



Fascists have always tried to organise in Ireland. The efforts of the Blueshirts in the 1930s and Ailtirí na hAiséirghe in the 1940s have been recounted in several books. This pamphlet looks at the extreme right and neo-Fascist groups that have emerged since the end of World War Two up to the present day for the first time. It's underlying argument is that one of the main reasons why these groups have failed to develop into real threats is because of the work of militant anti-Fascists.

The first section of the pamphlet traces the timeline of the far-right in Ireland from 1945 until the late 1980s with the second part looking at the background to Anti-Fascist Action and its work in preventing the growth of the far-right from 1991 to 2012.

This pamphlet reveals the stories of international fascists, like Sir Oswald Mosley, Otto Skorzeny and Francis Parker Yockey, who made Ireland their home and offers a comprehensive look at over two dozen home-grown organisations.

While the accounts of these groups are sometimes humorous or pitiful, the pamphlet shows that there has always been an underground fascist movement in this country. The efforts of anti-Fascists have greatly helped make sure their influence has only ever been marginal.



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AFA
IRELAND
21 YEARS OF
ANTI-FASCIST
ACTION

UNDERTONES:



THE FAR-RIGHT & ANTI-FASCISM IN IRELAND 1945-2012

Bernardo O'Reilly (AFA Ireland) Dublin, 2012

Our research into the far-right in Ireland from 1945 until the present day is a work in progress.

We are still looking for any information on any of the organisations or individuals mentioned in this pamphlet.

This includes newspaper clippings, photos, fascist literature or general anecdotes. We are also interested in any information on Fascist/anti-Semitic attacks, international Fascists who visited or lived in Ireland or any related information.

We are particularly interested in accounts of anti-Fascists opposition or indeed from any reformed fascists who want to tell their story.

Our aim is not to exaggerate the influence of Ireland's Fascist groups but to draw up an accurate, historical timeline.

If you can help in anyway, please email us at 'afaireland21@gmail.com'



Dedicated to
all the young
anti-Fascists
who have been
murdered in
Russia, Ukraine,
Spain, Czech
Republic, Italy &
Brazil since 2005
and all those who
laid down their
lives before them.

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This book was launched on the weekend of AFA Ireland's twenty first birthday. Also unveiled that weekend was a plaque dedicated to those Irish anti-fascists who made their way to Spain to take up the fight against Franco, 1936-1939. This would not have happened without the kind donations from the Workers Solidarity Movement (WSM), Eirigí, Aonghus Ó'Snodaigh T.D. of Sinn Féin, Independent Councillor Cieran Perry, LookLeft Magazine, the Independent Workers Union (IWU), members of the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC) and The Anti Racist World Cup Belfast.

CONTENTS

Introduction

Section 1: Historical timeline of the Irish Far-Right (1945 – late 1980s)

1. 1940s Ailtirí na hAiséirghe elections, Save the German Children Society, Joseph Hepburn – Ruston, Herman Goertz, Francis Parker Yockey, Council of National Action and Norman Baillie-Stewart.
2. 1950s Aontas Naisiunta, United Nationalist Christian Party, NatInform, Sir Oswald Mosley, Carraig Books, Otto Strasser & A.K.Chesterson, Otto Skorzeny and Resurgence magazine.
3. 1960s Wave of anti-Semitic attacks, George Lincoln Rockwell, National Social Union of Ireland, Irish Nationalist Youth, World Union of Nationalist Socialists, Arson attack on Synagogue in Terenure, National Movement, National Socialist Irish Workers Party (NSIWP)
4. 1970s National Movement, NSIWP, Peter Menten
5. 1980s NSIWP, Social Action Initiative
6. British Fascism in the Six Counties (1970s - 1990s)

Section 2: Anti-Fascist Action Ireland (late 1980s - 2012)

1. Background to AFA Ireland (late 1970s - late 1980s)
2. David Irving stopped in TCD (November 1988)
3. Celtic Dawn and Nazi skinheads in Dublin (c1988 - c1991)
4. Le Pen at Dublin Castle (February 1991)
5. Clashes with Youth Defence (1992 - 1995)
6. Short life span of Dublin City Firm (mid 1990s)
7. Lansdowne Road riot (1995)
8. Surprise run-in with Biker gang (August 1997)
9. Celtic Tiger and Large Scale Immigration (late 1990s)
10. Launch of the Immigration Control Platform (Jan 1998)
11. Anti -Deportations & Anti-Drugs (1998)
12. The first (and last) ICP picket (January 1999)
13. David Irving stopped in Cork (November 1999)
14. Occupation of Bertie Ahern's constituency office (March 2000)
15. Limerick Nazis (2001 - 2003)
16. General Election (2002)
17. Croke Villas incident (March 2003)
18. Jörg Haider in Dublin (April 2003)
19. Paul Kangley & the IPP (2004)
20. Justin Barrett stopped in UCD (October 2004)
21. Polish Anti-Fascists, St Patricks Cathedral & the Celtic Wolves (2006)
22. Brian Noone in Limerick (2007)
22. Boneheads in UCD and Messrs. Maguire (2008)
24. Infiltration, Temple Bar skinheads and a big Czech Nazi birthday party (2009)
25. Consolidating our position (2010-12)

INTRO DUCTION:



Ireland has had an unbroken line of far-right and neo-Nazi groups from the end of the Second World War to the present day. Fascist groups in Ireland, and throughout Europe, did not suddenly disappear after the defeat of Hitler and his cohorts in 1945. Surviving fascists went underground, regrouped or changed tactics - waiting to 'fight another day'. The failure of these groups to develop into real threats in Ireland is down not just to political and historical reasons but also the constant, vigilant work of militant anti-Fascists.

Every decade has seen direct action against Fascists in this country. There were widespread street battles against the Blueshirts in the 1930s and *Ailtirí na hAiséirghe* (Architects of the Resurrection) in the 1940s. In September 1950, a Fascist group *Aontas Naisiunta* (National Union) ceased producing its newspaper *Saoirse* after being raided by an IRA splinter group. In December 1953, IRA members, in an unsanctioned operation, burnt down the home of British Fascist leader Oswald Mosley in Co. Galway. Left-wing militants and socialists clashed with the Limerick based National Movement on at least one occasion in 1970 while republican socialists were behind attacks against *National Socialist Irish Workers Party* (NSIWP) members and their property from the 1970s until the 1980s.

The fact that Ireland today only has a small and fragmented far-right has interested several academics in recent times. Steve Garner tried to tackle the subject in his article *Ireland and immigration: explaining the absence of the far right* (2007) as did Eoin O'Malley with his *Why is there no Radical Right Party in Ireland?* (2008). The crux of Garner's argument is that our mainstream centre-right parties have soaked up any latent neo-Fascist support by appropriating key areas that the far right considers its own domain elsewhere in Europe *'such as the construction of nations as racial families and the application of different rules for non- nationals on principle'*. While O'Malley argues, somewhat more convincingly, that Ireland has seen no successful extreme right party because *'the 'space' usually occupied by such parties – for young, poor people disaffected by economic change – is taken up by Sinn Féin, which though it has similarities to radical right parties, differs markedly in its attitudes to immigrants.'*

It is important to note that both authors feel that Ireland has conditions amenable to the growth of the extreme right namely, according to O'Malley, *'rapidly rising immigration, allegations of job displacement, increased inequality, a weak and weakening left-right divide, an electoral system that enables small newcomers and high levels of candidate-based voting.'* Similarly Steve Garner in *'Racism in the Irish Experience'* has said that the *'conditions out of which far-right politics have blossomed since the early 1980s are increasingly present'* in Ireland namely *'growing apathy toward politics, the construction of immigration as a problem, rapid socio-economic changes, and the realisation that important decisions are being made beyond the level of the nation state'*¹

However both authors fail to discuss the fact that Ireland has had a line of far-right groups since the 1930s and that the success of these organisations has been greatly hampered by the work of militant anti-Fascists. This pamphlet, divided into parts, hopes to ratify that.

The first section looks at the various Fascist outfits that have sprung up in Ireland from 1945 to the late 1980s while the second section focuses on the background to Anti-Fascist Action in the late 1980s and its work in preventing the growth of the far-right from 1991 to 2012.

¹ Steve Garner, *Racism in the Irish Experience* (Dublin, 2004), 32

SECTION 1:



Historical timeline of the Irish Far-Right (1945 - late 1980s)

1. 1940s

The most important Fascist group in the immediate post-war period was **Ailtirí na hAiséirghe** ('Architects of the Resurrection') who were founded in 1942 by Belfast-born Gaelic nationalist Gearóid Ó Cuinneagáin. It's rise and fall came in 1945. After having secured 11,000 first preference votes and winning nine seats in the Local Elections, it succumbed to internal infighting and split in October 1945.

In what may have been the world's first instance of Holocaust denial to appear in print, the movement's film critic, Deasun Breathnach (aka 'Rex Mac Gall' and 'Cu Scannan') described in July 1945 the newsreel footage of the concentration camps at Belsen and Buchenwald as '*hate-mongering fabrications*'.^[1]

A number of disaffected members went on to set up short-lived far-right groups in the late 1940s. The group itself had its last internal meeting in 1958 while it managed to publish its newspaper up to the 1970s. For the comprehensive story on the group, read R.M. Douglas' excellent 2009 book *Architects of the Resurrection: Ailtirí na hAiséirghe and the Fascist 'New Order' in Ireland*.

Immediately after the end of the war, a number of far-right activists in Ireland joined together, along with some well-meaning people, to set up the *Save the German Children Society* in October 1945. Many of its leading members were longstanding Pro-Axis supporters like Maurice O'Connor^[2], Dr. Liam Gogan^[3], P.S. O'Sullivan and Sean O'Bradaigh^[4]. People were aware of the far-right influence within the group with *Irish Times* columnist Vincent Brittain describing it as '*merely a thinly veiled excuse for the dissemination of Fascist propaganda*'.^[5]

Joseph Hepburn - Ruston, early *British Union of Fascists* (BUF) member, personal acquaintance of Adolf Hitler and father of actress Audrey Hepburn, moved to Ireland in 1945 after his release from British internment. The *Carmelite Order* helped him, like many others with fascist sympathies, to find work and he lived in Dublin until his death in 1980^[6]. Dozens of Nazis and their collaborators were

¹ R.M. Douglas, *Architects of the Resurrection: Ailtirí na hAiséirghe and the fascist 'new order' in Ireland* (Manchester, 2009), 268

² O'Connor had been involved with Clann na Saoirse and the Irish Friends of Germany/ Cumann Naisiunta.

³ Pro-Nazi Gogan later claimed to have conveyed vital information on British strategic deployments to the Germans in 1944 (Douglas, *Architects*, 51)

⁴ O'Bradaigh was involved with Ailtirí na hAiséirghe and later Aontas Naisiunta

⁵ The Irish Times, 18 October 1945

⁶ The Irish Times, 27 November 2007

smuggled into Ireland after the end of the war. For a comprehensive account, read Daniel Leach's *'Fugitive Ireland: European minority nationalists and Irish political asylum, 1937 – 2008'*.

In November 1946, scores of young men shouting '*Up Franco!*', '*Down with Communism!*' and '*Down with Jews*' disrupted a public lecture by the **Dean of Canterbury, Rev. Dr. Hewlett Johnson** in the Mansion House, Dublin. Known as the 'Red Dean' Johnson gave his famous address '*What I Saw in Russia*' under the auspice of the *Irish Soviet Friendship Society*^[7].

Solicitor and president of the Irish-Soviet Friendship Society Helena M. Early presided over the meeting. Veteran Irish Republican socialist Peadar O'Donnell and journalist Hilda Verlin spoke.

While the Dean was speaking some members of the audience in the balcony stood up, shouted slogans and unfurled two Nazi Swastika flags. Fireworks were also thrown at the meeting and the Dean was interrupted many times.

Overall, two men were injured, three were arrested and some members of the public were badly crushed while trying to get into the, already packed, Mansion House. A 23 year old Brendan Behan was one of the stewards defending the meeting. One injured man was seen 'bleeding from wounds on the head, nose and eyes'. Another man claimed he had been hit with a walking-stick weighted with lead.

Two stewards Sean Dempsey, a labourer of Ellenfield Road, Whitehall and Henry Ryan a foundry worker of Summerhill were charged with assaulting John Hennigan of Ormond Road, Rathmines a UCD medical student who was protesting against the meeting. Ryan was found guilty of assault and sentenced to three months hard labour while Dempsey was sentenced to two month's hard labour. Both sentences were to be suspended if the two men paid £95 penalty and compensation altogether^[8]. Hennigan appealed against the decision and was found not guilty in March 1948. Dempsey was not successful^[9].

Hermann Goertz, the most famous of the Nazi spies that landed in Ireland, killed himself in Dublin in May 1947. He had originally been captured and detained in Ireland in November 1941 and then released in August 1946 but took his own life in the Alien Registration Office at Dublin Castle when he was informed that he could not stay in Ireland and that he would be deported back to Germany^[10].

His funeral at Deansgrange Cemetery on May 26 1947 was attended by more than two hundred people, many of whom wore Swastika

⁷ The Irish Press, 26 November 1946

⁸ The Irish Press, 06 May 1947

⁹ The Irish Times, 13 March 1948

¹⁰ Daniel Leach, *Fugitive Ireland: European minority nationalists and Irish political asylum, 1937 – 2008* (Dublin, 2009), 70

badges. *The Irish Times* noted that ‘Most of them were displayed by women, who were weeping bitterly as the coffin was carried to the grave’^[11]. Nazi Salutes and at least one “Heil, Hitler” was given at the ceremony at which Mr Dan Breen TD amongst others attended. In 1974, under the cover of darkness, a group of German ex-army officers exhumed Goertz’s remains and re-interred them in the German War Cemetery in Glencree, Co. Wicklow where they remain to this day.

Influential American neo-Nazi **Francis Parker Yockey** moved to Ireland, for a period of six months, in September 1947. A former U.S. soldier, Yockey, had managed to join the US legal team in Nuremberg investigating low-level war criminals but was fired in November 1946 after officials came to believe he was a mole for the Nazi defendants^[12]. Described as ‘one of the leading philosophers within the postwar fascist milieu’^[13], Yockey abandoned his wife and children and lodged at a small inn in Brittas Bay, Co. Wicklow.

Working without notes, it is here that he wrote his infamous 600-page, two-volume book *Imperium*. He published the work under the alias Ulick Varange, Ulick being Irish for ‘reward of the mind’ and Varange being the name of a Norse tribe that civilized Russia in the ninth century. James Hartung Madole, the then leader of the neo-Nazi American Resistance Party, called the book the second greatest work on ‘racial nationalism since Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*’.^[14]

Joseph Hanly, former Chief Inspector in the *Department of Education* and one of the first agricultural instructors with the *Department of Agriculture*, launched the **Council of National Action** in the *National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association* (NAIDA) Hall at 3 Stephens Green on April 22nd 1948. The Council of National Action wanted to see the ‘establishment of an Original Irish System of Government based on Christian Social Teaching and on National Unity’^[15].

‘Unless we bring nationalism and its teachings back into the schools, this country as a nation is lost’ Hanly was quoted as saying at a lecture at which he also made reference to the recent ‘immigration of undesirable aliens’ into the country.^[16] A J. Hennessy, the then president of the NAIDA, presided over the meeting.

Based on ‘Christian social teaching’, the five-point fundamental programme of the group was – A Christian State; Territorial Independence; Cultural Recovery; Economic Stability and Internal

¹¹ The Irish Times, 27 May 1947

¹² Stephen Dorril, *Black Shirt: Sir Oswald Mosley & British Fascism* (London, 2006), 564

¹³ Martin Lee, *The Beast Reawakens* (London, 1997), 91 - 92

¹⁴ Stephen E. Atkins, *Holocaust denial as an international movement* (Connecticut, 2009), 148.

¹⁵ Council of National Action, *National Action*, 1948. Fifth edition, published 1952.

¹⁶ The Irish Independent, 23 April 1948

Organisation of Society.^[17]

Seamus Murphy, president of the NAIDA, ran for the group in Dublin North East in the 1954 election receiving 1,430 votes (3.02%)

In general, it would seem that the NAIDA was riddled with the far-right.

Patrick Moylett, founding member and vice president of the 1940s fascist *People's Nationalist Party*, was president of the NAIDA in 1952. Maurice O'Connor, leading member of the fascist *Irish Friends of Germany/Cumann Naisiunta*, was president of the NAIDA in 1961. Sean O'Bradaigh (Sean Brady), former vice-president of the NAIDA (early 1950s), was an *Ailtirí na hAiséirghe* member who launched his own group *Aontas Naisiunta Na hEireann* ('National Union of Ireland') in late 1950. Peadar O'Clamhain (Peter Clavin), the Honorary Treasurer of the NAIDA (early 1950s), was secretary.

Former British officer and fascist **Norman Baillie-Stewart** entered Ireland with false papers in October 1949. Baillie-Stewart had been convicted and imprisoned in 1933 for selling military secrets to Germany and then, upon his release in 1937, moved to Germany where he spent the next six years working as an English announcer on Nazi radio.

Unlike most other instances, his fake papers were provided by the Quakers and not a Catholic order^[18]. Establishing a German-Irish export-import agency out of an office on Parliament Street^[19], Baillie-Stewart lived in Raheny, Dublin for the rest of his life.

In February 1950, Gearoid O'Cuineagáin of *Ailtirí na hAiséirghe* wrote to him, asking him to contribute articles to the party newspaper. Politely declining, he expressed his private sympathy for the group but pointed out he was a '*political refugee*' who enjoyed '*the protection of no Government*' and thus could not afford to jeopardise his position by becoming involved in local politics.^[20] In June 1966, he collapsed of a heart attack on Harmonstown Road, Artane and died soon after in the Mater Hospital.^[21] Adopting the pseudonyms James Scott and then Patrick Stewart while in Ireland, he married an Irish woman and had two children.

¹⁷ The Irish Times, 28 May 1955

¹⁸ Leach, *Fugitive Ireland*, 183

¹⁹ The Irish Times, 21 February 1995

²⁰ Douglas, *Architects*, 277

²¹ The Irish Times, 09 June 1966

2. 1950s

With *Ailtirí na hAiséirghe*'s split in 1945 and complete withdrawal from the political arena by 1949, a number of disaffected members launched their own, short-lived far-right organisations.

The first of these **Aontas Naisiunta** ('National Union') was launched in late 1950 by advertising agency clerk Sean Brady ('Sean O'Bradaigh')^[1] and Peadar O'Clamhain^[2], both officers of the NAIDA.^[3] Operating out of No. 34 Harcourt Street and then possibly an office on Pearse Street, its members, most of whom were probably linked with Maria Duce, wore a uniform of green shirts. Maria Duce were a small ultra-conservative Catholic group, set up by Fr. Denis Fahey, active from 1942 until the early 1970s.^[4] Limerick IRA man Seán South, who was killed in an attack on a RUC barracks in Brookeborough, Co. Fermanagh in 1957, was an active member

On 9 September 1950, *Aontas Naisiunta* launched a periodical *Saoirse* ('Freedom') whose principal aim was to '*demonstrate the Jewish antecedents of Communism*'.^[5] Published at irregular intervals over the following weeks and distributed outside the GPO, it ceased production on 23 September after an IRA splinter group raided the group's premises.^[6]

Every year from 1951 - 1954 members of *Aontas Naisiunta* laid flowers on the grave of the aforementioned German spy Hermann Goertz.^[7] On 10 December 1952 their Director of Organisation, Seosamh O'hUiginn gave a public lecture on a '*new outlook on Politics in Ireland based on a modern interpretation of the principles of the Ancient Gaelic State social system*' at the NAIDA Hall in Stephens Green.^[8] The group lasted until about 1954.

This period also saw a large number of writing desks in the *General Post Office* (GPO) defaced with swastikas. Police and GPO attendants were told to '*watch out for young men*' who are suspected to be behind the vandalism.^[9] In a possibly related incident, slogans such as 'Pig-

¹ Douglas, Architects, 284

² The Irish Times, 07 September 1951

³ The Irish Times, 23 March 1952

⁴ For more on Maria Duce read Sean Gannon's "'Schools of Corruption': The Contexts for Seán South's Antisemitism" in The Old Limerick Journal, Number 44/Winter 2010 and Enda Delaney's "Political Catholicism in Post-War Ireland: The Revd. Denis Fahey and Maria Duce 1945- 54" in Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Volume 52/Issue 03/July 2000

⁵ Douglas, Architects, 284

⁶ Dermot Keogh, *Jews in Twentieth-Century Ireland: Refugees, Anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust* (Cork, 1998), 228.

⁷ The Irish Times, 23 May 1951

⁸ The Irish Times, 07 December 1952

⁹ The Irish Times, 02 December 1950

Jew', 'Down with the Jews' and 'Boycott the Jews' were painted on Dublin stores and on walls in the city. A number of similar slogans, including 'Expel the Jews: Ban Freemasonry', attacking various people and organisations also appeared on tram standards and letter-boxes.^[10]

In September 1951, Raymond Moulton Sean O'Brien, wealthy landlord, one-time oil-company executive in New York and convicted child molester, launched the **United Christian Nationalist Party (UCNP)**.^[11] Anti-Semitic, anti-Feminist and anti-Communist in outlook, the group looked for 5,000 recruits for their military wing the *Black Legion*. Though it printed some pamphlets and posters, the organization made little impact and its membership never exceeded twenty-five. After a split in leadership, the UCNP wound up in 1953.

Bizarrely, the *Black Legion's* recruiting poster from October 1951 reappeared in Dublin in March 1988.^[12]

Also in 1951, former Ailtirí na hAiséirghe Ard Chomhairle member Risteard de Roiste co-wrote a book, 'World Government in 1955?', with former RAF officer Hilary James Coughtrie Cotter who had been previously involved with Oswald Mosley's Union Movement.^[13] Earlier that year Cotter, who had studied at Trinity College and lived in Glenageary on Dublin's Southside, established the **Nationalist Information Bureau** (aka Natinform) with A.F.X. Baron, a strict Catholic insurance clerk, who headed the neo-Fascist *National Workers Movement*. The bureau, which was run out of Baron's residence in Framlingham, Suffolk, provided 'a steady supply of neo-Nazi literature to the European extreme right'.^[14]

Cotter and De Roiste's book 'sought to expose the Cold War as a sham fight orchestrated by Jews manipulating both the capitalist and Communist blocs for the purpose of bringing the world under a single dictatorial government'.^[15] It concluded with the rally-cry: 'NATIONALISTS OF ALL LANDS UNITE: YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR JEWS'.

