.org.uk and contact Andrew.flack@derby.gov.uk (Corporate Director of Children and Young People) and sara.bolton@derby.gov.uk (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) to express your concern.



BNP back in court

BY SAM KIRK, YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE UAF JOINT SECRETARY

BNP leader Nick Griffin and leading BNP member Mark Collett are due in court again on Monday 30 October, for charges of incitement to racial hatred. Their original trial earlier this year failed to give a verdict on four of the eight charges. At the opening of the trial last time, around a thousand anti-fascists showed their opposition to the BNP outside the court. Students, trade unionists, community activists and people representing faith groups joined together to show unity against the hatred and division fostered by the BNP. UAF and Yorkshire and Humberside TUC organised the protest and rally afterwards. Join us from 8am outside Leeds Crown Court on Monday 30th October.*

*This date may be subject to change please check UAF website for up-to-date information.

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Membership fee: £ Donation: £

Membership rates: Individual waged £10/students £3

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