



1
2

12A

Special Report

SPECIAL BRANCH

COPY

2

18th day of February, 1983

SUBJECT

1. On Wednesday 16th February, 1983 the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) held a public meeting at the Rotherhithe Civic Centre as part of the election campaign of their candidate, Fran EDEN, in the Bermondsey By-Election. Attended by an audience of approximately eighty people the meeting began at 7.30pm and ended at 9.30pm. At least two thirds of those present displayed themselves as supporters of the RCP. There was no disorder or untoward incident.

Bermondsey
By-Election

2. Phil MURPHY, chairman for the evening, introduced the audience to the two platform speakers: Fran EDEN and Michael FREEMAN. Unfortunately, he said, the spokesman for Provisional Sinn Fein who had been scheduled to address the meeting was unable to attend. Nevertheless, he emphasised, the meeting would still be dealing with the Irish situation. The smashing of the Prevention of Terrorism Act was an important part of Fran EDEN's election campaign. He promised the audience an interesting meeting. In spite of there being sixteen candidates to choose from in the Bermondsey By-Election there was only one real alternative to a crumbling Labour Party: the party of the future, the Revolutionary Communist Party.

Reference to Papers

371/83/14

(400/83/5)

3. Michael FREEMAN, introduced as the editor of 'The Next Step', the monthly newspaper of the RCP, spoke articulately, if not dynamically, on the nature of the Revolutionary Communist Party. Approaching, as we were, Marx's centenary, it was important to realise that the RCP was the only party in Britain today that fully realised the importance of Marx's theory of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. The RCP would put this theory into practice. There was one simple route to the establishment of a genuine 'workers democracy': to break the paralysing grip of an impotent Labour Party on the working classes. Even the left wing of the Labour Party had no distinct theory of capitalism. Their naive belief that workers' interests could be defended by economic reforms was cruelly exposed by Labour's period of office between 1974 and 1979.

4. FREEMAN turned to deal with the Irish question. He was quite blunt. The IRA and those other groups fighting for the freedom of the Irish people posed the biggest threat to the security of the British ruling class. As such, and if for no other reason, they should be given every support by the working classes of Britain whose aim was the overthrow of the ruling class. At the present time the RCP was lending

.../...



it's weight to the Irish Solidarity Movement and the growing campaign for the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. He pointed out that the threat of exclusion, contained in the Act, was a powerful weapon for silencing the opponents of imperialism inside Britain.

5. Britain, he said, was in the deepest capitalist recession for fifty years. This crisis could not be resolved in the sphere of economic policy. There were no technical solutions to the crisis of imperialism. This was what the Labour Party was always afraid to admit. The whole of the British left was in disarray and only one party offered a clear way forward: the RCP. He sat down to a modest and respectful round of applause.

6. Fran EDEN dealt with the domestic concerns of Bermondsey. She claimed to have a lot more to offer voters than Peter TATCHELL, her only serious rival. One of her main objectives was to provide decent facilities for the women of Bermondsey; these included 'abortion on demand' and 'twenty four hour nurseries'. The Labour record in Bermondsey spoke for itself; it was a disaster. She was offering the workers of Bermondsey a real alternative; a way forward; a chance to take control of their own future. Peter TATCHELL could now be seen 'kow-towing' to the toothless Labour Party hierarchy; if elected he would prove to be just as impotent as any other Labour MP, under an inflexible Party whip.

7. Neither was she afraid to raise the Irish question with the voters of Bermondsey. It was only under the grip of the local Labour Party that the electorate of Bermondsey had ceased to voice their opinions on major political issues. It was worth remembering, she suggested, that shortly before the First World War the workers of Bermondsey had taken to the streets in protest at the treatment of an Irish suspect held in Brixton prison. This was the kind of positive action that the RCP would initiate in Bermondsey if she, Fran EDEN, was elected.

8. EDEN's speech, more forceful than fluent, was warmly received by the audience. Phil MURPHY proceeded to ask Judy HARRISON to step forward to the platform and deal with the matter of funding the election campaign.

9. Ms HARRISON claimed that the election campaign was proceeding apace. A huge vote for Fran EDEN was confidently expected. It was clear that their various opponents were amazed at the size and nature of the RCP's campaign. They had the best posters in Bermondsey and the most energetic set of workers. However, the campaign was costing a lot of money, and, contrary to popular belief the RCP did not have access to vast sums of 'Moscow Gold'. She asked those present to contribute generously to the fund.

In fact, a total of £96 was collected from the audience.

10. Next, Phil MURPHY took questions from the floor. The first man to address the chair can be identified as [redacted] Privacy, an Irishman, who called for the RCP to grasp the nettle of real 'street action' along the lines of the Irish struggle. It was necessary to fight the ruling class on the streets. His point was subsequently dealt with by Michael FREEMAN who patiently explained that the first priority was to replace the Labour Party as the true voice of the working class.