The *Nationalist Information Bureau* agreed at a meeting of its principal activists in Oldenburg, Germany in October 1952 to organise a significant conference of world-wide far-right groups in Bray, Wicklow for the following January. Dublin taxi driver James 'Sonny' Murphy who held the grand title of the 'Director of Political Education and Culture' of the UCNP was delegated to organise the meeting which was to be held under the title of the 'World Congress of Ex. Soldiers' but known to insiders as the 'World Aryan Congress'. Murphy, who was seemingly way out of his depth, managed to attract the unwanted

10 The Irish Times, 27 March 1950

11 Douglas, Architects, 282

12 The Irish Times, 05 March 1988

13 Douglas, Architects, 283

14 ibid

15 ibid

attention of the international press. As a result, the manager of the Bray hotel at which the conference was to take place cancelled the reservation after becoming overwhelmed by endless media enquiries. In March 1952, Ristead de Roiste publicly cut all links with Cotter, Baron and Natinform announcing that neo-Nazi politics were inconsistent with his Irish Catholic beliefs.

In August 1954, anti-Semitic handbills were posted on a number of prominent places in Dublin City. Headed '*Jewish Crimes*', and bearing no printing firm's imprint, they referred to the reported persecution of Christians and Arabs in Palestine.^[16]

In February 1951, Sir **Oswald Mosley**, founder of the *British Union of Fascists* (BUF) and leader of the far-right Union Movement (UM), began a self-imposed exile in Ireland to '*escape the press, the anti-Fascists and the state*'.^[17] While renovations took place in their new home Clonfert Palace, a former Protestant Bishops house, in Eyrecourt, Co. Galway, the Mosley family stayed in Dublin.

D. Costigan of the Department of Justice said that there was '*no evidence*' that Mosley was '*engaged in political activity or that he was in anyway connected with the (Fascist) Black Legion*'.^[18] and Dan Bryan of G2 Army intelligence said that there was '*no information*' Mosley was '*taking any interest in political ... activities*'.^[19] in Ireland. However it is known that Mosley did meet a number of leading non-Irish Fascists while living in the country. On 27 September 1952, he organised a meeting with his principal UM lieutenants in the Russell Hotel, Dublin to discuss the launch of a new monthly journal, *The European*.^[20] and in 1956, he met with leading post-war European neo-Nazi Otto Skorzeny in Ireland.^[21]

Understandably, his presence in Ireland did not please everyone and in December 1953, IRA members, in an unsanctioned operation, burnt down his house in Co. Galway. Mosley lost his papers, many BUF and UM internal documents and three family portraits in the fire that left Clonfert Palace as an '*uninhabitable shell*'.^[22] This is the first time this information has been published. Up to now, the fire was described, in Mosley biographies, as an '*accident*'.

Immediately after, the Mosley family bought another house, Ileclash, which was situated on a cliff above the Blackwater near Fermoy, Co. Cork. However, Mosley much preferred his house in France and began visiting Ireland less and less frequently before finally

16 The Irish Times, 21 August 1954

17 Dorril, Black Shirt, 593

18 Dorril, Black Shirt, 592

19 Dorril, Black Shirt, 599

20 Dorril, Black Shirt, 600

21 Dorril, Black Shirt, 610

22 Dorril, Black Shirt, 606

selling the house in the Spring of 1963.

British Union of Fascists (BUF) member A.E. Day established **Carraig Books** in Bristol in 1942. Living for a period at 44 Pekin Street, Poplar, London, Day has been described as a fascist with an 'international' outlook who in the 1940s used to advertise the sale of Canadian far-right literature in the BUF press. Moving business to Ireland in 1952 Carraig Books traded under a number of names and locations before finally in 1967 moving to 25 Newton Avenue, Blackrock where it is still in business to this day. Carraig Books was involved in supplying racist, fascist and ultra-right literature throughout Ireland and Britain in the 1960s and 1970s and was linked informally with NSIWP.^[23] A.E. Day passed away in 1974 and today the shop is ran by a family member.

Former 'left wing' leader of the NSDAP and devout Bavarian Catholic, **Otto Strasser**, who was originally denied a visa to visit Ireland in 1945^[24], took a trip to Roscommon in 1955.^[25] His travel partner was renowned anti-Semite A.K. Chesterson, former editor of the BUF's Action newspaper, the founder of *League of Empire Loyalists* and co-founder of the *National Front*. They visited the Order of the Divine World at Donamon Castle, Roscommon.

From 1957, legendary Lieutenant Colonel in the Waffen SS **Otto Skorzeny** bought estates in Ireland for himself and up to seventy former comrades including SS leader Alexander von Dornberg and SS-Sturmabführer Albert Schmidt-Stähler.^[26] ^[27] The former used the *Amsterdam Coffee Bar* in Dublin as a front for Skorzeny's secret neo-Nazi network, the Organization of Former SS Members (ODESSA).^[28] Dornberg, a former Ribbentrop staff member, was his courier between Ireland and Germany.^[29] On behalf of ODESSA he sold, at profit, weapons hidden by the SS in France, Austria and Italy.^[30]

It is alleged that Skorzeny hosted many foreign fascists at his Martinstown House in County Kildare including several members of the French Fascist group *La Phalange française* who stayed there for three weeks in the late 1950s.^[31] This particular group of visitors was led Paul Rives, a former member of the *Légion des Volontaires Français* (LVF) and of the French Battalion in Korea.

Throughout this period Skorzeny travelled to various neo-Fascist

23 Ciarán Ó Maoláin, *The radical right: a world directory* (London, 1987), 164

24 Leach, *Fugitive Ireland*, 72-73

25 Leach, *Fugitive Ireland*, 183

26 Leach, *Fugitive Ireland*, 184

27 Dorrill, *Mosley*, 610

28 Leach, *Fugitive Ireland*, 184

29 Dorrill, *Mosley*, 610

30 *ibid*

31 Chairorff, *Dossier Neo Nazisme*, 330

gathering across Europe including one at Bonn in July 1960 where he met Oswald Mosley and leading German neo-Nazi Colonel Hans-Ulrich Rudel.^[32] He paid his final visit to the country in 1969.

Patrick J. N. Bury (a.k.a. PJN Bury) and his sister Audrey Joan P. Bury, a former member of the *Union Movement* founded a magazine entitled **Resurgence** in December 1959. Based out of the family home at Ballymountain House, Waterford, the '*quarterly literary magazine*' enjoyed some success with left-wing intellectuals until it was '*discovered to be predominantly Fascist*' in outlook.^[33]

Bury, a former Royal Navy able seaman born in London in 1926, had been living in Ireland since 1947. His father Captain Napier Robert Peploe, originally from Terenure, had been awarded a Distinguished Service Order for active service with the Royal Navy.^[34]

A prolific letter writer and general knowledge expert, Bury was crowned 'Brain of Ireland' in March 1977 after he won a national quiz competition. From 1958 – 1988, he wrote literally hundreds of letters to *The Irish Times*, *The Irish Press*, *The Irish Independent*, *The European*, *Ebony*, *The Geographical Magazine*, *The Spectator*, *The Listener*, *The New Statesman and Nation*, *The Economist*, *History Today*, *Country Life* and other periodicals.

32 Dorrill, Mosley, 621

33 George Thayer, *The British political fringe: a profile* (London, 1965), 102

34 *The Irish Independent*, 20 March 1977

3. 1960s

January 1960 saw a wave of anti-Semitic attacks and vandalism across Europe, Australia, America and Africa. Dozens of incidents, some publicised and some not, occurred in Ireland. The outbreak was triggered off on Christmas Eve 1959 by two members of the *German Reich* Party who painted swastikas on the Cologne Synagogue.^[35]

In January 1960, a large swastika with the words '*Out with the Jews*' was painted on the road opposite the car park at Saval Park Road, Dalkey.^[36] In the same period, a swastika was found daubed on the wall of the Dublin corporation fuel dump in Crumlin.^[37] In Newry, Co. Down a swastika was painted on the outside gable factory wall of Stark Brothers (Salford) Ltd, a Jewish firm of raincoat manufacturers.^[38] In Lurgan, Co. Armagh '*Juden Raus*' and a swastika was painted on the pillar of a gateway to the *Irish National Forester's Club* on North Street.^[39] At Dalymount Park, the home of Bohemian F.C., staff removed swastikas and slogans '*Jews Go Home*' and '*Heil Hitler*' from the entrance gates to the ground.^[40] In lanes off Merrion Square, residents removed similar slogans and symbols.^[41]

In the early hours of Monday morning December 5th 1960, the Synagogue on Rathfarnham Road, Terenure was vandalised causing damages amounting to £485.^[42] Swastikas and slogans such as '*Juden Raus*', '*Kill Jews*' and '*Communists*' were daubed on the walls, some eight or nine feet high. On January 6 1961, a fifteen-year-old boy was sentenced, in the Dublin Children's court, to two years in a reformatory for the crime. The judge noted that 'there was nothing mentally wrong with the boy' and that a '*psychiatrist's report ... stated he was well above average intelligence*'.^[43]

On July 30 1962, **George Lincoln Rockwell**, leader of the *American Nazi Party* (ANP) visited Ireland briefly on his way to England.^[44] Rockwell was met by Colin Jordan, leader of the *British National Socialist Movement* and John Tyndall, its national secretary at Shannon Airport. The three then drove to Belfast, crossing the border at Middletown, Co. Armagh. At Belfast, they booked three cabins on the Heysham steamer and later drove to Larne and Carrickfergus. Jordon

35 Dennis Eisenberg, *The Re-emergence of Fascism* (London, 1967), 10

36 *The Irish Independent*, 07 January 1960

37 *The Irish Press*, 05 January 1960

38 *The Irish Press*, 06 January 1960

39 *ibid*

40 *The Irish Times*, 07 January 1960

41 *ibid*

42 *The Irish Independent*, 06 December 1960

43 *The Irish Press*, 07 January 1961

44 *The Irish Independent*, 10 August 1962

and co. hosted a gathering of international neo-Nazis, including Rockwell, in the Cotswold Hills in Gloucestershire. The resulting 1962 Cotswold Declaration established the *World Union of National Socialists* (WUNS).

Rockwell was arrested the following day in London and spent a night in the cells at Cannon Row police station before he was put on a plane and deported to the United States.

Authorities announced, in the aftermath of Rockwell's expulsion from England, that '*Nazis maintain a headquarters in Ireland, in a rural area near Dublin*'. The discovery was made '*by British Scotland Yard investigators and representatives of Ireland's Criminal Investigation Division*'. It was said that:

The Scotland Yard and CID crews found ... a nest of Nazis with a suburban Dublin headquarters. In the house near Dublin, the CID men found photographs of Adolf Hitler and swastika emblazoned Nazi flags in nearly every room. The CID has put "a close watch" on the Irish Nazis, it was stated here.^[45]

(A similar story was repeated the following year in an article in TCD magazine. This article alleged that an Irish neo-Nazi group had held meetings in their headquarters, a '*house near Dublin*' which had '*Nazi insignia and photographs of Hitler, Goering, Himmler, Goebbels and Mussolini*' on the walls^[46])

It has been rumoured that Dublin born neo-Nazi Terence Byrne, who will appear properly in this story soon, attended the WUNS conference in 1962.

The late historian and expert on the extreme right Stephen E. Atkins wrote that the conference involved the representatives of neo-Nazi groups from approximately seven countries, 'Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, *Ireland*, United States, and West Germany' while Frederick J. Simonelli, who wrote '*American Fuehrer: George Lincoln Rockwell and the American Nazi Party*' also names these seven countries in his book. Byrne, who would have been twenty at the time, certainly was in correspondence with Rockwell in the mid 1960s so it is possible that he attended the conference.

Whether they were present or not, the Irish Nazis certainly '*expressed tacit approval of the principles*' contained in the Cotswold Agreement but '*refused to publicly endorse them*'^[47]. They pleaded with WUNS European leader Colin Jordan to intercede with Rockwell and to explain to the commander that they were too '*young and weak*' to carry the movement on to Irish streets. Rockwell replied: '*I can*

45 Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 10 August 1962.

46 The Irish Times, 13 May 1963

47 J. Kaplan & T. Bjorgo (Eds.), *Nation and race: The developing Euro-American racist subculture* (Boston, 1998), 48

thoroughly understand their position ... but as all of us have found, the way to get old and strong is not to remain in the cellars'.

In July 1963, the Irish National Socialist publication **Nationalist News** made the front page of *The Irish Times*.^[48] The article noted that the 'anti-Jewish, anti-negro publication' had stated in its current issue that the Taoiseach Sean Lemass and Fidel Castro were Jewish and that 'C.I.E. might well look into the methods used by the Nazis in shipping train-loads of victims to the gas chambers'.

(This front page article spurred drama critic Gabriel Fallon to write a letter to the paper saying that it was not news that there was 'a carefully nurtured underground movement' in Ireland promoting Nationalist Socialist politics. Fallon mentioned in the letter that he had written a piece for *Universe* magazine in February 1961 drawing attention to the fact that there was a 'covert circulation in this country of publications of Irish, British and U.S. origin geared to build up hatred against the Jewish people'^[49])

In November 1963 it was stated by Dr. Silvano Santander, a *Union Civica* leader, who represented the *Argentine United Front Against Anti-Semitism* at a Paris conference of the Union of Resistance and Deportation, that Spain, Ireland and Austria constitute today 'a strong triangle of the Nazi movement'.^[50]

National Social Union of Ireland, the publisher, were said to have 'affiliations with Colin Jordan's fascist group in Britain' and while the Special Branch was aware of the organisation, it had so far not taken any action against it. This organisation, based out of 2 Clonturk Avenue, Drumcondra, published this newspaper from November 1962 up till at least 1965. Writers included Seamus O'Brion, James Healy, Brendan Maguire, Sean P. O'Sullivan and Thomas Holden.^[51]

In 1964, the Austrian neo-Fascist journal *Der Trommler* (Fighting Journal of Patriotic Youth) mentioned that it was in close contact with a group called **Irish National Youth** which produced its own magazine called *The New Guard*, edited by a M.I. Reiss of Dublin.^[52] (This name appears again under 'research' in the List of Contributors from a 1969 issue^[53] of *The Nation*, the paper of the *National Movement*.)

In May 1964, anti-Semitic slogans and swastikas were scrawled on David Allen hoardings at Werburg Street, Castle Street and Cornmarket in Dublin 8. Employees of the company 'obliterated the daubings with

48 The Irish Times, 19 July 1963

49 The Irish Times, 22 July 1963

50 Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 07 November 1963

51 The author has in his possession nearly all issues of Volume 3 (1965) of *Nationalist News*

52 Eisenberg, *The re-emergence of fascism*, 27

53 *The Nation*, Vol. 3, Issue 7 1969

strips of white paper' shortly after they appeared.^[54]

In 1966, Bernard E. Horgan took command of the Irish branch of the World Union of National Socialists (WUNS) organisation and finally its '*political and propaganda activities became visible*', it was noted however that '*the Irish Nazis never made the lofty expectations Rockwell held for them*'.^[55] In an interview with Playboy in the same year, George Lincoln Rockwell had said his Irish group was '*coming along fast*'.^[56]

In February 1966, the Synagogue in Terenure was arson attacked.^[57] A 24-year-old man, Liam Clynes, from Churchtown was found unconscious in the blazing building by the Jewish Congregation's chairman Nathan Mendall. Clynes was charged with having '*unlawfully and maliciously set fire to the synagogue*' but was certified '*unfit to plead*' and was sent to St. Brendan's Hospital for mental health treatment.^[58]

In Limerick in 1968, the **National Movement** (NM) was set up. This was certainly the most well-organised and best supported far-right since *Ailtirí na hAiséirgh*. The group was led by John Buckley, a 23 year old Window Dresser at Cannock's department store in Limerick, Dublin postman A.L. Price (aka Tony Price), and 84-year-old Easter 1916 veteran and notorious anti-Semite, Commandant W.J. Brennan-Whitmore.^[59]

The organisation was founded '*for the attainment of two objectives: the defence and preservation of our Christian way of life ... and our traditional heritage of nationality*'.^[60] Its largest branch was in Limerick though the total membership of the organisation nationwide was not thought to have reached much more than fifty. Their journals, *The Nation* (Dublin) and *Nationalist Worker* (Limerick), espoused National Socialism, racism and anti-communism. The latter publication, which praised Adolf Hitler, was sold openly on Limerick's O'Connell Street.

54 The Irish Press, 06 May 1964

55 Jeffrey Kaplan, *Encyclopaedia of white power: a sourcebook on the radical racist right* (Oxford, 2000), 357

56 1966 Playboy interview. Link: archive.org/details/1966PlayboyInterview

57 The Irish Independent, 10 February 1966

58 The Irish Press, 19 February 1966

59 Brian Hanley, 'The 1970 Springbooks tour and local politics in Limerick', *The Old Limerick Journal*, Vol.43 (Summer 2009), 8-11; Ciarán Ó Maoláin, *The radical right: a world directory* (London, 1987), 164

60 The Irish Times, 21 March 1970

4. 1970s

In 1970, the National Movement hit the headlines twice; firstly for organising a march to welcome the South African rugby team to Ireland and secondly for its involvement in the campaign to close down a Maoist bookshop in Limerick.

In January, the all-white South African rugby team, the Springboks visited Ireland after a two-month tour of England.^[61] Anti-Apartheid protests greeted them at every city. On the night before the game in Limerick, twenty-five uniformed members of the NM marched, in the pouring rain, from the city to the Shannon Shamrock Hotel to hand in a letter of welcome to the Springboks team. With Celtic Cross armbands and banners proclaiming '*Boks yes, Reds no*', '*We support White Christian South Africa*', '*Red Thugs get out*', the neo-Nazis exchanged insults (and possibly blows) with a small group of Anti-Apartheid protesters who were maintaining a picket outside the hotel. In the Movement's own words, they '*encountered and defeated an organised and militant band of Maoists*'^[62] It has been suggested that this was the first instance of organised, uniformed fascists marching in Ireland since Eoin O'Duffy's Blueshirts in the 1930s.

Later that year, the NM received further publicity in both local and national papers for its role in supporting reactionary Labour mayor Stephen Coughlan's campaign to shut down a small Maoist bookshop in Limerick City. *Progress Books*, which was ran by the *Irish Revolutionary Youth Movement*, was attacked several times. Its windows were smashed on a number of occasions, shots were fired into the shop and there was at least one attempt to burn it down. John Buckley, the *National Movement's* de facto leader, told *The Irish Times* that though the NM did not support violence he could if he wanted to '*get 30 people out on the streets in the morning to bash up any red who puts his head out*'.^[63]

Limerick mayor Stephen Coughlan was widely criticised for his speech in April 1970 in which he defended the 1904 anti-Semitic Limerick pogrom:

I remember the problem of the Jews in Limerick. Fr. Creagh in his courageous way declared war on the Jews at Colooney Street, which is now Wolfe Tone Street. The Jews at that that time, who are gone now, were extortionists, he had the backing of everybody in the City of Limerick ... He had set the match to

61 For a detailed analysis on the Springboks visit to Ireland, see Brian Hanley's 'The 1970 Springboks tour and local politics in Limerick', *The Old Limerick Journal*, Vol.43 (Summer 2009), 8-11

62 *The Irish Times*, 24 March 1970

63 *The Irish Times*, 13 March 1970

light the fire against the Jewish extortionists^[64]

Local Limerick City Labour chairman Jim Kemmy, who was subsequently elected as an independent socialist TD for the city, resigned from the party after Coughlan's speech.

During the same period, a left-wing bookshop in Cattle Market Street, Cork had to shut after just five days when hundreds of locals mounted violent protests. Reportedly local members of the Official IRA rescued the Maoists from being set upon by the mob.

NM members, dressed in trademark black polo neck shirts, collected signatures on the streets calling for the closure the bookshop and campaigned for Steve Coughlan with the slogan '*he stood by you, now stand by him*'. Coughlan met Buckley and praised the group's work. Astonishingly, two Labour councillors proposed '*a vote to thanks*' to the neo-Nazi organisation when they presented their anti-Maoist petition to the Limerick Corporation. However this marked the high point of the National Movement's short existence, with Limerick's Red Scare petering out, so did public interest with the group. It faded away in the early 1970s.

While it may have been the year of worldwide student protest, 1968 also saw a second Irish neo-Nazi group emerging. The **National Socialist Irish Workers Party** (NSIWP) was founded in Dublin by 26 year old Terence Allan-Byrne^[65], a self-employed decorator who lived with his mother at 6 St. Brendan's Cottages, Ringsend. The founding of the organisation coincided with a '*huge black swastika*' and the letters NSIWP daubed on the monument to Dr. William Ashford at Irishtown Square, Dublin.^[66]

This organisation, though never involving more than two dozen or so members, would be active for the next twenty years. It also played a vital role in the production of neo-Nazi paraphernalia for the European movement.

Byrne, who was born in 1942 and supposedly died in unknown circumstances in the early 1980s, insisted on being addressed as 'Commander' Byrne throughout his career in National Socialist politics. Other early members of the NSIWP included Pat Webb (Head of Propaganda), James Moore^[67] (Head of Security), Colm Tarrant, Jos

64 Bryan Fanning, *Racism and social change in the Republic of Ireland* (Manchester, 2002), 71

65 He also went by the names – Terry/Terence A. Byrne, T.A. Byrne and Terry/Terence Allan-Byrne.

66 The Irish Times, 24 August 1968

67 Moore fell out with Byrne in 1978. The Phoenix, July-Aug 1978.

Mussche^[68] (former Dutch SS), P. O’Flaherty^[69], Ann Flynn^[70] and two ‘leaders’ of the NSIWP’s Stormtrooper paramilitary units F. Radcliffe and Brent O’Brien. John T. Kane was a pseudonym used by several NSIWP members, originally Byrne.

Webb, an ex commando originally from Wolverhampton, was active with Colin Jordan’s *National Socialist Movement* (NSM) in the early 1960s and heavily involved in gun running for the far right. He went on to plant a bomb in the basement of a black family’s home in the 1970s, which exploded killing a visiting teenage relative. The rest of the family escaped injury as they were attending church at the time of the explosion.^[71]

There are also persistent rumours that both 1916 veteran Commandant W.J. Brennan-Whitmore, who was attached to the National Movement, and Alfred E. Day a former Mosleyite from Bristol who ran Carraig Books in Blackrock, were members of the NSIWP.

