

How Hate

The 2006 local election campaign

As the 2006 local election campaign kicks off, Nick Lowles looks at the campaign we can expect from the BNP and calls for a greater anti-fascist effort.

The 2006 local elections will be the toughest ever. Against the backdrop of growing disillusionment among Labour's core support, and about the political process generally, and the backlash from the reaction to the anti-Muslim cartoons, the British National Party is enjoying a growing sense of confidence. In councils across the country the racists are sensing a breakthrough.

The BNP is fielding a record number of candidates next month. Most of them are concentrated in the BNP's heartlands of West Yorkshire, East Lancashire and the West Midlands but there are also candidates in places the racist party has not contested before.

Many will be little more than paper candidates, with the BNP not putting in much of an effort in their support, but in a growing number of wards the BNP's campaigns are becoming more sophisticated.

Searchlight has already received reports of systematic door-to-door canvassing in several parts of the country, including in places such as Manchester where the party has never performed very well in recent times. There have even been some second-hand accounts of BNP telephone canvassing and its direct mail operation in a very small number of areas appears to be on a par with the three main parties.

While it is unlikely that the BNP will be able to match the intensity of a quality by-election campaign, such as those fought in Goresbrook (Barking and Dagenham) and Heanor and Looe (Amber Valley), other political parties should not underestimate the BNP's capability.

Burnley conference

A recent BNP organisers' event in Burnley last month put down the foundations for the BNP's election campaign. Run by the party's new group development officer Sadie Graham, the day focused on modern electioneering techniques such as direct mail.

Graham has some recent experience in this. During the recent Heanor and Looe council by-election, where the BNP came second, the party sent out a direct mail letter from its candidate to every voter who had responded positively during canvassing. Not only was the letter personally addressed and printed in a typeface that made it look handwritten but it was also customised for each street. A picture of the street adorned the letter, together with one or two promises from the candidate.

This degree of targeting has not been seen before from the BNP. Of course, direct mail relies on having the data to target voters and few BNP branches either have this data or appear capable of collecting it in a four-week campaign. However, there is a small but growing number of wards where this is possible, principally where the BNP has contested council by-elections and thrown regional or even national resources at them. Thurock, Barking and Dagenham, Epping, Bexley, Stoke-on-Trent, Dudley, Oldham, Manchester, Burnley, Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale and Amber Valley are all councils where the BNP potentially has canvassing data or its collection is under way.

Aggressive Islamophobia

Election techniques are simply a means of selling a message and for the BNP in 2006 the message is the danger of Islam in Britain.

Since last autumn the party's publications have been describing the local elections as a "Referendum on Islam". Since the London bombings they have portrayed Islamist terrorism in Britain as the consequence of the Government's slack asylum and immigration policies and the war in Iraq.

"If only they had listened to the BNP," proclaimed a BNP leaflet distributed only days after the bombings last July. A picture of the bombed-out bus adorned the front page.

The BNP's anti-Islam stance gained momentum with the acquittal of Nick Griffin, the party leader, on some charges at Leeds Crown Court in February. The verdict came at the same time as the controversy over the offensive anti-Muslim Danish cartoons and the offensive spectacle of a handful of young Muslims dressed up as suicide bombers on the streets of London, a coincidence that enabled the BNP to present itself as the defender of freedom of speech and the British way of life.

For more than a week the images of extremist Islam and a victorious BNP swamped media space. Searchlight's mailbox reflected what seemed to be a real sea-change in opinion and the BNP's must have been similar. The BNP responded by moving further to the right in its anti-Islam strategy. Emboldened by this apparent

changing mood, the BNP has become more hardline. It began with the reproduction of the Danish cartoons in a national leaflet in what was a clear attempt to incite and raise tensions.

Several BNP branches actually refused to hand leaflet out, both recognising the incitement element and through fear of attack. That the risk was real was confirmed when the Pendle BNP organiser was put in hospital after being attacked on the street while distributing the leaflet.

An even more headline approach was taken in Leeds. The latest edition of the BNP's *Morley Patriot* called for the banning of the burka and the removal of Muslims from any job that involves chemicals or electronics.

But it is no way clear whether this strategy will work. The hardening anti-Islam line might play well with the faithful and its hardcore support but it will increasingly repulse opponents of the BNP. In an election where turnout will be key the BNP message may have a quite unexpected impact.

Damn lies and BNP leaflets

Another element of the BNP campaign is the "Big Lie". Perpetrated by the BNP's election officer Eddy Butler, the "Big Lie" is a story the BNP will introduce to the campaign, with the sole intention to wind up and motivate its supporters.