11. MURPHY was careful to call on known members of the RCP to ask questions of the chair. [redacted] Privacy, [redacted] Privacy and [redacted] Privacy each posed as 'interested members of the public' and framed suitable questions for Michael FREEMAN and Fran EDEN to answer. In marked contrast, three unidentified members of the Workers Party sought desperately to be allowed to speak. Ultimately, they were able to express their pro-Soviet views. FREEMAN dealt with them disdainfully - describing them as the Lady BIRDWOODS of the left.

12. MURPHY wound up an enthusiastic meeting by calling on those present to help with canvassing on behalf of the Party. He urged everyone to attend a 'motorcade' on Saturday 19th February, which would begin at 11am at the Elephant and Castle; coinciding (though he made no mention of it) with the start of a planned Labour Party march to Downing Street. Additionally, supporters were reminded to attend the Spar Road Library on Thursday, 17th February, 1983 at 7.30pm where Fran EDEN would be taking part in a CND debate.

13. All persons present dispersed quietly and, in the main, reconvened in the Albion Public House near by.

3

R. A. Lambert
Detective Constable

Submitted:

[redacted]
Chief Inspector

4

[redacted]
for CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

[REDACTED]

A P P E N D I X

to Special Branch report dated 18th February, 1983 concerning an election meeting of the Revolutionary Communist Party

INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED

Fran EDEN		RF 402/	
Michael	Privacy	RF 402/	
@ FREEMAN			Privacy
Phil MURPHY		RF 402/	
Judy HARRISON		RF 402/	

[REDACTED]

Privacy

INDIVIDUALS MENTIONED

Peter TATCHELL	RF 402/	Privacy
Lady BIRDWOOD	RF 405/56/415	

ORGANISATIONS MENTIONED

Revolutionary Communist Party	400/82/80
Provisional Sinn Fein	335/83/20
Labour Party	400/82/157

[REDACTED]

PIRA	400/82/36
Irish Solidarity Movement	Mentions
Workers Party	335/82/66
CND	400/82/141

MOTOR VEHICLES ATTENDING MEETING and their REGISTERED OWNERS

GOC 822 W Ford Minibus	Clapham Community Project (mentions SB(R)), St Annes Hall, Venn Street, SW4
---------------------------	---

Privacy
Blue Ford Cortina

Privacy
Yellow Hilman IMP

Privacy
Maroon Singer Chamois

Privacy
Green Talbot Avenger

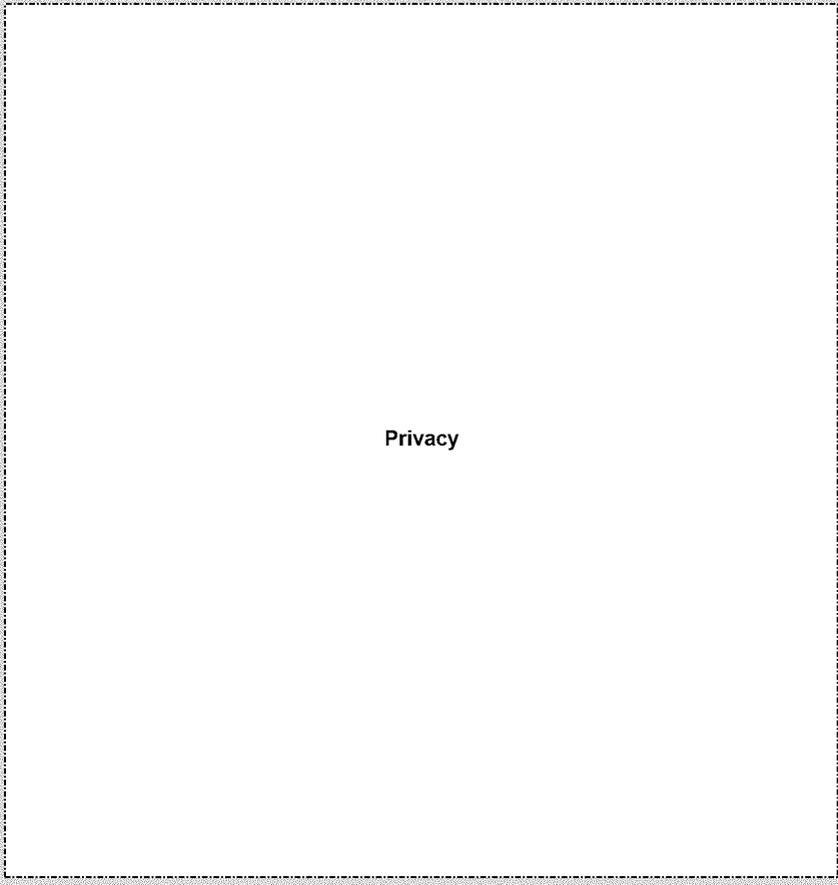
Privacy
Green Triumph Toledo

Privacy
Green Citroen Dyare

Privacy
Red Ford Cortina

Privacy
White Ford Escort

Privacy
Blue Talbot Alpine



Privacy