Throughout its existence militant anti-fascists in Dublin and elsewhere kept a close eye on the NSIWP and launched several unpremeditated, as well as organised attacks, against NSIWP members and property. Commander Byrne was particularly sought out for ‘reasoned political debate’. The intensity and viciousness of these attacks does, to a degree, give credence to the long-standing rumour that Byrne had also “perved” on local kids.

In October 1970, he was shot and critically wounded.^[72] In May 1973, anti-fascists raided an isolated farm in Arklow, which was leased by James Moore, to steal NSIWP internal documents. A few hours after the operation, Byrne was attacked again and hospitalised for several months.^[73]

In March 1977, while out walking, a car pulled up beside him and a man ‘leapt out’ and stabbed him in the hand.^[74] That same week, a gang of four men attacked him and stabbed him in the stomach with a bayonet.^[75] In September 1977, the NSIWP’s HQ (6 St. Brendan’s Cottages) was petrol bombed.^[76]

In 1979, Byrne had a ‘*wound in the shape of a back-to-front Swastika*’ carved into his chest. He refused to allow a ‘*greasy, slimy Indian*’ doctor

68 A ‘Jos A. Mucche’ is listed under ‘legal immigrants, and others’ in the ‘Foreign minority nationalists in Irish exile’ Appendix in Daniel Leach’s ‘Fugitive Ireland: European minority nationalists and Irish political asylum, 1937 – 2008’ (Dublin, 2009)

69 The Irish Worker, Christmas Issue 1969

70 ibid

71 Gerry Gable, Lone Wolves: myth or reality? (Searchlight, 2011)

72 Patrice Chairouff, Dossier Neo Nazisme (Paris, 1977), 333

73 Chairouff, Dossier Neo Nazisme, 333

74 The Sunday Independent, 27 March 1977

75 ibid

76 The Phoenix, November 1977

treat it and as such was referred to another hospital. Here, a different doctor refused to treat him and *'remarked that the wounds he was receiving were costing the tax-payers a lot of money'*.^[77] In another attack in the same time period, Commander Byrne *'suffered severe lacerations to the leg and right arm'* which needed 26 stitches.^[78] In the 1977 Sunday Independent interview with Byrne, his mother had remarked that he had been shot at three times.^[79] In another incident, Byrne had acid thrown over him and one night, when anti-fascists could not find Byrne at home they removed all the tiles on his roof and left them in a neat pile outside his front door.^[80] Byrne always insisted that his dog had been poisoned by the 'reds' as well.

As might be imagined Byrne was known to the Gardaí and at least on one occasion, March 1976, he was arrested and held for twenty-four hours under the Special Powers Act.^[81]

The NSIWP published three periodicals - The Phoenix, a monthly magazine from 1972, The Irish Worker, a monthly newspaper that was wound down around 1977 and N.S. News, an internal bulletin. These were amateurish, shoddily produced products filled with articles and images espousing Holocaust denial, racism and anti-Semitism.

In April 1970, Byrne tried to get involved with a Sinn Féin led protest campaign against the proposed building of a road through Ringsend Park. However, local activist Mairin de Burca told The Irish Times there would be absolutely no joint action between the groups as Sinn Féin had strong *'ideological objections to fascism'*.^[82]

In 1971, Mr. Maurice Abrahamson, a *'leading member of the Jewish community in Dublin'* spoke to *The Sunday Independent* about *'scurrilous anti-Semitic literature'* that was being circulated from a *'small cottage in Ringsend'*.^[83] Abrahamson admitted that the Jewish community had been aware of this man's (i.e. Byrne) activities for a number of months.

In July 1973, the NSIWP made its first and only known public appearance at a Anti-Apartheid Movement protest at the Portuguese embassy in Ballsbridge, called in response to the massacre in Wiriyanu in Mozambique at which 400 villagers had been killed by Portuguese troops.

Alan, a young Official Sinn Féin member at the time, remembers what happened next at the 50 or 60 strong demo:

"...two lads turn up, brown shirts, jackboots, brown trousers,

77 NS News, 1979. Issue number not known.

78 *ibid*

79 The Sunday Independent, 27 March 1977

80 Alan, interview with author, 23 August 2011

81 NS News, March 1976

82 The Irish Times, 15 April 1970

83 The Sunday Independent, 24 October 1971

swastika armbands, real Hollywood Nazi stuff carrying signs “Stop hate against white Portugal!” People were a bit sort of stunned, not the sort of thing you usually saw in Dublin, certainly not in those days!

Some people wanted to sort them there and then. But maybe wiser heads prevailed saying “no, that would become the story in the media rather than the massacre in Mozambique “. So when the protest was over about a half of dozen of us followed them up the road and they got, eh, quite savagely beaten and thrown over the wall of another embassy into their garden.

We then turned around to see half a dozen Garda stood in a line looking at us. We almost put our hands out, and said ‘ handcuff me, take me away’ but the Garda were all “fair play lads, good on ya” and they walked off.

We had gone through (the Nazis) pockets, one of the guys had his address on him in Clonskeagh^[84] and some people visited him later. Nothing physical that time, just letting him know that people knew where we lived. And as far as I know, neither of the two were ever seen again at any public fascist activity.” ^[85]

From around 1975 to 1977, leading NSIWP member Colm Tarrant^[86] split from the NSIWP and set up his own organization, the *Nationalist News Service*. Tarrant, an ex Private with the Irish Army based in Rathgar, Dublin, built links with numerous right-wing groups such as the *Free Rudolf Hess Committee* and the *Free Czechoslovakia Committee*.^[87] It also traded as *Irish Worker Publications* and *Revisionist Books*. Its youth group was called Michael Collins Youth. Tarrant took control of *The Irish Worker* while Byrne and co. held on to *The Phoenix*.

In the early 1970s, Tarrant was also involved with the miniscule *Irish Council for European Freedom* (ICEF) and later appeared as the registered secretary of the short-lived nationalist party called Aontacht Eireann, which was set up by former Fianna Fail minister Kevin Boland. Boland said in an interview many years later that himself and his colleagues’ withdrew from the party after it was taken over by a group of right wing, conservative individuals.^[88] In 1980, Tarrant became secretary of the *Irish Arab Association* before finally moving to London in the late 1980s where he became active on the fringes of various British Fascist groups.^[89]

84 This is likely to be Pat Webb, the NSIWP’s ‘Head of Propaganda’. The Irish Press from March 21 1969 lists a Pat Webb living at an address in Nutgrove Park, Clonskeagh, Dublin 14

85 Alan, interview with author, 23 August 2011

86 Tarrant also went by the name Colm O’Torain, Colum O’Torain and Deaglan O’Torain

87 Ó Maoláin, *The radical right*, 164

88 Colm Keena, ‘The Roman Reich?’, In Dublin, October 1987

89 Ó Maoláin, *The radical right*, 164

In March 1977, Byrne gave a candid interview to a Sunday Independent journalist in which he said that he had been 'Commander of the Irish Nazis' for nine years, that beards, long hair and drugs are forbidden in the NSIWP and that his heroes included Adolf Hitler, Michael Collins and William Joyce (Lord Haw-Haw).^[90]

In June 1977, Byrne was seemingly attacked by four Gardaí in Cork. He had:

"been attending a hospital outpatients dept. for treatment when a drunken man, one William Flynn, entered and caused a disturbance. The police was sent for but instead of ejecting the drunk they set upon the Commander hitting him on the head with a baton, pushing over the bonnet of a car and inflicted lacerations on his legs which necessitated 12 stitches and wounds to his face. NS literature was taken from his pockets as he lay bleeding on the ground and although he managed to note the numbers of these police and their car the slip of paper mysteriously vanished too ... The Commander was ten days in hospital".^[91]

In July 1977, the first issue of seminal punk fanzine Heat featured a small piece on Terence Byrne and the NSIWP.^[92] Shocked at the appearance of NSIWP leaflets at a TCD Rag Week gig, Jude Carr and a friend decided to visit 6 St. Brendan's Cottages to 'find out what type of dangerous person would peddle such garbage'. They noted that the walls in the vicinity were daubed with swastikas and NSIWP. Their first visit was abruptly ended when a young girl who answered the door, of the 'small swastika dubbed terrace' house, told them that Mr. Byrne was out but that they should call back tomorrow. They did. This time they were told by a man that Mr Byrne was away and that his 'business keeps him away for long periods...'. Carr and friend made an appointment for the next Saturday. On arrival, they were bluntly told by an old woman that Byrne had 'gone away', presumably forever. It transpired however that a neighbour had seen him recently leave the house to go for a walk.

Another 'important figure' in the Irish far-right movement in the late 1970s was NSIWP associate Raymond Hughes from Santry, a university lecturer and member of the *British Movement* (BM) who apparently spoke Italian and made frequent trips to that country to meet the leader of the Italian fascists, Giorgio Almirante.^[93] (A Raymond Hughes was a fulltime staff member in the School of Engineering at the College of Technology, Bolton Street from c1974 – c1975. It likely that they are the same person.)

90 The Sunday Independent, 27 March 1977

91 The Phoenix, Sep - Nov 1978

92 Jude Carr, 'White students ... the future can be yours! If you have the guts to fight for it', Heat fanzine, July 1977

93 Ó Maoláin, The radical right, 164 ; Searchlight Magazine (No. 42 1978)

Personal correspondence from the late 1970s between John T. Kane (i.e. Byrne) and James Mason, a leading American neo-Nazi offers a glimpse into the paranoid and fanciful world of the NSIWP. The group's likely exaggeration on the number of physical attacks on their members would seem to have been done to invoke sympathy and financial support from their American comrades.

On 8th March 1977, 'Kane' wrote that the NSIWP were receiving more trouble off the Special Branch and that the blame firmly lay on the '*creep*' Tarrant who was passing on information to them. The previous Sunday, it transpired, in the letter, Byrne was attacked by two friends of Tarrant and had to spend more time in hospital.

In an undated letter from the same period, 'Kane' mentions their falling out with Colm Tarrant and describes him as a '*creep been paid by the Special Branch here in Ireland for information. Last year Commander Byrne was arrested over this same person.*' It was also revealed that on Sunday 6th March 1977, '*two creeps*' attacked Byrne, '*kicked him in the face and several other parts of the body*' and called him a '*Nazi bastard*'.

All of these mysterious and violent attacks shocked James Mason who wrote:

'Through movement contacts, I've heard that you and Comdr. Byrne have suffered injuries lately. My God, what the hell kind of place is it over there? Every time I turn around, I hear of another assault against you comrades!'^[94]

In October, 'Kane' said that '*Within the last six months the Commander has had to get 68 stitches in various wounds*' and that '*the attacks on our H.Q. continue regularly*'^[95] and then in November it was reported that '*Commander Byrne has had more trouble this time, he was knifed in the left shoulder and was admitted to hospital where he received many stitches. This has been reported to the local police but as yet nothing has been done.*'^[96]

The NSIWP's overall evaluation of their activity in 1977 is quite tragic:

'...We hope that 1978 will be a better year for us than 1977 has been. Our party has been through a very bad year: Commander Byrne was attacked no less than 17 times and he received 79 stitches in various wounds - as you no doubt have heard. Just now, he is seriously ill from a badly infected right arm and this is not the worst of it - the infection has spread to his lungs and both lungs have a cloud on them. The doctor has diagnosed a chemical poison, so it seems that the reds have really made a special effort to put the Commander out of action. He suffers constantly from pain, nausea, weakness and lack of sleep ... We are striving to go from strength to strength in 1978. Our greatest handicap, however, is lack of money to buy machinery

94 Letter from Mason to 'Kane', 31.05.77. James N. Mason collection. Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas.

95 Letter from 'Kane' to Mason, 29.10.77

96 Letter from 'Kane' to Mason, 15.11.77

to replace that damaged in the raid in our HQ last June.^[97]

It would seem that by January 1978, things weren't going better for the group:

'Commander Byrne was attacked yet again on Sunday, and received 36 stitches - 22 to his left leg and 14 to his left arm. Two red creeps tried to get into his office and knocked a big wire grille down on top of him. I am told that the Commander managed to get one of them with a hatchet in the body - but so far there has been no red body found. This makes 116 stitches the Commander has had in wounds this year, or rather, the last 10 months. We really need some help - we can't even buy a gun, or a proper big knife, over here, due to the IRA Special Power acts etc.'^[98]

In March, 'Kane' described the commander as 'still not well' as 'only last week the Cmdr walked into a booby-trap that one IRA creep left around.' According to the letter 'there was a razor blade placed very unobtrusively and Terry slashed his left arm. One would get the impression that Terry is going around half asleep (sic) this is not so not one of us noticed it in the side of the door'.^[99]

In the last of the letters in the collection 'Kane' wrote: that 'Commander Byrne is at present in hospital and asked me to write to you' and that the NSIWP would like to join the USA based White Confederacy but have financial problems and thus 'are unable to afford to send you the requested fee'.^[100]

The same year saw a serious arson attack on the Waterford home of Dutch art collector and Nazi war criminal Pieter Menten. Comeragh House, bought by Menten in 1964, was first attacked in 1977 during his trial before the Dutch High Court. There was little damage caused. A more serious attempt was made in August 1979 when four masked and armed men poured petrol over several rooms in the house and set it alight. At the time, Menten was serving a jail sentence in Holland for the murder of thirty Polish Jews during the second World War. He was subsequently awarded £41,000 in damages by the Waterford Circuit Court.^[101] At the time it was believed that a 'gang of professional criminals ... may have been hired by a Zionist group abroad to destroy the Menten home'.^[102] No arrests were ever made. Menten died in 1987.

97 Letter from 'Kane' to Mason, 06.01.78

98 Letter from Kane to Mason, 29.01.78

99 Letter from Kane to Mason, 03.03.78

100 Letter from Kane to Mason, 20.04.78

101 The Irish Times, February 11 1986

102 The Irish Times, 09 August 1979

5. 1980s

In March 1980, The Irish Times reported that the NSIWP were *'supplying Nazi literature and regalia to Right-wing extremists in Britain'*.^[103] The article also noted that the group's HQ was in Ringsend and that the *'supposed leader'* of the group was seen recently putting up posters in Dublin.

Internal NSIWP documents show that in early 1980 their *'long standing accommodation was abruptly, without warning, taken away'* from them. The same article also makes open reference to *'a rumour that our Commander was dead'*. At no point do they confirm they confirm or deny rumour. As such, it is within reason to suggest that in early 1980 Byrne either died or moved out of the country. His family, understandably, didn't want the house used for NSIWP purposes so they kicked them out. Hazel Etherington took over as main organiser, used her house in Stamer Street as a *'temporary accommodation address'* before purchasing 69 Eugene Street in July 1980.

In November 1982, *The Irish Press* ran a story about how British fascist groups were able to get around the *Race Relations Act* by having their propaganda printed here by the NSIWP.^[104] The group was able to *'provide intermediary postal addresses'*, enabling letters requesting racist literature or membership details to be given to extremist groups in Britain. The article noted that the NSIWP's founder Terence Byrne had recently died at the age of forty and as such the group's *'accommodation address'* had moved to 69 Eugene Street in Dublin 8. While it was common knowledge that the NSIWP had little more than twenty-five or so members, the group was *'able to create the illusion of size because of their capability of supplying a considerable quantity of material for distribution by members of other organisations'*.

In 1983, NSIWP member Private Michael McAleavy murdered three Irish Army colleagues in Lebanon. McAleavy grew up in the Republican Ballymurphy estate in West Belfast and joined the NSIWP while still at school at St. Thomas' secondary school.^[105] Former classmates remember him distributing NSIWP leaflets and trying to recruit fellow pupils into the organisation.

In September 1983, the NSIWP joined the debate surrounding the Abortion referendum by issuing leaflets asking people to support the referendum because *'abortion is murder'*.^[106] The newspaper piece, which publicised this, also noted that the NSIWP had

103 The Irish Times, 07 March 1980

104 The Irish Press, 05 November 1982

105 New Hibernia, July/August 1986

106 The Irish Times, 06 September 1983

moved its operations from Byrne's home in Ringsend to their new 'accommodation address' on Eugene Street.

The NSIWP hit the headlines again in February 1985 when it was reported that the government was to 'purge' the 'Nazi propaganda cell', which had been using Ireland as a 'base to spread its evil across the world'.^[107] A special Garda surveillance squad had been set up to track the movements of the Nazis who visited the Eugene St. house while Attorney General John Rogers was in the middle of preparing 'emergency legislation' to outlaw the activities of the group. In fact this race relations legislation was not implemented till 1989.

In the same year, Brendan Holly of *Sounds and Leisure* record store in Rathmines, found three cards slipped into the cassettes and LPs of black artists proclaiming 'Nigger Free Zone' with the NSIWP initials and the Eugene St. address.^[108] Shocked but interested in learning more about the group, he contacted Liam Mackey of the music magazine *Hot Press* who in turn sent off a letter, using an alias, to the NSIWP. They received a 'wad of scruffy photocopied material' including racist leaflets, posters and a copy of their magazine *The Phoenix*. Mackey and photographer Colm Henry also paid a visit to 69 Eugene Street where they were greeted by a woman who said the NSIWP's secretary H. Murphy was not there and that no-one from the group were available to comment. This woman claimed she was not a member of the party but 'just a friend'.

It is reasonable to assume that this woman was Hazel Etherington who was the NSIWP's main organiser in the 1980s. She was described by *New Hibernia* as 'a middle-aged woman living on the Southside ... married to an ex. British naval officer'.^[109] The same piece hinted that it was very possible that this woman was the same woman whom locals see '... on a bicycle regularly collecting mail from the address ... never talking to any of the neighbours'. Justine McCarthy in *The Irish Independent* also referred to a woman who called to the house every day, 'sometimes twice a day', who stays for no longer than an hour and then leaves with a bundle of mail on her bicycle.^[110] One resident of Eugene Street described her as wearing a 'combat jacket, boots and a khaki cap'.^[111] The sporadic visits to 69 Eugene Street led it to become colloquially known as the 'house that only Hitler enters'.^[112]

In the same period, In Dublin's Colm Keena wrote a very well-researched piece on the NSIWP in which it exclusively revealed that

107 The Sunday World, 03 March 1985

108 Liam Mackey, 'Nazi outbreak', *Hot Press*, February, 1985 (?)

109 *New Hibernia*, July/August 1986

110 *The Irish Independent*, 13 March 1985

111 In Dublin, July 1986

112 *The Irish Independent*, 13 March 1985

the owner of 69 Eugene Street was Hazel Etherington, married name Deevy, who lived at 15 Stamer Street in Portobello.^[113] According to the documents in the Registry of Deeds, she bought 69 Eugene Street in July 1980. Etherington, when contacted by Keena, denied she was a member of the NSIWP but did admit that she had seen some of their material and *'did not consider it incitement to racial hatred'* and had no qualms with renting the property to the group. It is important to note here that Thomas MacGiolla (Workers Party TD) had stated in the Dáil that *'the owner of the Eugene Street premises was a principal member of the NSIWP'*.^[114] Internal AFA files from this period also name Etherington as the NSIWP's *'main organiser'*.

Etherington, who was a relatively well-known pianist and organist, died in 2004 after a short illness. Her obituary in *The Irish Times* made a fleeting reference to the fact that *'her strong political views'* seemed to have *'modified ... and softened in recent years'*. The next line talked about her deep interest in the *'esoteric'* such as *'extra-sensory perception, divining and telepathy'*. She was organist for forty years at the Christian Science Church, though not a member of the church itself, and before that at Abbey St. Methodist Church. She taught piano in the College of Music in Dublin and then at Kylemore College.

A man going by that name of John T. Kane (a long standing pseudonym used by the NSIWP) was interviewed by Pat Kenny on his radio show in September 1984.^[115] Speaking with a distinct Northern accent, it is possible that this was known neo-Nazi Alan/Allen G. Glenhill from Warrenpoint, Co. Down. A transcript of this interview was later printed in *Combat*, the magazine of the *Ulster Volunteer Force* (UVF).

Also in 1985, the NSIWP provided a safe house for Gerhard Topfer, a fugitive German Neo-Nazi terrorist. Derick Turner, who would later found a short-lived Cork-based fascist group called the Social Action Initiative, told *Searchlight Magazine* that *'Topfer stayed with some friends of mine but he was an undesirable type, he smoked dope and stole things. One time he wrecked the place he was staying in'*.^[116] After only two months in Dublin, Topfer quarreled with Tarrant and moved to London. The *New Hibernia* article reported that two West Germans had lived briefly in no. 69 in 1985 but had left Ireland. The Minister for Justice Michael Noonan said at the time in the Dáil that they would be refused re-entry into the country.^[117] It is possible that they were referring to Topfer and an associate. The NSIWP were known to regularly accommodate visiting foreign fascists. In early 1985, it was

113 In Dublin, July 1986

114 *The Irish Times*, 07 June 1985

115 *New Hibernia*, July/August 1986

116 *Searchlight Magazine* (Issue 15, May 1988)

117 *New Hibernia*, July/August 1986

reported in *The Irish Independent* that a handyman, who called to No. 69 to repair a faulty fixture, found he had difficulty communicating with the occupant, who eventually revealed he was Dutch.^[118]

In 1986, a kosher butcher shop on Clanbrassil Street was repeatedly attacked. It is widely believed that NSIWP members were involved in the vandalism, which continued over several months, and involved windows being smashed and the painting of anti-Semitic slogans and swastikas on the walls. The subsequent police harassment against NSIWP members, the implementation of the *Prohibition Of Incitement To Hatred Act* and the continued activity of anti-fascists led to the NSIWP disbanding. At the end of the year, the NSIWP made its last media appearances in two local newspapers *The Echo* and *South Leinster Advertiser* and *The Carlow Nationalist* in which NSIWP members living in Enniscorthy and Carlow were interviewed.^[119]

At some point in 1986-1987, though its not clear when, the NSIWP was 'absorbed' into another group the *National Socialist Party* (NSP) which was set up by Allen G. Glenhill and Desmond M. Holland. In the years afterwards, both names were used interchangeably for the organisation. Around 1987/88, the NSIWP went 'leaderless' with semi-autonomous 'NSP' cells taking its places in Kilkenny, led by Michael McGrath, and Kinsale, led by Cormac Hayes.

When Holland left the group in late 1989, it was taken over by an English neo-Nazi, Terence Dempster, based in Knocknaheeny, Co. Cork. The 50 year old ex. martial arts instructor, who ran a electronics and video business in Cork City, tried to set up a local branch of the 'International Order of the Schutzstaffel Waffen SS'. After appearing, fully uniformed, with a four of his devotees on an Irish language RTE programme *Sinn Fein* members, with the backing of locals, set fire to his house and car. This spurred on Dempster, the 'führer', to have crisis of conscience and he dropped out of politics altogether.

