

Special Report

ENCL

SPECIAL BRANCH

19 DEC 1973

TO

REF

17 day of December 1973

SUBJECT

FIGHT ON

Reference to Papers

406/73/191

1. The following information has been received from a reliable source:

2. 'Fight On' (the British section of the Italian Marxist movement - Lotta Continua), in co-operation with the Free Film Unit and the Electric Cinema, held a free film show from 11am to 1.15 p.m. on Saturday, 1 December, 1973 at the Electric Cinema, Portobello Road, London W11. The show was attended by about 30 persons, almost all of whom seemed to be Italian.

3. The three films shown were 'The Irish Struggle', 'Urban Insurgency' and 'How the Workers Smashed a Right-Wing Government in Italy.'

4. Fulvio GRIMALDI introduced the programme and spoke during the intervals. He claimed the British Government was using Northern Ireland as a proving ground for its fascist tactics of deploying the police and the army to suppress the workers. As the insurrection of the proletariat spread to Britain, the same methods would be used here. He cited the example of how the Government had sent in the troops to take over the fire stations in Glasgow during the recent firemen's strike.

5. He asserted the troops would soon be deployed in the coal mines, the docks, the power stations and in the railways if the workers in these industries went ahead with strike action this winter. The current 'fascist' state of emergency was only one step away from a full military take-over, such as existed in Northern Ireland.

6. The film on the Northern Ireland situation was confined to interviews with residents of the Ballymurphy area of Belfast, all of whom expressed strong anti-British Army and Government views, and riot scenes in that area, which were slanted to show the forces of the army and police in a very bad light.

7. GRIMALDI gave a running commentary in English to the other two films as they had Italian dialogue. Both were similar in context and were comprised almost entirely of scenes of political demonstrations in Milan and Rome, concentrating particularly on the riotous situations which had followed those demonstrations.

8. One film showed how a large fascist open air meeting in Milan had been broken-up by left-wing demonstrations in spite of a massive cordon of armed riot police protecting the fascists. As the film illustrated, the left-wing demonstrators were now employing new tactics in fighting the police. GRIMALDI said that at a given signal the demonstrators conformed to a preconceived plan

of dividing into groups of about 500 persons separate from the main body of the demonstration and then attacking the weaker flanks of the police contingent.

Special Report

9. Although on the particular demonstration depicted there had been no riot police on duty in the streets of Milan, assisted by many fascists, the use of these new tactics by the demonstrators had resulted in the complete routing of the police. The film certainly seemed to bear this out and showed the police in complete disarray. There were ugly scenes resulting in the police deserting their positions and military vehicles being smashed and burned by the demonstrators.

SUBJECT

10. GRIMALDI stated that since that day the Milan police had been afraid to intervene in any left-wing demonstrations in the city. Throughout Italy the police, who had killed nearly 200 workers since the war, were now on the retreat. Their morale had been defeated by the spirit of the proletariat.

Reference to Papers

11. Scenes in the film of injured police, damaged or burning police vehicles or property were greeted with enthusiastic clapping and cheering from the audience.

12. On completion of the show GRIMALDI said that members of 'Fight On' were immediately travelling to Shepherds Bush Green, W12 to participate in the Troops Out (of Northern Ireland) Movement's demonstration and urged all those present to join them and support this protest.

13. This is not the first occasion that 'Fight On' has given film shows immediately prior to a political demonstration and its purpose is clearly to whip up a militant aggressive mood in demonstrators, the obvious inference of the films being that these demonstrators could defeat the authorities by the use of militant aggressive tactics. The use of such methods clearly has the effect of arousing emotions beforehand and together with any unforeseen emotive, an explosive situation could quickly ensue.

14. The only persons identified amongst those present were:

Privacy

Fulvio GRIMALDI RF 408/Privacy

HN299/HN342

1

Constable

Submitted

HN294

2

Chief Inspector

CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

3