

# FIGHTING TALK

**UPDATE: Summer 1997**

## **Anti-Fascist Action**

- *Update on recent Activities*
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*Anti-Fascist Action was founded in Ireland in 1991. Since then, due to the low level of racist activity in Ireland, we have operated as a 'network' organisation providing information to people interested in anti fascist issues in Ireland, Britain and Europe.*

In the past few months the situation has changed dramatically due to the hostile reaction of many Irish people towards refugees. The hysteria whipped up by the media and politicians has contributed to the dangerous and worsening situation.

The racist nature of much of the media coverage has given the impression that Ireland is being overrun with criminal spongers, rather than the reality that a relatively small number of desperate people have come here fleeing from persecution, war and poverty.

*The results of the rise in racism are plain to see: arson attacks, racist graffiti, verbal abuse and physical attacks on refugees on the streets of Dublin.*

Anti-Fascist Action has been actively involved in organising against racism and fascism in Ireland. At present our activity is aimed at dispelling the widespread lies and stereotypes about refugees. In the past two months we have held leafleting and poster sessions in Phisboro, Cabra, Summerhill, Ballybough, Crumlin, the SCR, the City Centre and other areas.

We believe that racism must be fought on two levels

- On the one hand many people - who rightly feel abandoned by politicians - are dealing with the reality of unemployment, low pay, crime and drugs, and are now being encouraged to blame refugees for the problems of Irish people.

### **Extracts from a letter to AFA from an Asylum Seeker**

"I'm an asylum seeker here in Ireland since December 1996. My problem is that I have been assaulted 12 times by Irish men on the streets and I don't know why! So I couldn't say nothing because I'm nothing here. People treat us like rubbish, cheats. ... Since January 1997 I have never gone out for a drink because some places say to us no place for Blacks and some places call us niggers, fucking Black, dogs, chocolate and thieves.

Irish people think we are coming here to get a job and claim Social Welfare. We need peace because we flew our own countries from persecution, coming here in Ireland to the same thing. One day we can have peace to our own countries and go back.

Please, we need your help, emergency, to teach Irish people about everything because White, Black and Asian we are all the same blood, just different skin"

AFA is making it clear that the blame for poverty, lack of housing, crime, etc. lies with the government, not the refugees.

- There are a small number of people attempting to stir up hatred by producing racist posters, stickers and leaflets and carrying out physical attacks. For these people there will be **ZERO TOLERANCE**. AFA will not allow the emergence of an organised racist or fascist group here.

*If you agree with AFA's work and aims please get involved. Everyone has a part to play . new people & ideas are always welcome.*



# **Racist Attacks In Dublin**

**T**he past few months have seen an increasing number of physical attacks on Black people throughout Dublin. Asylum seekers, refugees and other Black people have been racially abused and badly beaten, some have been hospitalised. The current climate of racism in Ireland has led directly to these attacks. Lies and myths about refugees have emboldened racists to attack Black residents and deface some areas of Dublin with racist and nazi slogans. The colour of your skin now makes you a target.

In European countries in the early '90s racists and fascists used 'economic' arguments to force their governments to refuse entry to refugees. As racist views become increasingly widespread they are viewed as 'acceptable' - this encourages isolated fascists to become active in intimidating and attacking racial minorities. Any form of racism aids the growth of fascist ideas - the European experience proves this. Ireland is now experiencing the anti-refugee racism common in France, Germany, Austria and Italy.

**I**n early March Nazi slogans were sprayed in several areas of Ennis, Co. Clare. The graffiti came just a few weeks after Aine Ni Chonail's attempt

to launch the racist Immigration Control Platform (ICP) in the town. The slogans included 'White Power', swastikas and the nazi initials SS. The link between both incidents is obvious.

**I**n recent months intimidation of Black people has moved on from state harassment to graffiti and verbal abuse and now to open physical attacks in which asylum seekers, black students, tourists and others have been injured.

## **Some recent Racist Attacks in Dublin**

- A 17 year old refugee from the Congo, whose mother and father were killed at home, was attacked and badly beaten by 7 or 8 men on Liffey Street. He needed 16 stitches to a head wound. He is now afraid to walk alone in the streets.
- A refugee woman from Angola was attacked outside the Coombe hospital. She was six months pregnant.
- Another refugee from the Congo was attacked on his way home from night prayer. Two men beat him up and set their dog on him.
- In the Stoneybatter area a Black refugee was stopped and asked if he smoked and if he had dope. He said that he did not have any dope, nor did he smoke it. The two men attacked him with knuckle dusters. He required stitches to his face and mouth.

The widespread racism in Ireland is currently unfocused and leaderless, but it could provide a fertile base for fascist ideas in working class areas. Refugees are dumped in poor housing and cheap guest houses in the most deprived and neglected parts of Dublin. Racists are trying to scapegoat immigrants and refugees for problems created by politicians - such as poverty, poor housing, unemployment and crime. Opposition to such racism must come from working class people within these communities.

## **Anti Fascist Action**

*AFA has been fighting racism in Ireland since 1991. We believe in physically and ideologically confronting fascism. We are the only anti-racist group in Ireland with a policy of 'No Platform for Fascists'. AFA used direct action to stop the 'National Launch' of the racist Immigration Control Platform in Ennis in January.*

*AFA will provide whatever support and assistance asylum seekers and other victims of racist attacks request from us.*

*All racist/fascist activities, graffiti, attacks, etc. should be reported to AFA at the address below.*

**PO BOX 3355, DUBLIN 7.**

## **African Refugee Network**

*The African Refugee Network was established in June 1997. The main aim of the ARN is to support all refugees and asylum seekers who are facing difficulties in integrating themselves into their local communities.*

*The ARN is extremely concerned about the racist attacks on Black people in Ireland.*

*The ARN intends to establish contacts with local communities in areas where there have been problems with a view to breaking down any barriers between refugees and the people of these areas.*

**ARN, 90 Meath St., DUBLIN 8.**



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