The Cork based ***Social Action Initiative*** (SAI) was set up in November 1986 by Irish Navy Able Seaman Derrick Turner, carpenter Jonathan Hornibrook from Cork who was a former Fine Gael candidate in the 1985 Cork city council elections, and a Cork insurance broker whose name is not known.^[120] The group published an internal bulletin titled *Ar Aghaidh* (Forward) from PO Box 40, Brian Boru Street, Cork City and existed for around two years.

Turner, a communications expert from Dublin who had some involvement in his late teens with the NSIWP and was with the United Nations' UNIFIL force in Lebanon, worked in the Irish Navy's high

118 The Irish Independent, 13 March 1985

119 The Echo and South Leinster Advertiser, 07 November 1986; The Carlow Nationalist, 07 November 1986

120 Searchlight Magazine (Issue 152, February 1988)

security communications centre at Haulbowline, Cork. It is believed that a further five other Able Seamen at the same base were active with the SAI.

In August 1987, Turner met with John Field, the *National Front* (NF) Ulster organiser, at UDA headquarters at Gawn Street, Newtonards Road in East Belfast. He subsequently denied later that he '*passed on any information on the Defence Forces to the UDA*'.^[121]

In September 1987, Turner using the pseudonym 'Sean O'Neill' gave an interview to the NF's journal *Nationalism Today* in which he expressed his belief that '*the UDA and the NF are all groups with whom we feel that progress is possible*'.

In December 1987, a letter written by Michael McGrath, a mentally disturbed neo-Nazi from Kilkenny active with the post NSIWP outfit, the NSP, claimed that his party '*broke relations with the SAI some months ago ... when it became clear to us that the SAI leader was in cahoots with the Loyalist, British National Front*'.^[122]

Later that year, the Garda special branch and Navy security raided the lockers of five able seamen, including that of Turner, at Haulbowline base. In four out of the five lockers, SAI documents were found as well as two WW2 Nazi uniforms.^[123] One of those 'political associates' was William Lucey, a Navy technician from Weavers Point, Crosshaven in Cork, who said at the time '*I'm not personally interested in the North, the UDA, or anything, like that, for me the real issue for Ireland is the race question*'.^[124]

Various mainstream newspapers published stories in December 1987 about SAI's announcement that they planned to wind down the organization and set up a new thirty-two political party in May whose policy would be the repatriation of all '*Jews, coloureds and Blacks to the country of their origin*'.^[125] Suggestions for the party's new name included 'Éire Bán' and 'The Celtic People's Party'.

In January 1988, Turner stood before a military court of inquiry presided over by commander of the Navy Service and the Director of Navy Security. Though proof was produced by British anti-Fascist intelligence magazine *Searchlight*, the court '*did not find sufficient evidence*' to warrant the dismissal of Turner from the Navy Service. Instead the court of inquiry transferred him from the Navy 'COMCEN' to kitchen duties and fined him £30 for membership of a secret society,

121 Searchlight Magazine (Issue 153, May 1988)

122 Searchlight Magazine (Issue 152, February 1988)

123 Searchlight Magazine (Issue 153, June 1988)

124 Searchlight Magazine (Issue 154, June 1988)

125 The Irish Press, 12 December 1987

in breach of Navy Law. Turner was fined £30 again in February 1988 for talking to a reporter from *Searchlight* magazine.

It was believed that one member of the SAI was in possession of a semi-automatic rifle, a pistol grip bow and a collection of baseball bats. The group was also in correspondence with US Nazi *Soldier of Fortune* magazine and US military weapon manuals. One, alleged former provisional IRA, recruit was '*thought to have been sent on training courses to West Germany for two weeks in September 1988 and to the United States earlier in the year*'.^[126]

The group never made its planned political breakthrough into public life in May 1988 and Turner moved to London where he worked as a security guard at the South African embassy and then, in the late 1990s, became editor of *Right Now!*, an ultra-right magazine, within the *Conservative Party*.

126 L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan (eds), *Neo-Fascism in Europe*, (London, 1991), 261

6. British Fascism in the Six Counties 1970s - 1990s

Since the early 1970s, the *National Front* (NF), the *British National Party* (BNP), Combat 18, the *International Third Position* (ITP) and Blood & Honour have all organised in the North of Ireland.

In 1973 NF organiser Bill Annett stood as a candidate for the Assembly elections in South Down and received 591 votes. In April 1974, the NF opened an office on the Ravenhill Road in East Belfast and launched a monthly paper 'Ulster Worker'. Problems soon began to emerge for them though and the NF's application for membership of the *United Ulster Unionist Council* was rejected and paramilitaries expressed suspicion about the motives of these 'outsiders'.

NF branches were formed in a number of towns, the biggest being in Coleraine, Co. Derry, on the late 1970s. In that town, a handful of Vietnamese refugees were terrorised on the Ballysally estate until they forced to leave. A skinhead rally outside Coleraine Town Hall in July 1983 was addressed by NF leaders Martin Webster, Ian Anderson and Joe Pearce. In 1984, a 150 strong NF march in Coleraine was opposed by 600 trade unionists and socialists.

In the early 1980s Loyalist terror leader Johnny Adair played in a Belfast based neo-Nazi Oi! band called 'Offensive Weapon'. They recorded a demo with songs like 'Made In Ulster' and 'Gestapo R.U.C' and played around twenty gigs altogether. *The Irish Times* reported at the time that there were up to two hundred NF supporting young skinheads, who called themselves 'NF Skinz', and were involved in violent sectarian attacks.

In 1985, a full time NF organiser was appointed in the North and NF members traveled over from England to attend the huge loyalist protests against the *Anglo Irish Agreement*. In April 1986, the NF's Northern Ireland Treasurer, was jailed for two years for organising the fire bombing of the homes of RUC officers. A NF bookshop was opened in Templemore Avenue in Belfast around this time.

In February 1987 Peter Robinson, the then deputy leader of the *Democratic Unionist Party* (DUP) and the late Harold McCusker, then deputy leader of the *Ulster Unionist Party* (UUP) shared a platform at a meeting in Glasgow City Hall with Paul Kingsley, long time neo-Nazi, former NF election candidate and leading member of the 'Friends of British Ulster'.

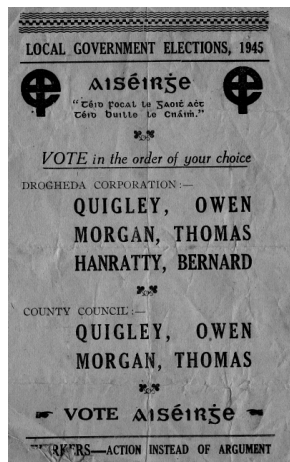
While the UDA claimed they did not support the racism of the NF, close links were built between UDA organisers in Britain like Eddie Whicker and Frank Portinari and London based Fascists in the early

1990s. Portinari was jailed in 1993 for gun running for the UDA while the following year saw another British Fascist Terry Blackham jailed for attempting to smuggle sub-machine guns, a grenade launcher and 2,000 rounds of ammunition to the UDA.

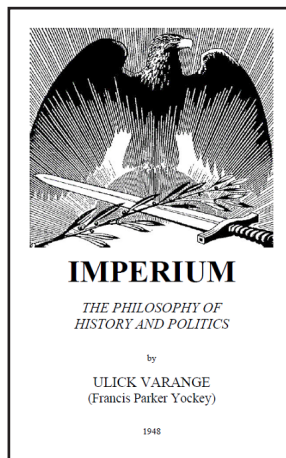
Throughout the 1990s, the *British National Party* (BNP) leafleted Coleraine, Crusaders and Linfield football matches. In March 1997 Linfield fans brandished the the racist South African Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging three black sevens flag in Windsor Park while Combat 18 banners were displayed by Linfield fans in January 1998.

In the late 1990s, Combat 18 and Blood & Honour became active in the North. Former C18 leader Charlie Sargeant boasted of his friendship with Johnny Adair. In 1995 and 1996, C18 stewarded Orange Order marches in London and Bolton. There were several C18/ B&H gigs in Belfast during this period. Pictures of Welsh nazi band Celtic Warrior with Loyalist bandsmen playing a 'White Christmas' gig in the city were published in B&H's magazine. In July 1999, C18 members traveled from England to the Portadown for the annual 12th of July weekend. Members were also present at the unveiling of a memorial to Billy Wright in Portadown that same month. The Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) hosted C18 gigs in Portadown and other Northern towns during the period with all profits donated to the LVF Prisoners fund.

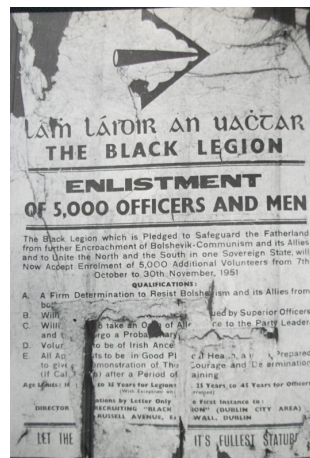
The BNP became more active in the 1990s and set up a Ulster branch in 1998. They, along with the NF, have been active, to varying degrees, in the North ever since.



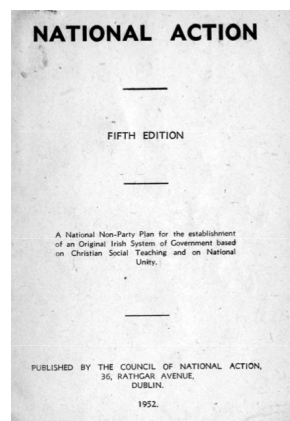
1. 1945 local elections leaflet for Ailtirí na hAiséirghe candidates Eoin O' Coiglig (Owen Quigley), Thomas Morgan and Bernard Hanratty who were running for Louth County Council and Drogheda Corporation. (Source: <http://irishelectionliterature.wordpress.com>)



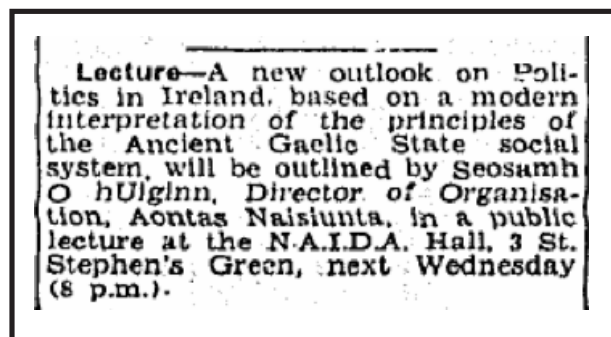
2. Front cover of Francis Parker Yockey's influential 1948 book 'Imperium: The Philosophy of History and Politics' which was written by the author during his six month stay in Brittas Bay, County Wicklow. (Source: the-savoisien.com)



3. Fanciful recruiting poster for The Black Legion, supposed paramilitary wing of the United Christian Nationalist Party (UNCP) from c. 1951. (Source: <http://gmcc.co.uk>)



4. Front cover of the fifth edition of Joseph Harly's 'National Action' plan from 1952, originally published ten years earlier. (Authors collection)



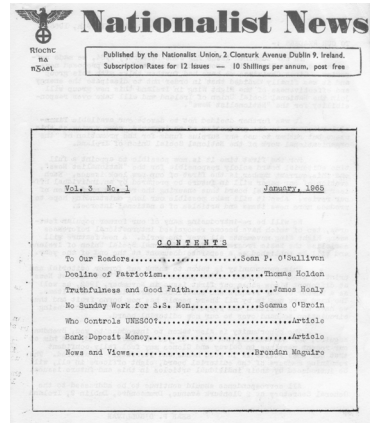
5. An advertisement for a public lecture organised by Aontas Naisiunta. (Source: The Sunday Independent, 07 December 1952)



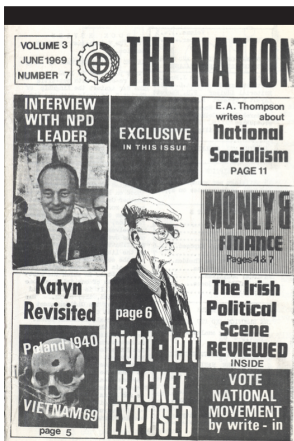
6. Aftermath of an attack on the synagogue in Terenure, Dublin in December 1960. (Source: Irish Jewish Museum)



7. A picture from 2008 of Oswald Mosley's former home in Clonfert Palace, Eyrecourt, Galway which was burnt out by IRA members in December 1953. (Source: travelswithshep.blogspot.ie)

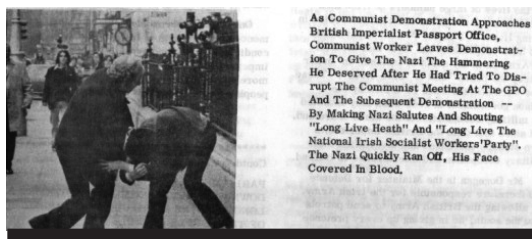


8. Front cover of 'Nationalist News' Vol. 3 Issue 1 from 1965. It is reckoned that the printing press that produced this was still in action by the late 1980s. (Authors collection)



9. Front cover of 'The Nation', published by the National Movement, from June 1969. (Source: Limerick City Library)

10. Front cover of 'The Irish Worker', published by the NSIWP, from June 1970. (Authors Collection)



11/12. Rare but bizarrely captioned photos from CPI-ML literature showing an alleged NSIWP member being attacked in 1973. (Source: dublinopinion.com)



13. Front cover of 'Nationalist News', published by Colm Tarrant's NSIWP split, from November 1976. (Authors collection)



17. Front page of 'Liberties News' from 1986 with story on anti-Semitic attacks on Dublin kosher bakery. The NSIWP, who were widely believed to be responsible, came under intense pressure from the authorities and disbanded soon after. (Authors collection)



19. Image of Dublin Nazi bonehead band 'Celtic Dawn' playing in September 1989.

14/15/16.
Sample
NSIWP
stickers from
the 1980s.
The Dutch one
illustrates how
European neo-
Nazis relied on
Ireland, whom
had no Race
Hate act,
for printing
propaganda.



**HITLER, HIJ HAD
GELIJK!**
NSIWP, NSPUK,
C/O 69 EUGENE STREET,
Dublin 8.



**AN POST - STOP
ROBBING THE PEOPLE,
28 P FOR A LETTER IS TO MUCH!**

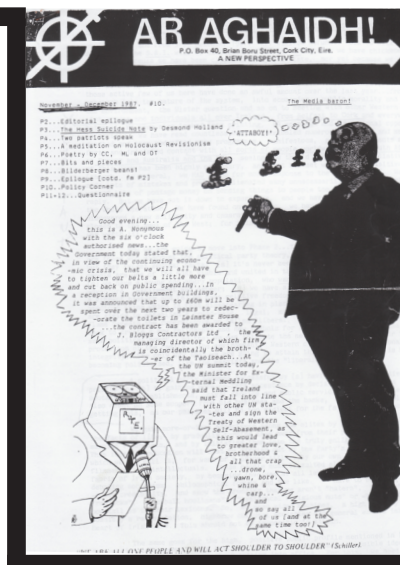


NSIWP & NSPUK
C/O 69 EUGENE STREET,
Dublin 8.

Send SAE for Literatu.



18. Front page of 'Ar Aghaidh', published by the Cork based Social Action Initiative, from late 1987. (Authors Collection)

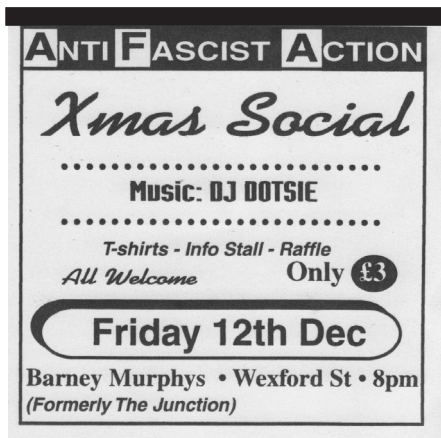




20. Poster for loyalist supporting Blood & Honour gig in Northampton in 1990 with Celtic Dawn on bill.

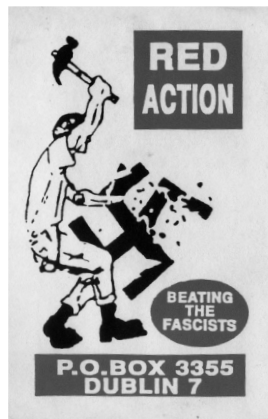


21. Poster advertising Student Assembly in Trinity College against French Fascist Jean Marie Le Pen from 1991.



22. Flyer for AFA gig in mid 1990s.

23. Sticker for Red Action from mid 1990s.

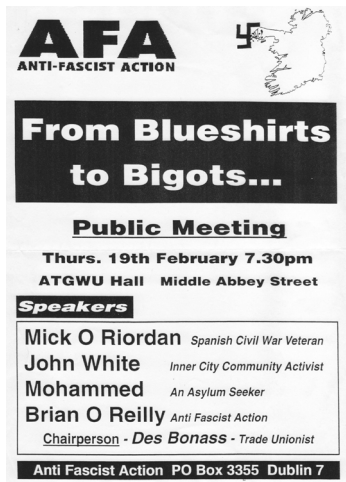


25. An example of the media coverage that followed after the ICP's failed launch. The Star, 1998.



24. Advertisement for the launch of the Immigration Control Platform, 1998.





26. Poster for AFA's major public meeting in 1998.



27. AFA activist, trade unionist Des Bonass and International Brigade veteran Mick O'Riordan speaking at 1998 public meeting.



28. Picture of AFA members in anti-racist and anti-deportation demo in Dublin, 1998. (Source: An Phoblacht)



29 & 30. Sample of AFA's stickers from the 1990s.





31. Belfast singer songwriter Ciaran Murphy plays AFA benefit, June 2009.

THE
FREE BOOTERS
ORDINARY LEVEL OF
ALBUM LAUNCH
DROPPIN' BOMBS
BLISTERING HARDCORE PUNK MAYHEM
PUNKY REGGAE PARTY d/s till late
OCTOBER 23RD
MURRAY'S BAR O'CONNELL STREET
BENEFIT FOR IRISH PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN & ANTI FASCIST ACTION
8PM TICKETS €5 EUROS IN TO WITH CD

32. Sound of Resistance gig, October 2010.



33. AFA on the march. Mayday demo in Dublin, 2011.

ANTI-FASCIST SPEAKING TOUR
'AUTONOMOUS NATIONALISM', THE EDL, BREIVIK'S NORWAY MASSACRE, RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPEAN FASCISM
SPEAKER: PAUL HULL (SWEDISH ANTI-FASCIST AND TRADE UNIONIST)
DUBLIN: Mon Oct 17th, 7pm, Connolly Books, 43 East Essex St
BELFAST: Tues Oct 18th, 7.30pm, Fresh Claim Cafe, 48 King St
DERRY: Wed Oct 19th, 6pm, Sandinos, Water St
LONDON: Sat Oct 22nd, 5pm, Anarchist Bookfair, Queen Mary, University Of London
From German black-bloc 'autonomist' nationalists, to 'third millennium fascist' equivalents in Italy, to skin-wearing Nazis in Sweden, the last 20 years has seen huge developments in the neo-fascist scene. No longer can Nazis be easily identified by shaven heads, swastikas and steel-capped boots. Some are even farming for Gramsci, Lenin and global anti-imperialist struggles for inspiration.
Paul Hull, a veteran anti-fascist and trade unionist in Sweden will discuss the evolution of neo-fascist theories and tactics in Europe and will offer suggestions on how the modern militant anti-fascist movement can adapt to these changes.
For more details, see facebook.com/afaireland or email afa@ireland.com
Organised by Anti Fascist Action Ireland

34. Speaking tour with Swedish Anti-Fascist and trade unionist organised by AFA, 2011.



35. Poster for AFA's 21st birthday weekend, 2012.



ANTI FASCIST ACTION IRELAND
6th & 7th October 2012 - a weekend of activity
CELEBRATING 21 YEARS
SATURDAY 6TH OCTOBER
Public Meeting: The Future of Militant Anti-Fascism in Europe
Speakers from England, Sweden, Greece, Italy and Poland
3pm - 5pm, Main Hall, Teachers' Club, 36 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1
21ST BIRTHDAY PARTY GIG
LIVE BANDS
THE WAKES, **MCLOVE**, **GALUM**, **FREE BOOTERS**, **THE BIONIC RATS**, **MILLAR**, **DOTSIE**, **COBAX**
8pm - 3am, The Grand Social, Lower Liffey Street, Dublin 1
SUNDAY 7TH OCTOBER
Anti-Fascist & Radical History Walking Tour of Dublin
Walk starts at 2.30pm, Meet at Jim Larkin Statue, O'Connell Street, Dublin 1
Plaque Unveiling
Dedication of plaque dedicated to the Irish who fought fascism in the Spanish Civil War, and all those who have taken up the anti-fascist fight.
Comedy Books, 43 East Essex Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2
Mural Unveiling
Unveiling of mural to Spanish Civil War International Brigades in Dublin.
Cobblestone Pub, 77 King Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7
Tread & Ballad Session
Rohan O'Shaughnessy (Kila)
Clarean Murphy
Lynched
Pol MacAdam and more
6.30pm, Cobblestone Pub, 77 King Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7
www.afa-ireland.com www.facebook.com/afaireland

SECTION 2:



**Anti-Fascist
Action Ireland
(late 1980s - 2012)**

1. Background to AFA Ireland (late 1970s - late 1980s)

While Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) Ireland was not founded until 1991, it is important to give some background on the prime movers who were active in the music scene and left-wing politics in the 1980s.

Some of AFA's founding members were well-known Dublin punks and skinheads in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Being a young punk or skin at the time meant it was common to get into scraps with rival members of other skinhead gangs, mods, rockers or sometimes even members of the public. Founding AFA member Harry remembers that: *"Back then there were fights with skinheads in town every weekend. They weren't Nazi skinheads but just skins up for a ruck. We used to get the bollocks knocked out of us by these older lads. One time we were chased by a gang of one or two hundred skins all the way out to RTE in Donnybrook! We were used to fighting every weekend. So by the time the next layer of the skinhead scene became politicised and got organised, we were older and could handle ourselves."*

These future founding members of AFA also built long- lasting friendships within a large layer of the punk and skinhead scene in the city which helped to prevent racist undercurrents develop. This established strong bonds between AFA and the Punk and Skin scene that remain to this day.

