

ANTI FASCIST ACTION
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Press release October 5 1997

Labour council responsible for anti-fascist ban!

Documentary evidence in AFA's possession proves the direct involvement by Camden Council in the controversial decision to cancel the International Anti-Fascist Conference which was due to be held at the Camden Irish Centre from 2-5 Oct. This evidence in the form of a fax identifies the Labour Council as the real instigator of subsequent events. Up till now Camden Council has "vigorously denied" any involvement.

The existence of this fax gives the lie to the claim a) that the council have "no power to dictate to the venue" * b) that the Irish Centre had been "duped" * c) that the public rally was "incompatible" ** with the venue d) that 'legally'*** the Irish centre had no option and e) "that grant aided centres are run entirely autonomously".***

At 17.15 on Thursday 25/9/ 1997 a fax was sent by Camden Council Voluntary Sector unit to the Camden Irish Centre. This is the department that deals with grants and funding. The front sheet has a half page introduction written in felt tip pen. Hand written comments in the margins of subsequent pages comment and draw attention to certain aspects of the press pack, concentrating on reports of physical confrontations with the far-right since 1985.

Minutes later at 17.20 on Thursday 25.9.1997 AFA was informed by the Camden Irish Centre that they were pulling the event, because to allow the AFA conference/gig/rally to go ahead would mean "their future funding being in jeopardy".

An AFA spokesman commented: "Camden Council recently marked the 1997 European Year of Anti-Racism with a showing of the Anne Frank Exhibition. Now they have made another mark through the attempted censoring of militant anti-fascism in the borough. Clearly they have sought to conceal their role, by insisting the Irish Centre carry the political can.

No working class person expects much from Labour these days but the pious hypocrisy is hard to stomach particularly when they are happy to be identified with an official plaque in their Town Hall 'honouring those who fell fighting fascism in Spain'. Of course Labour didn't want to know the International Brigade when they were alive either. The humbug of it all, will probably have them spinning in their graves."

Eamonn Kent
Anti-Fascist Action

*Mail on Sunday 28.9.1997

**Irish Post Saturday 4.10.1997

***Camden New Journal 2.10.1997

PICKET: Camden Irish Centre 4 pm Sunday Oct 5
RALLY: Halkevi Centre Kingsland High Rd Dalston 5.30 Oct 5