In June 1984 these young anti-Fascists travelled up to Coleraine, Co. Derry, on a bus mainly filled with trade unionists, to protest against a *National Front* rally. At the last minute, the loyalist paramilitary *Ulster Defence Association (UDA)* decided not to participate in the march. *"We were blessed"* Carl remembers *"other than that, we would've have been killed up there."*

Activity surrounding the Dunnes Stores strike which started in July 1984, when twelve workers came out in sympathy with a fellow worker who was dismissed when she refused to handle South African oranges, also helped to bring together these young working class militants who would later go on to establish AFA.

Outside Dublin, a teenage schoolboy from Munster began to become interested in left-wing politics during this time. Barry says: *"I remember in the mid 1980s reading articles about the National Socialist Irish Workers' Party (NSIWP) and coming up to Dublin on a school trip, bunking off and seeing their stickers around town. After that, I basically decided to do something. So I came up to Dublin with a couple of friends and we went out to the Liberties to their house on Eugene Street. We tried to burn the place down. It didn't work out. We bought some paraffin and matches*

in a hardware shop nearby and poured the stuff through the letterbox and tried to light it. We managed to get the newspaper smoking but legged it off once a gang of local kids came over to see what was going on. Thinking back now, if it had worked, it could have been a disaster. It was a terraced house. Later, I was questioned by detectives for sending hate mail to them. I denied everything of course. One of the cops said to me "people get upset about this all Nazi stuff, but sure how would you feel if your sister married a Black man".

Articles in 1986 in the *In Dublin* magazine helped Carl and his friends get more active.

Carl:

"I remember we went down to Ringsend, after the 'In Dublin' piece, and we were told that we had missed Byrne by a year. We knew the Sticks had given him a lot of grief. I heard that he had been perving on kids as well. During the same period, we went out to Hazel's house on Stamer Street in Portobello and did her bins."

Throughout the mid to late 1980s these anti-Fascists were active in individual capacities. There were no major far-right groupings operating at the time.

Like so many of their generation, a number of key future activists moved to London in the 1980s. James: *"I went to England in 1985 or thereabouts. I had already been politically active here for a little bit before that. The first major thing I was involved in in London was one of the early AFA mobilisations against the NF on Remembrance Sunday."*

Separately, Anthony and Harry had moved to London in the late 1980s and had met members of the left-wing *Red Action*¹ which proved to be a huge influence on their politics.

Harry:

"It was a funny story actually. I was a redskin at the time. We were at a Free Nelson Mandela march outside Africa House in Trafalgar Square. We heard this bloke point over to a group of lads and say that they were Red Action. I said to Anthony, let's go over and introduce ourselves and him acting the smart bastard said, "you go on over, I'll be over in a minute". I was in full skinhead gear with a tiny, yellow Free Nelson Mandela badge. I remember crossing over the road and by the time I was at the other side I realised I was in serious trouble. There were about 80 of them. It was like walking into a pub and thinking nobody knew each other when they actually all did. About five or six of them came at me straight away. I saw metal bars coming out of peoples' jackets. They came right up to me, ready to batter me, thinking I was fash. Just at the last minute they spotted the Mandela badge, stopped

¹ The group was formed in 1981 after members of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party were expelled for their involvement in 'squadism' (i.e. direct action against far right racist groups)

and just kept on walking. I reckon I was very close to being battered that time!"

Thankfully, the misunderstanding was sorted out quickly and the Dublin lads were taken out on the town by Red Action members over a period of several nights:

Harry:

"So we ended up making friends and were taken on board that night. The fash wouldn't have known us so we were the ones sent out to scout. In one pub, the barmaid smiled at us and said, "Alright lads, how can I help ya". This auld fella at the bar looked up from his pint and said, "If you were looking for Ian (Stuart) and the lads, they're upstairs" The barmaid quickly gestured at him to shut up the hell up. We left, gave the signal and the RA boys came down and stormed the pub."

There were a number of funny incidents when the two were living in London as Anthony remembers:

"One time the NF were supposed to be marching through Kilburn so we were leafleting with AFA to warn local people about the possible danger. Anyway, Harry disappears down this doorway into a room and there's an old Rasta lad sitting in a chair. Harry tells him "Hey! We got to unite against the NF. They're marching here soon. We've to be ready to defend ourselves" and the Rasta looked up, smiled and said "I don't think no Fash are gonna do me" and pulls out a pistol from his jacket."

Another time, Anthony had a friend over from Dublin staying with him:

"So I took him out on the piss. Now, this guy Mark wasn't political at all. Just an old mate. Anyway we were walking home, pissed as farts, and he spotted four boneheads down an alley. We figured out later that they were gearing up to attack the 24hr Anti-Apartheid picket. Anyway without a blink and before I even knew what was going on, Mark steamed into them. He battered the fuck out of them, more or less single-handedly. They were caught completely by surprise. Walking away he said to me casually "they were those Nazis you hate so much right?" It's hilarious looking back. The incident even made the next issue of their paper. It transpired that they had come up from Dewsbury or somewhere. The article said they'd been attacked by a hit squad of reds!"

In January 1989, Anthony, Carl and a few others travelled over to London to help steward the big *Angelic Upstarts* gig that the Nazis boasted would be smashed up. The gig went ahead without any major trouble but Anthony recalls one funny incident:

"From the stage Mensi (the lead singer) had said, "I've met the IRA and they're the same as us. Normal working class guys". Later on, I went to have a piss and this skinhead beside me at the urinal goes "I like Mensi but why does he keep on going on about the bloody Irish?" expecting me to nod along. Instead I replied, "Well, I actually quite like that stuff". Caught off guard he

went “Oh... So do I!, So do I” clocking my Irish accent. He must’ve thought I was a Provo on a night off or something!”

Not long after Anthony and Harry moved back to Dublin. Harry explains that “when we came back from London, there was a conscious decision made to get more organised. Up till then, we were individual anti-Fascists acting ad hoc.”

2. David Irving stopped in TCD (November 1988)

In November 1988, the University Philosophical Society (aka The Phil) of *Trinity College Dublin (TCD)* invited disgraced far-right British ‘historian’ and convicted Holocaust denier David Irving to address the motion ‘*The Holocaust: Did Hitler Know?*’ at one of their debates. The president of the society at the time was a fourth year student Niall Lenihan, son of the then Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs Brian Lenihan.

Some individuals, both students and non-students, who later became active with AFA, played a part in organising opposition to the visit. The TCD Student Union assembly narrowly passed a resolution calling on The Phil to withdraw Irving’s invitation. With the invitation still in place, the president of the union Mark Little, who would later become a presenter of RTE’s Prime Time, announced that a picket would be placed on the Society’s debating room.

On the night of November 25, over five hundred anti-Fascists staged a ‘*running and stormy demonstration*’^[2] that saw protesters climb on roofs and barricade doors. The announcement that the debate was cancelled came thirty minutes after it was due to begin, when a window in an adjoining room was broken.

Barry:

“There was a big crowd outside but word was that the debate was all set to go ahead. Irving was upstairs in the GMB building somewhere. The someone put in one of the main windows and pretty soon we heard it was cancelled.”

2 The Irish Press, 26 November 1988

Mary remembers: 'It was one of the last major nights of smog in Dublin and it was freezing bullets. Once the debate was cancelled a rumour spread that Irving was going to appear on the 'Late Late Show' on TV. So the chant changed from "Get Him Out!" to "Keep Him In!". A hard core stayed on until well after midnight, by then the 'Late Late' was well over and we straggled home to late soup and bed. It turned out that the debating pr*cks then snuck off to a private hotel room and declared a laughable hollow victory.'

Irving had been in the building for nine hours at this stage and was only able to be smuggled out at 1.15am. The debate was eventually held at 1.30am, to a room of only thirty Phil members, in Powers Hotel on Kildare Street.

The event triggered several days of letter writing to *The Irish Times* and a pro-freedom of speech column from Kevin Myers.

Franz Frison, a holocaust survivor, was the writer of an important and sobering letter:

"Sir, - Having experienced fascism in the flesh as a citizen of a Nazi-occupied country, a member of the resistance and a concentration camp prisoner, I am profoundly dismayed by Kevin Myer's reflections on the happenings at TCD on the occasion of the David Irving debate.

If fascism could be defeated in debate, I assure you that it would never have happened, neither in Germany, nor in Italy, nor anywhere else. Those who recognised its threat at the time and tried to stop it were, I assume, also called "a mob". Regrettably too many "fair-minded" people didn't either try, or want to stop it, and, as I witnessed myself during the war, accommodated themselves when it took over.

....

People who witnessed fascism at its height are dying out, but the ideology is still here, and its apologists are working hard at a comeback. Past experience should teach us that fascism must be stopped before it takes hold again of too many minds, and becomes useful once again to some powerful interests, as it happened in the thirties, or in Chile. I am one hundred percent behind the students and staff of TCD and congratulate them for showing the way. - Yours etc. F.L. Frison."^[3]

Overall, the successful prevention of David Irving speaking in Trinity College in 1988 laid an important marker for all future students who were thinking of inviting over other ultra-right 'controversial' speakers and those who would be committed to stopping them.

3. Celtic Dawn and Nazi Skinheads in Dublin (c1988 - c1991)

During the late 1980s, Dublin saw its second real skinhead revival. While most were ska and reggae-loving types, it became apparent by about 1988 that a small minority were becoming influenced by racist politics. Guided by the media and the right wing British Oi! bands, some skinheads in Dublin thought they had to copy everything from British skinheads across the water. Other, younger skins got into skinhead culture at this time only through Oi! and street punk, neglecting its reggae and ska roots.

From around the summer of 1988, anti-Fascists became aware of a gang of Dublin skinheads who were becoming influenced by the politics of racist Oi! bands like Skrewdriver. A skinhead from the north of Dublin, who was very active with *Sinn Féin*, was spotted with a White Power badge in August 1989 on a bus to the border for a Paul Kane anti-extradition protest. In the summer of 1990, this same individual attacked a SWP member and was then kicked out of his party after a complaint was made by the victim's organisation. (For the record, this skinhead has long since renounced right-wing politics!)

One of the skinhead scene's few bands was Skin Appeal who had supported British Oi! legends *The Business* in McGonagles in May 1988.

Skin Appeal were interviewed in Issue 3 of renowned local punk fanzine *Smegma* that came out in June of that year. While the interview starts off relatively positively, this extract shows that some members of the band were already flirting with racist politics.

Q. I heard you got offered a few tracks on a French Nazi compilation L.P?

Ken: Yeah, we decided not to go on that as we would be labelled a Nazi band and Roodie Mareno (sic) advised us not to.

Q. Skinheads are always associated with extreme right groups like the National Front in Britain, what do you think of the NF?

Ken: The NF just lashed onto the skinhead thing; they only want to use skins

Dodger: We were at this Oi! festival in Britain a while back and the NF started a riot and wrecked it. There won't be anymore Oi! festivals there again.

Ken: At the moment in Europe to be a skin your (sic) automatically a Nazi, most are and this is not what being (a)

skinhead is about. It's about being proud of what you are and where your (sic) from. It's a way of life not a political statement.

Q. Do you yourselves have anything against racial minorities?

Ken: No, but we don't have the same situation as they do in Britain

John: I hate fuckin (sic) pakies, their (sic) all dirty bastards.

Ken: Well that's generalising, but it must be remembered that the reason the Brits have such a problem with immigrants is coz of their Empire.

(Coincidentally the same issue of the fanzine also carried an article entitled "Nazi Scum in Ireland" which publicised and ridiculed the NSIWP and Social Action Initiative. As a result, the writer was threatened.)

As could be seen coming through in the interview, the band didn't share Ken's belief that being a Nazi was anything to do with 'what being skinhead is about'. They told him to piss off after, replacing him with a full on neo-Nazi called Barnsey and renamed themselves Celtic Dawn.

The band went through a couple of line up changes but the main four were Anthony 'Barnsey' Barnes (Vocals), John J Killion (Guitar), 'Dodger' Burke (Bass) and Kieran Davis (Drums). The band could attract a group of up to thirty boneheads who followed them around and went to their rehearsals. While for many it was only a passing phase, which they look back on with embarrassment, some like Vicky Cahill still hold these views and are active in neo-Nazi politics to this day.

During the time, Dublin Resource Centre in Temple Bar was a popular spot for gigs. Sinn Féin were the prime movers behind the centre. Carl remembers:

"A big gang of the Celtic Dawn crew came in one night and there was trouble. They stabbed a Shinner with a screwdriver. The Shimmers said they'd get it sorted but they never did. There was a big enough gang of them to put it up to the Shimmers. Little things like that added up making them a force that needed to be sorted out. This occurred at the same time that Anthony and Harry came back from London with the organisational experience that they gained from working with R.A. It consolidated everything."

Harry:

"Barnsey and his crowd started trying to take over the ska scene and that's when we upped the game. We were always outnumbered but they never really knew that. We created mayhem in The Fox & The Pheasant where they drank. Three of us once took on a gang of 25 or 30 skins, majority being fash, in Stephens Green. They were gagging for a kick off but didn't have the bottle for it. They probably thought it was a trap as there were only three of

us. We were shitting ourselves. But when they bottled it, we knew straight away then that they were fucked from then on."

Carl:

"I remember two of us were walking up Grafton Street one time and spotted the drummer of Celtic Dawn wearing a White Power t-shirt. He was with his missus. Dave said something to him and his missus went for me with a bottle. I managed to move my head and she just caught my ear. Dave knocked her out and yer man just legged it, leaving his girlfriend. We couldn't believe it he'd leave her. They were real lowlifes."

One time the band was supposed to play *The White Horse* pub on the quays. AFA people 'rang the manager and explained who they were but he wasn't interested. So, the windows were put in.' While there are arguments about whether Celtic Dawn ever actually played a gig in Dublin (as opposed to practise sessions for friends), they certainly played one gig in England. Alongside such big names in the scene as *Skrewdriver*, *No Remorse*, and *Battlezone*, these young Dublin 'Irish nationalists' who were often seen with Irish and Dublin GAA flags, played a loyalist-supporting *Blood & Honour* gig in Nottingham in 1991.

One of the other main players in this Celtic Dawn/B&H gang was Lucan based David Manning who threatened local Socialists and smashed the windows of a Vietnamese family who lived in nearby Hillcrest.

Almost every weekend, over a concentrated period of time, AFA launched attacks on these boneheads in Dublin. In one memorable incident, Barnsey was attacked and had red paint thrown over him in Ballymun.

Things got so heavy that the Nazis boasted that they were importing guns. During one fight on Wexford Street, one of the gang sliced one young anti-Fascist punk in the neck with a Holsten beer bottle. This individual was then caught by local people and battered, to the point that the cops had to rescue him.

At the time, the judge presiding over the case told the court *"the combination of drink and political motivation is a powerful one."* The judge then voiced his concern over the court being packed with anti-fascists.

Carl was of the opinion that *"Barnsey was a ultra catholic fundamentalist, a real fascist. He wasn't a skinhead who fell into it, he was a fascist who became a skinhead."*

His home in Ballymun was attacked soon after the Wexford Street incident. Anthony remembers:

"His mother who was a community activist went mad and that was the end of it. Him and the rest of them stopped hanging around town. They had grown tired of being chased around and beaten up."

Barnsey found Carl and co. in town one day and told them to *"leave*

it over. I'm finished with it all".

The importance of this gang being beaten off the streets should not be underestimated. As Barry commented, *"Imagine the problems that could have developed in say 1997 or 1998, when large scale immigration started, if you still had even 10 or 15 Nazi skins still knocking about. They could have become the muscle for a group like the Immigration Control Platform (ICP) and things may have turned out very differently"*

Meanwhile James had returned to Ireland for a year or so and then went back to England where he became active with North London AFA. *"I actually came back to Dublin the weekend of the Battle of Waterloo in 1992. I was involved in the build up and publicity for it but came back with my wife to have my first child in Dublin. So I missed the event itself."*

4. Le Pen at Dublin Castle (February 1991)

Jean Marie Le Pen of the French far-right party Front National (National Front) and sixteen fellow members of European Parliament's 'Technical Group of the European Right' held a two-day conference in Dublin Castle in mid- February 1991. They only chose Dublin because the group liked to hold its meetings in a different capital city every month. There was no evidence to suggest that Le Pen got in touch with any Irish Fascists before or during his time in Ireland, besides brief correspondence with the Cork based SAI around 1988. The *Labour Party*, the *Workers Party* and student groups condemned the authorities for allowing the conference to go ahead.

Around one hundred people demonstrated against the presence of Le Pen and company. At around 6pm, the protesters managed to push pass police and blockades at Lord Edward Street to get nearer to the castle. One demonstrator, an AFA Ireland member, was arrested but released that night.

An AFA activist:

"Two days after the main demo, a small group of anti-fascists from a variety of backgrounds were mounting a picket of Dublin Castle. This young guy came up and said that there was a side gate with only one cop on it, who was half-asleep. There was only about 10 of us. We strolled down to the gate and then just shoved it in and ran past the cop. We tore across the courtyard of Dublin Castle but we didn't have a clue where we were going. Anyway we went in this doorway and there were a load of special branch men sitting there, who looked as surprised as us. We had no plan and no strategy and basically got turfed out onto the ground. We later realised we were just a few feet away from Le Pen's press conference. One Red Action member who was with us was rather unkind about why we hadn't done better!"

5. Clashes with Youth Defence (1992 - 1995)

Having been officially founded in 1991 the individuals who formed AFA really consolidated friendships and trust when they came together to help defend pro-choice pickets from attack by the extreme anti-abortion group Youth Defence (YD). It should be made clear it was AFA members in individual capacities who became involved in clashes with YD as opposed to AFA as an organisation.

The main pro-choice group, including many young activists from both independent and left-wing backgrounds, was the *Dublin Abortion Information Campaign (DAIC)*. DAIC's main activity was public leafleting to distribute the phone number for a womens helpline which gave out contacts details for abortion clinics in Britain. Distribution of this information was illegal in Ireland at the time.

James:

"That's probably how the different elements that became AFA, really came together - from fighting with YD. Even though it wasn't organised by AFA as such, the people who were prepared to fight and get stuck in kinda all came together during this period. It helped people who were militant make links with each other. A lot of people ran and some would stand. You soon found out who you could trust and as a result you were able to bond with them. It was really important in the development of AFA."

Mary:

"In reality none of the encounters with YD amounted to much, jostling and scuffles really. If they knew you would fight they were less keen for aggro. The more middle class people on the pro-choice side did not understand this at all, they had not experienced physical opposition to their ideas before. They thought the 'opposition' was a distant and unseen body called 'the government' or 'capitalism'."

From the start of 1992 to around 1994/1995, nearly every weekend, there were altercations with YD people. *"Sometimes they tried to move us off from the GPO and sometimes we'd try to move them off from the traffic island in the centre of O'Connell Street"* Mary remembers.

Mary got involved with AFA as a direct result of seeing that they refused to back down. *"At that stage, it was only the Red Action and AFA people who stood up against YD. Most of the lefties and liberals wanted to avoid confrontation. They'd suggest moving to Grafton St to leaflet instead of the GPO in case YD showed up. By that logic you would end up in your own bedroom pushing leaflets under the door."*

Barry, a full time Socialist Workers Movement (SWM) organiser at the time, looks back at the group's response bitterly. *"They didn't take it*

seriously. They riled people up into protesting against YD but offered no help or guidance when YD started to attack pro-choice people."

Youth Defence was taken by surprise when young militant working class pro-choice people began to fight back. Harry: *"They just couldn't figure this out. We weren't the usual students, willing to move when they were told to. As a result, they brought in heavies then from Donegal and Coolock. Absolute knife merchants. It got very dangerous for a while"*

Peter's *"first encounter with YD was when they attacked Barry who had an ear ring ripped out. Just prior to that they had attacked a Socialist Workers Movement (SWM) meeting in Tallaght."*

A weekend in late October 1992 saw three separate days of AFA members clashing with YD. This weekend, which would go down in the AFA history annals, helped to stabilise the organisation and strengthen friendships within the group that remain to this day.

On Friday October 23rd, *Democratic Left Youth* organised a picket outside YD's Headquarters, which was above *Pipers House* pub, owned by an Irish nationalist and YD supporter, on Thomas Street. Thirty picketers, mainly students, were attacked by around fifteen men in their 30s and 40s who came out of the pub armed with sticks, planks of wood and other weapons. In the melee, a photographer from *The Star* newspaper was beaten and had his camera broken.

Barry:

"I was there that day in Thomas Street when they came out of the pub. I had said at a SWM meeting a few nights before that the march was likely to be a disaster. They hadn't done their homework. They were going to march on a pub in the south inner city as outsiders. The people who ran that pub were dangerous fuckers. Sure any pub owner would object to his business being picketed but this was a different kettle of fish. After the incident, I was pretty annoyed and began to become more cynical of the SWM and eventually left."

Peter remembers at the picket:

"I was writing a slogan on their front door when it suddenly opened and Willie Ryan, the owner came out. He punched me and I hit him back. All hell broke loose then. Ryan got a pickaxe handle and came running towards me. That's when I decided to leg it!"

Mary:

"The Democratic Left group and TCD students panicked and ran through the traffic on Thomas Street, pursued by a handful of men taking swipes at all and sundry with pool cues and baseball bats. Myself, Barry, and a very few others, stewarded people safely away from the area. It was a rearguard action. The whole event was a disaster. We had tried to stop the march ever going there from the start."

The next day there was a tense standoff between YD people and AFA

in the city centre.

On Sunday, YD held a 1,200 strong demo through town. It was met by a small counter picket of around 150 people. A short scuffle broke out between the two sides and a YD member and AFA activist James were arrested and charged with breach of the peace.

James takes up the story:

"I got arrested at the Sunday demo fighting one of those Saor Eire guys. We were in court that Monday. It was only a breach of the peace. When the YD bloke who I'd been fighting with went out for a smoke, one of our guys walked over and punched him in the head. He came running back into the court to get the police to come out but they wouldn't.

After the case was heard, we went to the pub next door for a cup of tea. There was only about six of us. In the mirror, we saw a big gang of YD piling into the pub from the far end. We thought they were going to go for us. We jumped up and grabbed everything. I had a chair in my hand; Barry had one of those heavy ashtrays. When they saw us like that, they froze. It was funny though because there was a little hatch in the window where you could see into the side of the pub where the cops could go for a drink away from the criminals. I looked out of the corner of my eye and saw one cop with a cup of tea half raised with his mouth wide open. Anyway, they backed out the door and we chased them down the road."

While YD was not a Fascist organisation, it certainly did contain a number of people with far-right sympathies. People like Justin Barrett, Michael Quinn and Maurice Colgan were all heavily active with the group in the 1990s.

Mick McCaughan, a journalist with *Hot Press*, had infiltrated YD almost from their inception and he observed them at close quarters for six months. His feature article revealed the casual racism and right-wing nationalist views of a number of YD's main activists at the time.

(In the early 2000s Youth Defence set up a Northern 'sister group' called 'Precious Life', which spawned a support group in Scotland, where the leader of 'Precious Life' was Jim Dowson. Dowson had previously been an organiser of a Scottish loyalist flute band that produced tapes in honour of Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) sectarian killer Michael Stone. Dowson has more recently turned up as *British National Party (BNP)* organiser in the Six Counties, before an acrimonious parting with the party.)

Through contacts, AFA were able to find out that Maurice Colgan had shared a flat with Barnsey of Celtic Dawn. During the same period, Colgan was seen at one YD leafleting- session wearing a Celtic Dawn t-shirt.

In 1993, the International Third Position (ITP) magazine Final

Conflict printed articles praising YD.^[4] In September of that year Candour, the British Mosleyite Journal, republished an article by YD activist 'Cliona Ni Mhurchu'. The article was full of "*Nazi terminology and thinly veiled references to Jewish conspiracies*".^[5] It had originally appeared in the ITP publication, *Catholic Action*. A certain layer of YD was certainly becoming influenced by Third Positionist politics during the early to mid- 1990s.

One day during this time, a group of YD activists turned up to the General Post Office (GPO) wearing a semi -uniform namely long blue army surplus coats and blue hats. It was possible that they were dabbling with the idea of creating a more Fascist, uniformed group. The pro-choice leafleters just laughed at them and they were never spotted wearing the gear again.

There was another confrontation with YD in June 1994 at the Dail, where some of them turned up with hurleys, and then scuffles with them at demos surrounding the 'C' case in 1997.

In 2000, Maurice Colgan and two other YD people attacked two AFA members who were travelling home from having joined an ALDI workers picket line. AFA, as a group, went after them following that incident.

James:

"We were geared up to do a major attack on them but they weren't where we expected them to be. It was actually the first time in anyone's memory that they did not turn up to the GPO, bit of a coincidence there. The mobilisation was not entirely wasted as, as luck would have it, on the way back through town, we bumped into a team of Security Guards for Aldi who had been abusing striking workers and we decided to give them a few slaps. Afterwards, a YD members house was visited"

4 Al Wright, Major Libel Victory for Former Youth Defence Leader, www.indymedia.ie/article/82123 (April 2007)

5 *ibid*

6. Short life span of Dublin City Firm (mid 1990s)

In the mid 1990s, some of the “leading lights” of the now defunct *Blood & Honour/Celtic Dawn* tried to set up a hooligan firm within Dublin GAA called the *Dublin City Firm*. The group could attract around 20 people with the six core members being Fascists. After only two incidents with AFA people, the group called it a day!

Carl:

“I was on my way to the Dublin match to meet some mates. I bumped into the core of the DCF who threatened me but they didn’t have the bottle to do anything there and then. I met my mates and told them what had happened. DCF and some of their mates knew that I was drinking in this pub and so came looking for me after the game. The pub was packed with normal Dublin fans. They weren’t political lads but they’d be game for a fight none the less.

So, they ran around the corner giving it loads but they shit themselves when they saw us all of us. Some of the less political ones, who thought it was just a kick off, realised what they were actually up against and walked off. So it was left to just the hardcore. They had ran around the corner acting like hard men but then they were standing there looking like pricks. Our lot chased them. There were people chasing them who I had never seen before in my fucking life! Bobbo, one of the main lads, and a couple of others famously jumped in the canal then. Some of their mates who had stayed drinking around the corner would have seen all this. It was an embarrassment for them.”

The second incident occurred when Carl and his mates spotted some of them drinking by the canal one summer day not long after:

“Outnumbered, we waited till they were finished drinking and heading for their buses. We attacked them at the bus stop. They didn’t know what was happening. It was a massacre.”

It proved to be too much for these wannabe Nazi casuals. Not long after one of the ringleaders Bobbo, who was fond of canal swimming, found Carl and company in a local pub and ‘handed in his cards’ as it were. He wept apparently and said he’d “*never be involved in anything ever again*”

7. Lansdowne Road riot (1995)

The story of the infamous friendly game between Ireland and England in Lansdowne Road in February 1995 will probably be known to most people. In essence, after Ireland went 1 nil up, right-wing English hooligans rioted in the stand and the game was called off after twenty-one minutes.

The night before the game, AFA posterred the area around the stadium. AFA, like most people, expected that some British neo-Nazis would be traveling over for the match. It seemed everyone but the Gardaí knew! They subsequently claimed to be been caught off -guard, as it were.

Mary:

"On the evening itself, we were selling anti-Fascist magazines, including the Man United Red Attitude, outside the game. We were hoping that some of the English fans would 'break cover' and go for us. None of them did. One English fan actually bought Red Attitude!"

When the trouble started some AFA people, Celtic Soccer Casuals and ordinary Irish fans jumped on the pitch and were involved unsuccessfully in trying to get over to the English hooligans. One FAI steward told an AFA member *"you can batter them in town lads, please just don't do it at Lansdowne!"*

Mary:

"Afterwards, the streets were deserted. All the pubs were shut. We scouted around and followed a gang of them down to a hostel to Gardiner St. We saw boneheads sitting inside the window. As we were following them from the GPO, we clocked that a van had been following us as well. We suspected it was cops and so we left it. It wouldn't be wise to start reefing bricks through the window!"

Another group of AFA had actually ran into Manchester City's main hooligan firm which had some fash elements but actually had a Black guy leading them. Both groups decided to go their different ways.

Mary:

"There was, obviously, lots of media coverage afterwards. It was positive in that we were able to get lots of pics and info on the English hools from the Irish papers. We did up a document with info on all those charged - names, address, where they worked etc. and sent it over to AFA in England and some of the English fash were done as a result."

Ireland played Northern Ireland a few weeks after the game. Predictably, every leftie under the sun turned up to sell papers! Squads

of St. Pauli and Celtic fans came over in support in case the violence started again. AFA drew up another important leaflet for this game. It's been mostly written out of history but a significant number of Irish fans were monkey- chanting at Paul Ince at the England game. AFA made reference to this in their leaflet and were the only group to raise this issue. Later that summer, there were a couple of friendly matches in Dublin. One was between Manchester United and Shelbourne where some AFA members sold Red Attitude outside the ground. The gardai threatened to confiscate the fanzines them and arrest Barry.

Throughout the 1990s AFA placed a lot of emphasis on opposing racism and promoting anti-fascism among football fans. The fact that the activists involved were football fans themselves was very important; Tom says *"I remember a couple of times I mentioned in passing that I was going to leaflet a match, or have a stall at a Celtic gig or such and 'lefties' would look at me in shock. That was working class territory and so alien to them. One lad even said "Good Luck, I would not fancy that myself". He was assuming that the fans would be hostile to our views. In fact the opposite was the case, we sold hundreds of 'Celtic Anti-Fascist' t-shirts, for example."*

AFA believed that it was vital for us to promote progressive views on racism in all areas where it had influence. By making our views known we were cutting the ground from under those who would hope to advance reactionary ideas in those areas.

Leafleting sessions and fanzine and t-shirt sales took place at League of Ireland, Ireland Internationals and Friendlies. AFA members wrote articles for fanzines such as 'Red Attitude' (Man United) and 'Tiocfaidh Ar La' (Celtic). Contacts were made with fans of these and other teams, such as Hamburg's St Pauli. In Ireland good relationships were built up with fans of Bohs, Shamrock Rovers, St Pats, Cliftonville and other teams. AFA ran information and merchandise stalls at Naomh Pdraig Celtic Supporters Club events, televised matches and gigs. As a result a number of activists got involved in AFA from a football rather than a political background. AFA was also invited to address an anti-sectarian/anti-bigotry event organised by the Michael Dwyer Celtic Supporters Club in Bray Co Wicklow.

In the couple of years following the Lansdowne Road violence, it was quieter and AFA's main work involving removing the odd bits of racist graffiti or homemade stickers.

8. Surprise run-in with Biker gang (August 1997)

In 1997 AFA were invited to speak at an anti-racist gig held upstairs in a south inner city pub. It turned out that this establishment was a popular spot for a local biker gang. While they had no involvement in racism, there had been a few instances of fairly detailed nazi graffiti in the immediate vicinity which had been painted over by AFA members. AFA thought it likely to be the work of a patron of the bar, not necessarily a biker, due to the proximity to the pub and the times they appeared.

Daniel:

"The gig passed off without any incident, the AFA speaker was given a good reception by the audience, and when it ended we relocated to the downstairs bar. For some reason we were missing a good few of our "regulars" with the result that AFA members were scattered loosely around the bar in separate groups. Later on, one biker was spotted interrogating and intimidating unaffiliated punters from the gig. He had earlier been observed hovering around and overheard saying that he loved Hitler or some other such rubbish. Alarm bells were raised when it was spotted that he was holding his helmet concealed behind his back – obviously preparing to use it as an outsize knuckle duster. When he tried the same shite on an AFA member he soon had the greasy head nearly twisted off him. Seeing one of their members taken down, the other bikers present charged to the rescue with AFA members responding and a couple of minutes of mayhem ensued. At one stage baseball bats were produced but thankfully only by bar staff in a "peacemaking" capacity. When the dust cleared the gobshite who started it was still encased in a headlock and received a few more digs."

In the end, AFA members made an honourable departure suffering no major casualties while one female gig goer member had been injured by a bottle thrown by a female biker.

9. Celtic Tiger and Large Scale Immigration (late 1990s)

Things changed dramatically around 1996. With Ireland in the middle of its Celtic Tiger period of rapid economic expansion and labour shortages, large numbers of immigrants and small numbers of Asylum seekers^[6] began to arrive into the country for the first time.

Barry:

"Around 1996/97, the first wave of refugees arrived into Ireland followed by the scare stories.^[7] The bandwagon started to roll. It certainly reminded me of what happened in England in the 1950s. First the shock of of people seeing non-white faces for the first time in person. Then all the scaremongering stories that followed in the media. Unfortunately lots of people believed these lies."

AFA had to step up their game but they rose to the challenge.

Another AFA member recalled:

"We responded and revived the group. We began to publicly leaflet outside the GPO most weekends as well as the North and South inner cities including Dolphin's Barn, Fatima Mansions, Sean McDermott Street. Areas that most political groups don't bother about. Our leaflets debunked the racist myths surrounding refugees. Places where racist graffiti started to appear, we were quick to remove it and leaflet the area. We did a huge amount of groundwork that summer in 1997."

James:

"In those years, it wasn't about fighting, it was about working in working class communities putting the right message out. We'd always look out for the graffiti that had a bit more to it than just the usual racist stuff. I remember that some graffiti in Crumlin had Fascist slogans along with it. By that stage, the internet had become widely available so it was possible for people to find these kind of slogans or symbols online. We did lots of leaflets around Kimmage and Crumlin and the graffiti never reappeared after that. In other instance, one AFA member was actually arrested for removing racist graffiti in North inner city! "

AFA members also addressed students in a number of schools and even travelled to Camlough in Armagh to talk at an event for teenagers organised by Ógra Shinn Féin. In addition a couple of

6 Between 1995 and 2000, asylum seekers constituted less than ten per cent of all immigrants who entered Ireland. Source: P. Mac Éinrí, 'Immigration policy in Ireland', in F. Farrell and P. Watt (eds), *Responding to Racism* (Dublin: Veritas, 2001), 56.

7 e.g. 'Floodgates open as new army of poor swamp the country' (The Sunday World, 25 May 1997), 'Crackdown on 2,000 "sponger" refugees' (The Irish Independent, 7 June 1997), 'Refugee Rapists on the Rampage' (The Star, 13 June 1997)

hundred t-shirts were printed with 'Bohs Fans Against Racism' and 'Real Dubs Oppose Racism' and were given out free to young people.

The leaflets and ground work were beginning to have an effect. The "No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish" leaflet was particularly striking and hit a positive nerve with a lot of people. However, people also sometimes got the wrong idea initially. Andrew: *"I remember a couple of incidents outside the GPO where you'd hand the leaflet to a Black person, they'd read it and look disgusted but return five minutes later and shake your hand"*.

More homemade racist stickers began to appear around the city but they were removed as quickly as they were put up. The NSIWP also cropped up again one last time in the mid-1990s. Their stickers, printed on their old machine, but saying 'NSIWP In Exile' with an Post Office address in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, were spotted around the city. They were all removed in one night. People thought their printing press may have been passed on to someone else but the stickers were never seen again after that. This 'NSIWP In Exile' grouping survived until the late 1990s before disbanding in early 2000.

In July 1997, racists were believed to have been behind an arson attack on the Dublin Mosque on the South Circular Road. Vandals broke into the mosque, causing damage to the windows and then started the fire. Some parts of the door and carpeting section of the main mosque were damaged.^[8] AFA leafleted the area immediately afterwards.

In August 1997, stickers reading 'Keep Ireland White' and 'White Power: Refugees Go Home' were plastered around Phibsboro and Cabra. AFA suspected it was a lone individual.

During this time, AFA members also began to develop a stronger political platform.

Barry

"We were also sharpening up our political argument. It wasn't all about 'tolerance' or 'multi-culturalism' but giving a class argument about immigration and local issues. The inner city was quite tense at that time. We were never physically threatened but we always made sure we had good numbers out during the leafleting sessions. The odd time we'd get some local kids shouting some racist stuff at us. A lot of people were surprised at the work that we were doing. Some people on the Left dismissed AFA as some sort of small-time, drinking gang who beat up Nazis every now and again. They got worried when it became clear that we doing more valuable, on the-ground work than them."

AFA consolidated themselves as a group that summer, in a similar fashion to several years previously as a reaction to the Youth Defence activity and recruited a lot of new people. The range of people

8 The Irish Times, 01 July 1997

involved was one of the keys to AFA's success. Barry remembers AFA leafleting sessions when you had *" long term inner city anti-drugs activists working alongside young Hunt Sab punks in turn working alongside people who were on the Exec committees of their unions. We were also able to work with people from various republican backgrounds, who usually may have not been friendly with one another. For a group with limited resources, we did a lot. "*

Anthony:

"AFA leafleted some of the toughest and most deprived areas in Dublin. No area was considered out of bounds. Our message was solidly pro-working class and anti-racist/fascist. AFA pointed out who the real enemies of these communities were. Not the poor immigrants who were housed there but the authorities who had neglected these communities for decades. AFA called on these communities not to react to the state's divide and conquer tactics but to organise themselves."

Due to the fact that central people involved in AFA had also been leading activists in the anti-drugs movement, they were quite well- situated in the inner city and enjoyed respect in the local communities. This helped prevent AFA from making mistakes as they were experienced local political activists.

A clear example of this was the reaction of a racial attack on a black family in a Dublin suburb. When some left-wing student groups leafleted the area, they were met with a hostile local reaction. The reason for this was, as AFA already knew from local contacts, that the perpetrators of the attack were already engaged in widespread anti-social behaviour against the whole community and AFA's response was to condemn them for all their activities and not just the issue which made the headlines. Local residents responded positively to AFA's intervention.

10. Launch of the Immigration Control Platform (January 1998)

With a growth of tension and media scare stories, AFA felt that it was only a matter of time until individual racists started getting organised. On the mark as usual, January 1998 saw the first activity of the *Immigration Control Platform (ICP)*. The ICP could be described as the first serious far-right, anti-Immigrant group to come out of Ireland for some time. Its message and image was certainly more susceptible to the Irish public than the NSIWP.

The ICP's founder Áine Ní Chonaill, a middle-aged school teacher at Clonakilty Sacred Heart Secondary School in Cork, had been a founding member of her local branch the *Progressive Democrats* but left shortly afterwards. She was later active with Amnesty International for many years but left in 1996 in order to campaign against the "*UN Convention on Refugees, which Amnesty promotes*"^[9]

Ní Chonaill was a regular letter writer to *The Irish Times* throughout the 1980s (including one in 1983 on Ireland's supposed overpopulation). In September 1994, she started a long -running debate in the Letters section about the number of non-nationals in west Cork. The "*frightening proportions*" of non-nationals were "*reaching an alarming imbalance in those communities she claimed*".^[10] A October 1996 letter of hers warned that if a "*basic income scheme*" was introduced in Ireland it would "*attract literally millions of foreigners*".^[11] She ran as an independent, on an anti-immigrant ticket, in the 1997 General Election in in her native Cork South-West constituency. Her manifesto proposed the "*controlling the ongoing flood of immigrants into Ireland*" and announced that multiculturalism was "*one of the greatest heresies of the 20th century*."^[12] She received 293 votes or 0.84% of the overall vote.

Undeterred by her poor performance, she formed the Immigration Control Platform (ICP) which announced itself to the Irish media and general public in January 1998. The group had planned to hold their official launch in Ennis on January 13th. Ennis was clearly chosen because of its large asylum seeker population in an attempt to stir up tensions on the ground. In the run up, Ní Chonaill told *The Star* that

9 The Irish Times, 17 January 1998

10 The Irish Times, 20 September 1994

11 The Irish Times, 03 October 1996

12 The Irish Times, 27 May 1997

Black people were “less desirable than white immigrants because of their colour”.^[13]

James:

“We were fairly quick to react to the ICP launch. We knew that Ennis was chosen to try to stir up local people. We accepted the fact that if the ICP were allowed to have their launch without hindrance then every loon would come out of the woodwork and gravitate towards them. We had to send a message that it would not be tolerated.”

It was the first time AFA, as an organisation, had to deal with an organised racist group who were serious about political organising.

Mary:

“It was obviously a new development for us but we were well enough placed to deal with it. We had spent the previous eighteen months or so leafleting, posterizing, trying reduce the impact of casual racism and recruiting new members. We had also built up some media skills and experience.

Eight of us traveled to Ennis from Dublin. A group of AFA supporters, mainly Sinn Féin members, came from Cork. We arrived into the town and after some difficulty found the hotel. One of ours had a mobile phone at the time. A big brick of a thing. It came in very useful as I was able to pretend to be a journalist with it. At the launch, we let the first person speak just as to see what they had to say. At around the same time, Immigrant Solidarity activists held a silent demo and then left the room. (Some of the immigrants later personally thanked us for what we did after they left)”

One ICP supporter was reported as telling a group of refugees to “go back to the jungle” while another said “they’d want someone like Hitler to put the skids under the country. These people can come over and live in top class accommodation and contribute f***ing nothing to the country”.

As soon as Áine Ní Chonaill got up to speak, AFA members stood in front of her and blocked her from making her speech. The media photographers had a field day. An AFA member read out a statement explaining the reason for our actions. At the same time AFA in Dublin circulated a press release to all media.

Mary:

“Once she realised things weren’t going ahead as planned, she talked to reception about getting a room upstairs. I remained with their crowd, pretending not to know the AFA people. I was sussed once we sat down in the room and had to leave. Bizarrely there was building work going on at the same time so there was effectively no wall dividing the room with the one next door. So I was able to hide behind this plastic sheet and listen to the whole thing! Their meeting was boring, tedious stuff. To sum up, Aine asked people to write letters to the paper and to the government congratulating

them whenever they deported someone. She reckoned that the letters would encourage them to deport more people! In essence the whole thing wasn't particularly worrying but the danger was that she would become a focus point for others to get active and then we'd have a real problem on our hands."

During the evenings events, the fire alarm was pulled and a stink bomb was set off.

Mary:

"The most interesting thing for me was that there was a huge amount of media there at the launch intent on covering the story no matter what. If AFA hadn't been there and disrupted it, then the media would have just covered the meeting and what she had said."

The launch in Ennis and AFA's interjection became front-page news right around Ireland the next day. Both organisations became almost universally known overnight. Barry was interviewed on a couple of local and national radio stations the next day, including the Pat Kenny Show.

Paul Cullen in The Irish Times said in his report:

"An attempt to set up Ireland's first anti-immigrant organisation dissolved into chaos last night as two separate groups of protesters disrupted the launch of the Immigration Control Platform in Ennis".^[14]

The Star's front cover of Ní Chonaill and the headline 'Face of Hate' was generally welcomed by anti-Fascists.

Leslie Mallory spoke wisely in The Sunday Independent:

"In trying to launch her wretched movement on a national scale Ní Chonaill has uncorked a vicious genie. As a kid in Dublin I was caught up in rioting to remember in College Green. It involved Republicans against Blueshirts, the Irish Christian Front and their Animal Gang allies, whose favourite weapons were potatoes with razor blades in them and wide leather belts wrapped around their knuckles with the spike of the buckle sticking out. This was the heritage of the genie. It was clear by then that counter violence was the inevitable consequence of provocation. More than half a century later this is still not clear to Aine Ní Chonaill."^[15]

Pat Brosnan in The Irish Examiner described AFA as "*fanatics*" and "*dangerous*" while the paper carried an editorial entitled "*A very thin line between fascism and anti-fascism*".^[16]

Meanwhile many letters were sent into papers and to AFA themselves offering support for their action in the months after the event.

14 The Irish Times, 14 January 1998

15 The Sunday Independent, 18 January 1998

16 The Examiner, 16 January 1998

Robert Dwyer from London wrote to *The Irish Post*:

"It is still the perceived wisdom amongst liberal anti-racists that people like Ní Chonnail should be allowed to put forward her arguments in order that "intelligent and democratic debate" expose them for what nonsense they really are. Unfortunately, in reality this approach gives racist or fascist elements the respectability they crave, allowing their views to enter the political mainstream. A quick look across the rest of Europe proves the effect of this"^[17]

William McDermott from Middlesex in a letter to *An Phoblacht* said:
"Born in England with an Irish father I've always considered fighting anti-Irish racism as part of the wider struggle of fighting fascism and defending minorities from racism When the Orange Order tried to deny the people of the Garvaghy Road dignity in July by parading their bigotry they will be supported by (the) racists; AFA will support the people of the Garvaghy Road. That is the signpost Irish people must look to."^[18]

As a direct result of the so called 'Siege of Ennis' and AFA's actions, the ICP cancelled their planned Dublin launch. AFA also picketed RTE when Ní Chonnail was invited to speak in *The Late Late Show*. An AFA spokesperson told the media that the group *"would follow Ms Ní Chonnail wherever she appeared in her campaign to ensure that everyone understood there was opposition to her group"*.^[19]

Mary:

"Not long after, AFA received a report that the ICP had leafleted the Charlemont Street flats in Dublin at about five in the morning. It woke lots of people up apparently! They were afraid to leaflet during the day. That said it all."

James recalled that the events in Ennis were a *"great boost for us and as a result, the ICP never became the force they could have become."*

Building upon the wave of interest in AFA following the event in Ennis, the group held an important and successful public meeting on February 19th 1998 entitled *'From Blueshirts to Bigots'* in the *Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union (ATGWU)* Hall in Middle Abbey Street. Speakers included Mick O'Riordan, one of the last surviving Irish members of the International Brigade and former general Secretary of the *Communist Party of Ireland*; John White, a North Inner city community activist with over twenty years of experience and Brian O'Reilly of AFA. The meeting was chaired by leading trade unionist Des Bonass of the ATGWU.

One hundred people attended the meeting and heard AFA call for a new ground level approach to combating racism, based on local

17 The Irish Post, 21 February 1998

18 An Phoblacht, 07 May 1998

19 AFA Press Release, January 1998

working class communities and for zero tolerance for organized racists and fascists. John White spoke on the widespread expression of racist views in working class areas of Dublin and stressed that opposition to racism must be developed and rooted in local communities. The way to address and overcome racism is through co-operation and practical work within these areas by working class activists.

Mick O’Riordan, who fought with the Connolly Column of the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War, gave a historical overview of the growth of fascism in Ireland during the Blueshirt period of the 1930s and the physical opposition to them from anti-fascists. “The Blueshirts were a powerful movement, but the remarkable thing is that they were defeated on the streets. Communists, Republicans, socialists and democrats got together and beat them off the streets, to such an extent that they were non-existent as a threat”. He explained the vital link between the tactics of militant anti-fascism in the Ireland of the 1930s and now. In the 1930s the Blueshirts were literally beaten off the streets by anti-fascists - the same task faced anti-fascists in the 1990s.

Brian O’Reilly, for AFA, stressed the need for a vigilant and militant anti-fascist response to the rise in racism in Ireland. He dismissed the notion that Ireland is somehow immune to fascism - the rise in anti-refugee racism throughout Europe had come to Ireland and the recent attempt to set up a racist group here reflects European trends. Opinion polls and racist comments reveal that there is a fertile and dangerous base where fascist ideas could take root. While Aine Ni Chonaill may be a marginal and eccentric figure the fact remains that the poverty and deprivation inflicted on working class areas, allied with resentment against the housing of high numbers of refugees in these areas, could be cultivated by an extreme racist or fascist group.

James:

“That public meeting was really important. We were putting ourselves out there publicly, arguing our politics. We weren’t hiding. That was also an important meeting as Mick O’Riordan passed the baton down to us at that meeting and said very clearly that we came from the same tradition and that it was great to see young people carrying on the anti-Fascist torch. It was a big morale booster.”

11. Anti-Deportations & Anti-Drugs (1998)

In the late 1990s a number of anti-racism groups were set up, almost all were state sponsored and funded groups. The main non-state organisations were the *Anti-Racism Campaign* (ARC) and *Residents Against Racism* (RAR). Some AFA members were also involved in these groups and by combining resources and activists a number of joint leafleting sessions were held and large areas of the North and South Inner City of Dublin as well as big working class suburbs like Crumlin, Ballyfermot, Dolphin's Barn and Kimmage. AFA used our contacts in these areas to involve local community activists and get coverage in publications such as *Inner City News*. After a few years the ARC faded away as liberals backed away from the racism issue. RAR continues to exist as a group and does valuable work as a support and advocacy organisation for victims of State racism.

Around this time AFA also distributed leaflets at the annual Wolfe Tone commemorations in Bodenstown and addressed a group of *Ógra Shinn Féin* (OSF) members in Camlough, Co Armagh.

In April 1998, AFA Ireland were joint organisers of a 1,000 strong 'No Racism - No Deportations' demo in Dublin city centre. On the same day events took place in Galway, Cork (400 people), Limerick (100 people), Roscrea and Belfast. Pickets were also organised at Irish embassies in London, Bonn, Paris, Brussels and Stockholm and at the Irish Consulate in San Francisco.

From the platform in Dublin, the AFA speaker, a well-known community activist, made the point that "*marching alone is not the answer*" and encouraged people to become involved in any of the anti-racist groups represented on the platform.

It was noted in Issue 20 of AFA's Britain's *Fighting Talk* that the SWP/ANL, also operating as the Anti-Deportation Committee, withdrew their involvement in the organisation of the march because AFA and other groups would not invite Labour and Democratic Left politicians as speakers for the rally. Both parties, stated the article, were in power the year before and 'introduced draconian border controls against refugees'.

Illustrating the support individual members had in the inner city, AFA activists were able to prevent a highly- charged and possibly -racist march on a Black dealer's house that was planned in earlier in the year.

James:

"The Left never engaged with the anti-drugs movement and ignored it for the most part. As a result AFA did something that no one else could have

done - prevented a possible racist march from going ahead. In the Ballybough area, there were rumours that a Black drug dealer had begun selling in the area. Evidence was slim but local people were really riled. The old tenement building, where the suspect lived, was occupied solely by Black immigrants."

Some of the local anti-drugs group wanted to march on the house. AFA activists weren't against the idea but only done in the right away. *"It should be made clear that we had nothing against marching on a drug dealer who was Black but you have to do it correctly"* Andrew recalls *"You need to take the issue of race out of it"*. With tensions in the area already running high, this march could have had the possibility of gaining racist overtones very quickly.

James:

"So people wanted to march on the house where he lived. It was a potentially explosive situation. Imagine it - a couple of hundred, local white Irish residents marching on a building comprised almost solely of Black Africans. Some AFA members who were also community activists were on the Coalition of Communities Against Drugs (COCAD) committee and argued that the march was a bad move as it could spark off something really nasty. The fact that AFA members in COCAD were, not only actively marching on dealers in our own areas but also, part of the group that were called into areas if there was back up needed meant that we were respected and gave us credibility to say "Don't do this".

AFA also made contact with a group of Congolese refugees who were willing to provide a speaker at a COCAD meeting to make it clear that Black people were not against marching on a drug dealer who was Black. They also offered to lead a demo on the individual's house if it was organised in the right, non-racialised way *"thereby limiting the possibility of it turning it into a racist march and further inflaming an already tense situation"*.^[20]

On the day it was due to take place, the march was cancelled, thankfully.

Andrew:

"I got a bit of grief afterwards as a result. Snidy comments and things. Certain local residents never forgave us for essentially stopping them from having a racist march. It was very telling that we were still pushing for that march to be done correctly long after the people who suggested it first had given up on it."

The whole incident proved that it was essential for any serious anti-Fascist group to have deep ties in working class areas. AFA also were building stronger links with community workers like John White who spoke at AFA's public meeting after the ICP launch. AFA members also were invited by established community activists in Finglas speak to community development groups on the topic of debunking myths about asylum seekers and other racist misconceptions.

20 Fighting Talk, Issue 20.

12. The first (and last) ICP picket (January 1999)

On a cold wet day in January 15 1999, the ICP held a picket against the granting of work permits to asylum seekers outside the headquarters of the *Irish Congress of Trade Unions* (ICTU) on Raglan Road in Dublin 4. It was their first publicly-organised protest. Only seven ICP supporters turned up. Ní Chonaill was not present.

AFA brought along 15 people, thus outnumbering them two to one. Jim Morahan in *The Irish Examiner* described AFA as “noisy and numerically superior”.^[21] At one stage, AFA members grabbed a bunch of leaflets from an ICP supporter and threw them on the ground. An AFA spokesperson summed things up well when he told the media

“On one hand they are saying all refugees are spongers and then they try to stop them working. It just shows that they want to keep refugees out of the country totally”.^[22]

Journalist Gene Kerrigan wrote a very humorous account of the day’s events from the comfort of a phone box as he sheltered from the pouring rain. Talking about the seven ICPers:

“It’s not frightening or worrying, it’s sad. The Anti-Fascist Action folk wouldn’t agree; they’d see such an outfit as the embryo of something more sinister. Maybe they’re right. And anti-immigrant chatter, whether from these people or John O’Donoghue, fuels the sickness which makes drunken thugs believe they have some sort of social mandate to beat up people with black skin.”^[23]

It was the first and last time the ICP held a public picket.

Ní Chonaill did turn up once at the trade union May Day march, giving out leaflets and saying she was entitled to do so, being a member of a teachers union. She was quickly relieved of the leaflets and her glasses disappeared into the trees at the Garden of Remembrance.

21 The Irish Examiner, 16 January 1999

22 AFA Press Release, January 1999

23 The Irish Examiner, 17 January 1999

13. David Irving stopped in Cork (November 1999)

AFA's old friend David Irving was invited to speak in Ireland again in 1999.

(A proposed trip to the country to speak at four different universities was cancelled in October 1993 after the broad based Stop Irving Campaign announced that it would do all in its power to stop him for speaking.)

Irving was due to speak in *University College Cork* (UCC) on the theme of "*Myths of the Second World War*" at the invitation of the Philosophical Society.

Cork has never been a welcome place for Fascists. As mentioned earlier local führer Terry Dempster had his house and car burnt out in late 1989. When one of his pals, Paul Deegan, was spotted distributing BNP leaflets in Patrick Street in November 1994 a local republican threw him, and his leaflets, into a nearby skip. There seemed to be a small bonehead gang active in Cork in the 1980s who were blamed for the unsuccessful petrol bomb attack on Cork's synagogue in South Terrace in August 1982.^[24]

For Irving's visit in 1999 AFA, the *Anti-Racism Campaign* and the *Socialist Party* clubbed together to hire a mini-bus and brought about 20 people to Cork. AFA were joined up there with some punks and local activists but it was clear that the vast majority of the six hundred protesters were non-militant students and the SWP engaging in their usual politics of complaint and paper selling. At the last minute a small bunch of *Ógra Shinn Féin* people arrived, who were also up for taking direct action.

In the end about forty assorted militants stormed the building and pushed through a Garda cordon. Scuffles broke out along corridors, but when a few AFA people finally got through to the lecture room it was deserted, except for a Special Branch man with a camcorder.

The debate had been cancelled when the Gardai informed the organisers that they were no longer in control of the building. Irving never even made it onto the campus, but he devoted days on his website diary to attacks on the 'Reds' and 'Jews' and said that Ireland was one of the countries where he encountered most opposition from these forces!

When the dust settled, four registered student societies - *Socialist Worker Student Society*, *Socialist Party Society*, *Socialist Society* and *Sinn*

24 The Irish Times, 09 August 1982

Féin, were banned by the Societies Guild for being involved in the organising of the protest. One member of staff, who was also involved, was suspended from tutoring. Meetings by left-wing groups and even *Amnesty International* were also banned for a time.

Irving later wrote about the event, mentioning that he had armed special branch detectives assigned to him.

AFA 2 - Irving 0.

14. Occupation of Bertie Ahern's office (March 2000)

On March 28 2000 eleven activists, including members of AFA, were involved in the peaceful sit-in at Bertie Ahern, *Fianna Fail* TD's constituency office, St. Lukes in Drumcondra. The occupation was held because on that day the government was meeting to discuss a number of draconian measures to be introduced against asylum-seekers, most of which were subsequently implemented. These included:

- The introduction of detention camps.
- Asylum seekers being forced to live on prison ships (so called 'flotels').
- Forcible fingerprinting of asylum applicants.
- An expansion of the compulsory dispersal system.

All eleven activists were arrested and two women were later strip searched in Fitzgibbon Street Garda Station. The activists were charged under the 1994 *Public Order Act* faced heavy fines and possibly prison sentences.

AFA called a number of meetings to draw together a support group for all of the accused and to raise some funds for legal expenses.

The court cases didn't fully conclude until February 2002. The cases of three activists were dismissed, two because they had not been provided with translators. The other eight were sentenced under Section 1.1. of the Probation Act. They were bound to keep the peace for 24 months on their own bond of 600 Euro and banned from going near St. Lukes for two years. Overall, the activists were satisfied with the outcome.

15. Limerick Nazis (2001 - 2003)

The embarrassingly named *National Socialists Are Us* (NRSUS) was a tiny, Limerick-based group who came and went within a period of just under two years. Their main activity was confined to spraying racist graffiti down side lanes, printing some stickers with the slogan 'Say No To A Black Ireland' and running a terribly-designed website. The group, which numbered a handful of people known to AFA, also sent death threats to journalists from *The Star* and campaigners involved in *Residents Against Racism*.

The arrival of NSRUS and its online presence was the first incidence of racist websites emerging with a particular focus on Ireland.

It was generally believed that the group was set up by two brothers, the eldest of whom had been active in far-right politics in London for many years.

Barry:

"NSRUS had been upping their profile, both with the internet and graffiti and stickers around Limerick. A couple of AFA contacts had been monitoring them. The Socialist Party (SP) decided to have an anti-racist protest in the city centre one Saturday. NSRUS claimed that they were going to turn up. We went down the night before and checked out the pub they sometimes used, and visited a couple of addresses we had. They knew we were around. The following day we turned up in the vicinity of the SP protest. A group of men arrived after a while and stood a bit away. We clocked them and they clocked us: there was a bit of staring and I thought 'well, here we go'. Eventually we discovered they were Sinn Féin members who wanted to support the protest but weren't sure about joining the SP's picket! There was no sign of the dreaded NSRUS. They later claimed to have been watching us but the fact was away from their keyboards they never showed up."

Some members of NSRUS also used the name *Democratic Peoples Party* (DPP) for a time. A Desmond Hayes from Ballyneety was the leading man behind this unsuccessful attempt to set up a more 'respectable' political party. He was awarded damages of €20,000 after successfully suing broadcaster Gerry Hannon and the owner of pirate radio station Radio Limerick One, Gerard Madden after he was described by Hannon, in March 2003, as a "Ku Klux Klan type of character".^[25]

The NSRUS disbanded in August 2003 complaining that "the response was pitiful" and the Irish "people seem blind to the alien invasion".^[26]

25 The Limerick Leader, 19 December 2007

26 The Sunday Times, 27 July 2003

16. General Election (2002)

The ICP ran two candidates in the General Election - Ted Neville in Cork South Central and Aine Ni Chonaill in Dublin South Central.

AFA with the help of *Residents Against Racism* and a few individual anti-racists distributed 20,000 leaflets in Dublin South Central arguing against the racism of the ICP from a working class perspective. Ni Chonaill, based in Cork, travelled up every weekend with one sidekick and only managed to leaflet a couple of supermarkets and the odd block of flats.

Any time the ICP put up election posters the whole lot tended to mysteriously disappear overnight.

Andrew:

"When Aine ni Chonnail was running, AFA bumped into her and one of her minions (a middle-aged fella called Brendan). We were leafleting door-to-door and she was on her way to a supermarket to leaflet. We abandoned our leafleting and tailed her to her planned pitch. Ni Chonnail couldn't really take the pressure and ranted a bit at passers-by; something about her having horns and a tail (she was claiming about being demonised). At one point a woman said to me, 'I wouldn't dare take a leaflet from you in case that woman sees me'."

She received 926 votes or 2.1% of the overall vote. Neville managed to get only 371 votes, which worked out at 0.7% of the overall share.

More worryingly a number of *Fianna Fail* (FF) candidates and independents played the race ticket in the election. Noel O'Flynn of FF, did best, having received 7,387 (16.14%) in Cork North Central.

17. Croke Villas incident (March 2003)

Early 2003 saw another spate of racist graffiti in a part of Dublin city. This time it was the 1960s flat complex, Croke Villas, built in the shadow of Croke Park. A run-down and neglected complex, it had seen its fair share of anti-social problems.

Racist graffiti with Fascist slogans appeared on the walls around the flats. The graffiti included 'SS', 'Panzer Army', 'Lazio' with the 'o' as a Celtic Cross and so forth. In response, three AFA went down to spray over it with AFA slogans. After that new graffiti went up, most notably the words, 'Anti-Faggot Action' in impressively large letters, and below this, 'anytime after 6.30pm'.

It was decided that a large leafleting session of the area was the next step to take.

James:

"Croke Villas was a one of the last areas ever going to be regenerated and had lots of anti-social problems. Because some of us had been involved in the anti-drugs movement for years, we knew that when you go to leaflet a flat complex, you start at the top. So, if anyone decides to give you grief or chase ya - you're not running up to the top of a block of flats."

The leaflet that AFA distributed door to door made the comparison that the same people behind the anti-social racist graffiti in the area were likely the same anti-social types who would be selling drugs - always was a big issue in the inner city. In Croke Villas, there was a majority of decent tenants and a small number of anti-social types behind all of the trouble. AFA figured that it was one of the latter group that was behind the graffiti.

James:

"We were just finishing the last block of flats when this bloke Les and his mate, charged down out of the block. He was shouting his head off about AFA and immigrants and had his shirt off. We had our guy. He chased two leafleters, not knowing there were another twenty of us around the corner. He turned the corner and his sprint slowed down to a walk, the look on his face was priceless. Some of us charged then and he legged it just avoiding being caught in a pincer movement. It was great because there was a lot of young kids and teenagers around who saw the whole thing. It turned out he was a local 'hard man' and drug dealer. So these kids had seen this so called 'hard man' running away with his tail between his legs. People came out of their houses when they heard the commotion and we talked to them all, explaining the situation. Most of them admitted to us that he was known as a drug dealer."

It was a very important event. Local people saw that the people who were prepared to chase drug dealers up the street were the same people who were debunking racist nonsense on the doorsteps. It also stressed the importance of working class activists being involved in anti-Fascist stuff. Things could have had been completely different if it had been a group of well-meaning student lefties who had leafleted the block of flats.

James:

"You have to remember that a lot of working class communities are clannish anyway, so if a load of outsiders come in and start a row, they'll naturally defend their own. In London in the 1980s I was nearly killed after a couple of us attacked a group of NF in a pub and the whole place turned on us, but that's another story!"

The graffiti did not reappear and the individual was never heard from again.

James:

"If we had ignored it a totally different situation could have developed. The graffiti would have continued and some young people, who would've looked up to this 'hard man', may have started to join him painting the stuff. With the amount of immigrants living in the area, it would have only been a matter of time until they would have begun attacking them."

18. Jörg Haider in Dublin (April 2003)

The late far-right Austrian politician Jörg Haider visited Dublin in April 2003 at the invitation of *The Phil* of TCD to join a debate on the future of Europe. Details of his involvement were only announced at the very last minute in order to prevent large protests. While he, unfortunately did manage to speak, anti-Fascist protesters were involved in disrupting his address with sirens and shouting slogans.

Mary:

"The number of protestors was very small, about 50 people, due to the failure of the usual liberal and 'left-wing' groups to turn out their members. This lack of concern was worrying as Haider's party had already been in government in Austria and was the first far-right party to make such an electoral breakthrough. Though AFA people were cynical about the left groups the consensus was that in such situations the militants could make use of larger crowds for concealment purposes."

Daniel:

"While Haider managed to speak, a couple of AFA got in briefly and caused a bit of disruption. What was most satisfying was the later report of Ruari Quinn getting visibly riled at being called an arsehole by someone on a megaphone – the said description was audible to everyone in the hall. The lessons learned were successfully applied to Nick Griffin's proposed Trimmers visit in 2011 as the authorities learnt that the college would have to be on total lockdown to secure it for visiting fascists."

19. Paul Kangley & the Irish Peoples Party (2004)

Long term Fianna Fail activist, failed actor and slum landlord Paul Kangley ran for election as an Independent, on a racist ticket, in the North Inner City in the 2004 Local Elections.

Kangley first came to AFA's attention in 1999 when he joined the ICP's demo outside ICTU's headquarters. The following year he was a guest member of the Late Late Show audience and delivered a rant against asylum seekers. In 2001 while campaigning against the Nice referendum, he adopted the lavish title of the *Irish People's Party* (IPP) for his one man campaign before finally attracting a couple of dissatisfied ICP members.

Kangley collected signatures to put his name forward for 2002 elections on behalf of the IPP but missed the deadline to declare himself a candidate. At the time, he held a number of extensive property interests in Dublin's north inner city, including properties on Blessington Street and the North Circular Road, which he rented to refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants. It also became apparent that he had gained support from Nick Griffin's BNP.

Many other organised racists in the country weren't prepared to work with him as he had a Filipina wife and were prone to insulting him behind his back as a result.

His 2004 electoral campaign was an utter joke.

James:

"On two occasions, once at the back of the Mater hospital and once in East Wall, his canvassers were stopped. Kangley was never present. Both times the canvassers said they were doing it because they were getting paid. They stopped canvassing after we had words with them."

He received 276 votes or 2.18% of the share overall and hasn't been heard of since.

20. Justin Barrett stopped in UCD (October 2004)

Anti-Immigrant campaigner, Justin Barrett, cut his teeth politically initially with *Family Solidarity*, a movement established to oppose liberalisation on social issues such as abortion, contraception, gay rights and divorce and subsequently with *Fine Gael* in the late 1980s.

He joined *Youth Defence* soon after it was set up and became a leading member and spokesperson for the group. In 1998 he self-published a 191 page book entitled *'The National Way Forward'* which was filled with ultra-nationalist, extreme right and homophobic views. (It was republished in May 2002.) In April 1999, he was arrested along with seven other YD activists at "mini-riot" during a picket of Dublin's then Adelaide Hospital. Others arrested that day included fellow far-rightists Michael Quinn and Maurice Colgan.

In the early 2000s, he spoke and met with a number of neo-Fascist groups around Europe. These included speaking at a rally of the German neo-Nazi *National Democratic Party of Germany* (NPD) in Passau, Bavaria in May 2000^[27] and attending a conference of the Italian far-right *Forza Nuova* group in November 2000.^[28] He later admitted to the press that that he spoke three times altogether at NPD linked events.^[29] In July 2001 he shared platform with fascist terrorist and police informer Roberto Fiore at a *Forza Nuova* rally at the Hotel Miramar in Civitanova.^[30]

It was AFA who had first exposed Barrett's international right-wing and fascist contacts and circulated briefings about him to journalists during the Nice Referendum campaign.

On a strict anti-Immigrant and anti-choice ticket, he ran for a seat in the 'East' constituency in the European Parliament election in June 2004 winning 2.4% of the vote (i.e. 10,997 first-preference votes). Former IRA volunteer Gerry McGeough, went on to set up a homophobic, anti-immigrant, ultra-conservative magazine *Hibernian* (2006-2008) helped canvass with Barrett in Drogheda.^[31]

In October 2004, Barrett was due to speak at a debate on Immigration in *University College Dublin* (UCD). AFA felt it was important to implement its *No Platform* position on this far-right organiser who continued to make links with neo-Fascist groups across Europe.

27 The Irish Times, 11 October 2002

28 The Sunday Mirror (Irish Edition), 29 September 2002

29 The Irish Times, 12 October 2002

30 The Sunday Mirror (Irish Edition), 29 September 2002

31 The Irish Times, 07 June 2004

Andrew:

"A few months before the Barrett incident in UCD, there was an Irish language march in town. We heard whispers that Fash were thinking of bringing along a banner saying 'Chinese is spoken more in Dublin than Gaelic' or something similar. They didn't in the end but three characters did turn up - Stormfront user Mythos, a bloke with beard and boots, white laces and a WP badge and Celtic Wolfer Karl. Unfortunately we couldn't touch them as it was a busy Saturday on O'Connell Street. We managed to get some good photographs of them though"

(A similar thing happened when three boneheads from the Celtic Legion were spotted skulking around an anti-racist demo in O'Connell Street in 2002.)

It wasn't particularly surprising then when Karl and Mythos turned up to support Barrett at the UCD debate in October.

Andrew:

"On the way into UCD we spotted the two. We sent some of the younger punks to sit beside them. Being a skinhead Mythos possibly thought I was Fash as he gave me a nod."

AFA let Aine Ni Choniall speak but when Barrett stood AFA people rushed to the stage.

Andrew:

"All Barrett said was 'Well' and then we jumped up. I tapped everyone on the shoulder and said let's go. Later on, it transpired that one of the people wasn't even with us but he jumped up and helped take the stage anyway! Barrett was terrified, he hid behind some chairs at the back of the stage and then legged it out!"

The punks dealt with Karl and Mythos then. Poor Mythos had a fall down the stairs. The two begged the (foreign) security to escort them to the bus stop for safety. Mythos was crying, trying to claim he was an innocent student.

All in all, it was a good evening's work and it led to the first ever cancellation of a *Literary & Historical* (L&H) debate in its 149-year history!

Justin Barrett's last public outing was a long whinge on the Joe Duffy radio show the next day. He has not been heard from since.

21. Polish Anti-Fascists, St Patrick's Cathedral & the Celtic Wolves (2006)

The mid 2000s saw AFA build more solid links with anti-Fascists, particularly anarchists, from Eastern Europe who had moved over to Ireland for work during the boom time. Local Polish anti-Fascists organised a protest in support of imprisoned Anti-Fascist Tomek Wiloszeski Protest at the Polish Embassy demo in April 2006 that AFA joined.

In May 2006, a group of over forty Afghan hunger strikers entered St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin and ended up spending seven days on hunger strike there in pursuit of political asylum, until they were removed by the police. For the whole week, a group of anti-racist campaigners held an almost 24hr support picket outside. Some local people, mainly curious about the situation, were stirred up by racists who came into the area. There were incidents of racist chanting and some eggs being thrown at the anti-racist vigil. One older racist was thought to be have been an active member of the *British National Party* (BNP). During the whole week, AFA activists were involved on the ground organising and monitoring the small group of racists.

In June 2006, AFA successfully broke up a private meeting of the neo-Nazi group *Celtic Wolves* (CW) in Dublin.

From the AFA report that followed:

"Four boneheads were confronted in a city centre pub and after a brief but frank discussion, the boneheads acted on the anti-fascists' advice to abandon their meeting and leave the pub. But not before the fascists, far from being hostile witnesses, readily divulged their personal details to their interrogators while trying desperately to maintain control of their bodily functions, it seemed! For this, AFA would like to thank them for helping us with our enquiries." Enticed by the prospect of further political debate, anti-fascists followed. Disaster was then heaped upon disaster for these specimens of the master race as they were repeatedly battered as they attempted to evade further attention. The final ignominy came when two of them, having abandoned their comrades to their fate, jumped into a taxi and to a hoped-for speedy exit from the fray. Unfortunately for them, not quickly enough. Stuck in traffic and with the windows rolled down, the bones suffered a barrage of blows from anti-fascists. Sometimes they just make it too easy."

All four of the boneheads were photographed and two dropped out of political activity immediately afterwards.

The *Celtic Wolves* (2001-09) grew out of a similar grouping called the *Celtic Legion* (2001-02). The CW themselves later morphed into *Muscailte* (2009-10). The main players got active for a short period with the *Democratic Right Movement* (DRM) in 2011. One bonehead, from Wicklow, who had been active from the early 1990s, was the main linchpin between all three incarnations. He is now based in Thailand.

A sporadic sticker campaign, occasional camp outs in the woods and hosting European boneheads were their main activities. Snaps of themselves, with their faces blurred, made *The Herald* newspaper twice. AFA's action ruined their secretive, hard man image that they had been trying to cultivate for many years.

In September 2006, six members of the *Celtic Wolves*, three Irish and three Polish, were arrested at Ballinastoe Woods in Wicklow at one of their camp-outs. The Gardaí found the group of men, "*mostly dressed in army fatigues, beside a large wooden cross-like structure with three flags draped on it*"^[32] They included a white Celtic cross on a black background, three black sevens on a white circle with a red background and an Irish flag with a black Celtic cross and a wolf in the left hand side corner. Another flag lay on the ground bearing a Viking symbol and the symbol of Thor. A ghetto blaster with 19 racist Oi! CDs were also found.

The men were charged with distribution or display of a visible representation that is threatening, insulting or abusive and is reckless with breaching the peace.

Kieran McNeill (19) of Clonthread, Moate, Westmeath was given a two month suspended jail sentence along with an 18 month €200 bond of good behavior and fined €300. David Kavanagh (32) of Main Street, Wicklow was also given a two month suspended jail sentence under a bond of €200 for good behavior for 18 months and fined €200. He also had to €200 for witness expenses. Jack Cummins (20) of Ballyfaskin, Ballylanders was ordered to pay €500 to the Garda Benevolent fund.

The three Polish boneheads. Frantisek Janostak, Frantisek Julius, and Miroslav Dombai, all with addresses in Tallaght, Dublin 24 were dismissed, as they were only seen present in the parking area.

22. David Noone in Limerick (2007)

2007 was a relatively quiet year. AFA continued to remove racist graffiti and stickers, organise benefit gigs and produce leaflets and its magazine *No Quarter*.

In Limerick, local AFA members and a range of people from left-wing political groups got together to mount a counter campaign against the widespread poster of the *Movement to Save Ireland* (MSI). This group was the 'brainchild' of Cork holocaust denier Brian Wallace (a.k.a. David Noone) who has been on the fringes of Irish neo-Nazi politics for many years. Limerick AFA were involved in one scuffle with Noone and a sidekick. His posters, unlikely to attract any general support in the first place, became more and more bizarre. One suggested that a Jewish lecturer in Trinity College was intent on wiping out the Irish race. Another gem was '*Smash Feminism! Let's Make The Babies We Need Now!*' In July 2007, the law caught up with Noone. No doubt the Trinity lecturer objected to having her face pictured on posters that suggested she intended mass-homicide of the Irish people. It is likely that the Litter Warden also got fed up with all the half ripped posters that blighted the area.

Mark:

"It was very encouraging to us that a large group of people from different backgrounds and ideologies gathered together in a short time and continued in the months that followed to remove the posters. Many of us were complimented by passers-by as we took them down"

23. Boneheads in UCD and Messrs. Maguire (2008)

In March 2008, AFA helped mobilise in anticipation of another David Irving visit to *University College Cork* (UCC). While the college cancelled Mr Irving's appearance over security concerns, he was invited onto the popular Irish TV chat show *The Late Late Show*. There was a small picket in protest outside Raidió Teilifís Éireann's studios.

On a quiet Sunday in July 2008, AFA members interrupted a quiet drink between two neo-Nazis in Messrs. Maguire on the Quays. A Socialist Party member who was talking to bar staff about the possibility of renting a room for a film spotted one of the young lads sporting a 'Stormfront - White Pride World Wide' t-shirt. She quickly rang an older member of her party who got in contact with an AFA supporter he knew who subsequently called up one of the Dublin organisers. In the space of four quick phone calls and in just over an hour, AFA had seven stewards ready in town.

Catching the two completely by surprise, they were advised them that wearing such t-shirts was unwise in Dublin. Squirming in their seats, their appeals of *"Do you not even believe in free speech?" "Let's debate this", "My Da is a member of the Labour Party"* and the always classic *"I'm not a fascist, I'm a nationalist"* didn't cut it. When the fashion -conscious racist was being assisted in the removal of his Stormfront t-shirt, the bar staff made enquires about what was going on. The fash screamed about being attacked and was ushered into a back room for protection, not before one of them shouted *"They're all commies, get the guards!"* With their photos taken, they were added to the AFA database.

From Issue four of AFA's magazine No Quarter:

"Later when two comrades were heading down the quays, they spotted a young guy in a hoody coming towards them, hiding his face and talking furtively into his mobile phone. Closer inspection by our scouts clocked him as one of the numpties dispatched earlier at which point he, staring with wide terrified eyes and, realising that he had been rumbled, turned to run. Legging it across the road, in blind panic, the unheroic Aryan almost met his Valhalla there and then as a car had to slam on its brakes to avoid having scrambled fascist all over its bonnet. Tearing across the bridge in pure terror, the antifas just laughed at him and the free entertainment"

A few months later, our two friends from Messrs. Maguire were spotted with the ICP leafleting outside the *General Post Office* (GPO). When confronted and reminded of the earlier encounter, one of them confessed nervously that he had since distanced himself from his more overt fascist leanings - before removing himself safely to the opposite

side of the heavily Garda-surveilled GPO. Neither has been seen since.

Another humorous incident from 2008 relates to an older bonehead who was spotted walking around the Arts block in *University College Dublin* (UCD) with Skrewdriver and 'SS' badges on his jacket. Seemingly either on medication or having smoked a lot of wacky tobacky on his lunch break, the bone, in a daze, handed over his badges was happy to be photographed, apologised and then cheerily walked off. His badges were added to the ever growing 'Lost & Found' AFA section.

24. Infiltration, Temple Bar skinheads and a big Czech Nazi birthday party (2009)

In May, AFA worked with a friendly journalist to infiltrate a significant meeting of Stormfront Ireland in the Porterhouse pub in Temple Bar. Acquiring yet more information on our local Nazi fantasists, the poor lads, especially the odd ball Wissum from Lebanon, did not appreciate having their 'secret' meeting exposed in a Sunday tabloid newspaper.

In September, AFA helped to organise two large leafleting sessions of the Temple Bar area after reports that a anti-social group of young skinheads were engaged in some low-level racist abuse and graffiti. Talking to shop keepers, residents and other young people who hang out outside the Central Bank, we built up an accurate picture of what was going on. Unfortunately a group of teenage skinheads, influenced by the 2006 *This Is England* film, had become influenced by the racist politics of a couple of skinheads in their late teens who had been on our radar for sometime. Deterred by the AFA presence on their 'patch', the online naming and shaming and their 15 minutes of fame in the tabloids, the older boneheads found more interesting things to do with their lives than hang around Temple Bar on a Saturday. Through solid co-operating with the skinhead No Bother clothes shop, the younger skinheads have turned their backs on racist politics and are now regulars at local reggae, ska and AFA events.

In October, AFA Ireland faced one of its biggest threats to date.

Eighty plus supporters of *Bohemia Hammerskins* (Czech Republic), *Narodni Odpor* (National Resistance) (Czech Republic) and *Blood & Honour* Poland were planning on traveling to Tralee, Co Kerry for a white power gig with bands "*Conflict 88*" from Czech Republic and "*Juden Mord*" and "*Death Varan*" from Slovakia on the bill.

The occasion was the 30th birthday celebration of Czech fascist organiser, David "Jiri" Kalo, then resident in Dublin. With solid intelligence received in the weeks preceding the event from comrades overseas, AFA quickly realised that this was to be an unprecedented gathering of fascists in Ireland due both to the nature of the groups represented and the numbers that had planned to travel and represented a massive step up from the level of organising required to combat the homespun specimens that the organisation occasionally encounter on the streets here.

Kalo had block-booked a B&B in Tralee, a run down guesthouse where he had previously stayed called, appropriately enough, the 'White House' to accommodate his guests. The owners, eager for business in these tough economic times, had taken the booking and agreed to hand over the keys for the weekend not knowing the true identity of their guests- that is, until they were informed by AFA. It is thought that Kalo was keen to pick an out of the way venue where he and his friends could party away from the interventions of anti-fascist gatecrashers. When the venue owner was persuaded by AFA of the potential consequences of hosting up to eighty fascists on his premises, he cancelled their booking the day before they were to arrive. AFA was assisted in 'no platforming' the fascists in Tralee by the intervention of local Sinn Féin TD, Martin Ferris who was quoted in The Irish Examiner newspaper: "*These fascist groups would certainly not be welcome in Tralee or any part of Kerry.*"

The cancellation of the booking and realisation that AFA had rumbled the event was enough to persuade a majority of the touring fascists to cancel their travel plans at the last minute. AFA realised that although Tralee was now 'off limits' to the fascists, we also knew from AFA scouts that around fifteen of the eighty that Kalo boasted of had decided to proceed with their flights to Dublin to try to make the best of a bad situation, so a welcoming committee was still required to make their stay in Ireland as uncomfortable as possible.

Diligent preparation by AFA in the weeks previous saw alliances being formed with a number of progressive militant anti-fascist individuals, groups and parties, some of whom AFA had never before worked with and so it was that on the Friday, and the majority of the fascists having safely arrived in Dublin, AFA was able to mobilise over sixty activists onto the streets of Dublin to flush them out. The numbers were impressive, especially for a bank holiday weekend,

and meant that activists could cover huge areas over long hours in the search for the opposition. Unfortunately, our searches proved unfruitful with only one or two 'phantom' fascist sightings reported and investigated which in themselves added some comic relief to the proceedings! One group of tourist Swedish punky types having a quiet drink in a Temple Bar pub experienced temporarily what Alex Ferguson might refer to as "squeaky bum time" when approached by AFA stewards enquiring after their politics. It quickly became evident that although sporting some of the same clobber favoured by the fash, they clearly weren't our target and when told of the reasons behind the questions offered to help their interrogators to hunt down the fascists!

Unfortunately, searches were in vain over the course of much of the weekend with dedicated groups of AFA scouts continuing to patrol likely city centre spots until due diligence paid off handsomely when a group of twenty fascists were tracked to a Slovakian-owned pub called 'Pifko' on the quays. A speedy mobilisation of the available AFA forces precipitated an orderly attack on the fascists drinking inside who were taken completely off-guard and suffered heavy casualties as a result. This was tempered only by a chance Garda patrol happening by. Although police back-up was quickly on the scene, all anti-fascists departed with no arrests taking place. Two ambulances tended to the casualties on the fascist side. All in all, a resounding result in favour of the militants and the policy of 'no platform'.

It should be noted that this was a one-off event by these touring fascists, ostensibly to celebrate a birthday, but also to rally and stage a fascist event in what they assumed would be a safe country for them, away from the confrontations with anti-fascists that regularly spoil their fun on their home turf. The message was hard learnt by them and their ilk that if this was their intention, AFA vows to endeavour to ensure that Ireland will never be a redoubt for fascists from the rest of Europe to "holiday" in safety.

Important to note for Irish anti-fascists also is that there is no evidence to connect these individuals with the tiny but growing Irish fascist scene, with none of the regular Irish contributors to fascist internet forums even being aware of the event until it hit the papers. It was heartening then for AFA in the aftermath, when David Kalo and his mates were still licking their wounds that they had to endure the internet taunts and abuse from their Irish brethren for not being invited to the party and in a kind of strange fascist doublespeak, for acting much like "the immigrants" and having the temerity to come over here and 'take over our fascist scene'.

25. Consolidating our position (2010-2012)

AFA continued to build new links with militant anti-Fascists, both Irish and non-Irish, on the island. It also helped with the setting up of a supporters network in Derry and bringing together contacts in Belfast, Galway and Cork.

As a group, it attended the Belfast Anti Racist World Cup in 2010, 2011 and 2012 making new friends and strengthening old ones. AFA members were instrumental in the setting up of the St. Pauli Dublin Supporters Club and have continued to leaflet and sell its merchandise at League of Ireland games. Anti-Racist displays, flags and stickers have been seen at Bohemians, Shamrock Rovers, St. Patricks Athletic, Sligo Rovers and Derry City in the last two seasons. As a group it has built up a strong link with Casa Rebelde clothing store in Temple Bar, Dublin which sells a range of football jerseys, books and t-shirts and now AFA merchandise.

AFA have continued to help support Spanish Civil War memorial projects - attending the George Brown commemoration in Inistogie, Kilkenny in 2010; the annual Peter Daly commemoration in Monageer, Wexford in 2011 and 2012 and a public meeting marking the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Guernica in Dublin in 2012.

Building upon big gigs like with the Angelic Upstarts (July '02) and Attila the Stockbroker (Feb '03), AFA, mainly through its sub-group Sounds of Resistance, organised approximately thirteen gigs since 2009. These include Ciaran Murphy (June '09), The Freebooters & Droppin' Bombs (Oct '10), The Wakes & Lynched (Dec '10), Millerntor Brigade (Jan '11), Easpa Measa (Feb '11), Liz Is Evil & Dirge (April '11), Mutefish (May '11), TV Smith & Paranoid Visions (June '11), Found On The Floor & Septic Pussy (Dec '11), Oi Polloi (March '12) and DJs Carax, Tommy Rash, Stew & Ciaran H (July '12).

In April 2011, AFA successfully infiltrated a meeting of Autonomist Nationalist group '*Folk Advance*' in a Dublin city hotel and afterwards had some sharp words with the organisers. In November, AFA were able to build up more intel on this group when they tailed their members who were collecting Croatian-American guest speaker Tomislav Sunic from the airport. Valuable photographs, car registration and other details were garnered. The highlight of the day, was the fact that an international fascist speaker had to scuttle around the city, stooped in the back seat of a tatty black KIA car, seeking refuge in a cop station and looking for another hotel to lay his bigoted head.

In October 2011, AFA mobilised to help prevent a debate with *British National Party* (BNP) leader Nick Griffin in Trinity College from taking

place. On 13 October, thirty AFA members and supporters called into the weekly PhilSoc debate, as part of a campaign against Griffin's invitation. AFA felt that that this proved to be the tipping point for PhilSoc and the college authorities to withdraw the invitation. This direct action was the culmination of a number of weeks work by AFA which included a mass email campaign, the production of several hundred stickers and the setting up of a Facebook page, entitled 'No Platform For Nazi Nick Griffin in Dublin', which attracted the 'likes' of over 600 people.

Later that month, AFA organised a four city public meeting tour with a respected Swedish anti-Fascist and trade unionist entitled '*From Casa Pound to Anders Behring Breivik: Looking at recent developments in European fascism*'. In Dublin, Belfast, Derry and London there were well attended discussions on the evolution of Neo-Nazi theories and tactics in northern Europe over the last decade or so.

During this period, AFA also kept its eye on the small number of right-wing, ultra-conservative, anti-Immigrant Irish nationalists based around the Cork based group *Craobh Gal Greine*, the defunct website *Ireland First* and the defunct magazine *The Hibernian*. The latter was founded by former Provisional IRA volunteer Gerry McGeough who, at the time of writing, is serving a twenty year jail sentence for his alleged involvement in a shooting in 1981. McGeough, who left *Sinn Féin* in 2001, launched the monthly magazine *The Hibernian*, dedicated to "Faith, Family and Country" in May 2006. It lasted until September 2008. McGeough and *The Hibernian*, which was sold in mainstream outlets like Easons, were in the right-wing Irish nationalist tradition of *Maria Duce* (1842 - early 1970s) while *Craobh Gal Greine* is in the same lineage as *Ailtirí na hAiséirghe* (1940s) and the *National Movement* (1960s/1970s).

Since its inception in March 2012, AFA has been watching in awe at the car crash which is the DRM. Falling outs, a bitter split and internal violence have been the order of the day.

The highlight of their activity has been unannounced twenty-minute leafleting sessions, mainly in provincial towns. In May 2012, two DRM activists handing out leaflets outside the GPO were confronted by a group of AFA, Eirigi, SWP and concerned passersby. Visibly shaking when challenged, they had most of their leaflets snatched, thrown in the bin and they were then chased off. Returning some time later with a group of Gardai (who seemed disinterested in their plight and whom soon left), the two moved across to North Earl St. Here, some moments later, the last of their leaflets were taken off them. Concerned about their safety no doubt, they then made the right decision to leave the area hastily. It was a bad day for the DRM and another clear cut victory for anti-Fascists in the city. Despite claiming 'mass support' the DRM has only managed to

attract a grand total of 26 'likes' on their Facebook page after it was set up eight (!) months ago. It is known that the vast majority of these are Irish-Americans and Antifa fifth columnists. The DRM are an embarrassment both to anti-Fascists here and the international Fascist community who routinely slag them off.

Just at the time of going to print it was revealed that the monument to IRA volunteer and anti-Fascist who lost his life in the Spanish Civil War, Peter Daly was attacked by neo-Nazis. Skulking around in the middle night damaging monuments in small villages has been the peak of Irish fascists activity in the last three years. While it has left people understandably upset, the act has only served to unite Irish Republicans and anti-Fascists across the island and beyond. Amongst others, New York based band Black 47 sent its support.

The current state of affairs in Ireland can be summed up by the following: while AFA can host three days of publicly advertised meetings, gigs and cultural events in Dublin city with hundreds of national and international guests - neo-Nazis here are reduced to acts of nocturnal vandalism as they are afraid (rightly so) to undertake any open political activity. Through dedicated activists, a large base of support, firm links with various political groups, music scenes and local football fans and a solid political analysis, AFA have been largely successful in preventing the growth of the far-right in this country.

It is in everyone's interest that they remain as successful over the course of their next twenty one years of activity.

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Militant
New Hibernia
Phoenix
Searchlight

Socialist Worker
Smegma (Zine)
Sunday Independent
Sunday Tribune
Sunday World
The Clare Champion
The Cork Examiner
The Echo and South Leinster Advertiser
The Irish Press
The Irish Times
The Observer
The Star
The Sunday Business Post
The Sunday Press
Trinity News
Workers Solidarity

The following far-right periodicals were consulted:

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Candour
Irish Worker (NSIWP)
N.S. News (NSIWP)
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The Nationalist Worker (NM)
The Phoenix (NSIWP)