The "Big Lie" will vary from area to area depending on what local issue is available for the BNP to exploit.

In Heanor the BNP claimed a 15-year-old girl had been gang raped by asylum seekers. This was untrue.

In Sandwell the BNP claimed a local library was going to become a mosque. This was untrue.

In Barking and Dagenham the BNP claimed that a secret "Africans for Essex" scheme gave Africans £50,000 to buy property in the area. This was untrue.

In Thurock, the BNP claimed that the local council had a secret deal with Hacaney to transfer 3,000 asylum seekers to the area. This was untrue.

In many recent elections rival parties and candidates have complained to the police and returning officer but so far no action has been taken against the BNP. Unfortunately, each investigative body has looked at each leaflet individually rather than at the deliberate strategy to whip up tensions.

Dealing with the "Big Lie" is crucial to defeating the BNP. For too long councils and the other parties have ignored the BNP's lies. The failure to refute the claims (albeit in an imaginative way so as not to allow the BNP's agenda to govern the debate) will invariably mean the lies become facts. And then the BNP has won.

Old Labour

A lesser element of the BNP campaign will be presenting itself as "Old Labour", or, as a recent BNP leaflet in Sandwell proudly announced, "the Labour Party your Grandfathers voted for".

The BNP has pushed the link with Old Labour values in parts of the West Midlands, South Yorkshire and the North East.

Turning out the anti-BNP vote

In the mad frenzy of an election campaign the difference between winning and losing is often determined by the quality of the campaign. For all the BNP's growing expertise, the anti-fascist campaign is still more advanced. We know that the majority of people in every single ward in the country are against the BNP; the question is getting them out to vote.

Searchlight has been identifying anti-BNP voters for several months now and together with a more sophisticated trade union operation this year's anti-BNP campaign will be the most advanced yet.

But victory is nowhere near certain. Against a backdrop of increasing apathy among Labour voters, disillusionment among Labour Party members and rising Islamophobia, our task is hard.

That is why we ask all our readers to give that little bit more during the next few weeks. From making telephone calls to stuffing envelopes, leafleting to talking to your neighbour, there is something for you to do. So we make this one appeal. Get in touch and get involved. You could make a difference.

To help the Searchlight campaign please contact us on 020 7681 8660 or email us at editors@searchlightmagazine.com

SEARCHLIGHT HITS THE STREETS

Searchlight
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREE
VOTE HOPE NOT HATE
STOP THE BNP
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006

DUPED!
Local Heanor pensioner 'in' at underland BNP

The BNP
EXCLUSIVE
ON LOCAL BNP ORGANISERS

WWW.STOPTHEBNP.COM

Searchlight
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREE
VOTE HOPE NOT HATE
STOP THE BNP
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006

The BNP recruit and simplicit. They are evil. We live in a very competitive region and we need to use all our gifts and resources available to us. We don't so will mean that our city loses out. Please do not vote for a party that seeks to divide us.

The BNP
WEARING IT WITH PRIDE

WWW.STOPTHEBNP.COM

Searchlight
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREE
VOTE HOPE NOT HATE
STOP THE BNP
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006

PEOPLE POWER
While the BNP whip up racism in local people are getting on with improving the lives of the community

SHEFFIELD DOESN'T NEED THE BNP

The BNP
A RECORD OF LOCAL BNP ACTIVITIES

WWW.STOPTHEBNP.COM

Searchlight
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREE
VOTE HOPE NOT HATE
STOP THE BNP
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006

Question: Which political party has the most groups behind these bombings?

The BNP
EXCLUSIVE
NAZI POLITICS OF LOCAL BNP ORGANISERS

HITS THE STREETS

WWW.STOPTHEBNP.COM

Searchlight has produced 16 different tabloid newspapers which are being distributed by anti-fascist volunteers across Britain. The following pages give a selection of some of the articles that hundreds of thousands of voters are reading in the run-up to the local elections on 4 May.

BNP exposed

Searchlight
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREE
VOTE HOPE NOT HATE
STOP THE BNP
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006

THE NAZI ASSASSIN
Nazi godfather spills the beans

The BNP
THE WILL TO HATE
THE BOMBERS
THE BOMBERS
THE BOMBERS

WWW.STOPTHEBNP.COM

The Nazi assassin

BNP LEADER Nick Griffin is bracing himself for a new book that will blow the mask of respectability off his party.

The Nazi Assassin is the story of former Merseyside BNP organiser Joe Owens.

By day he was Griffin's personal bodyguard but by night "he was a professional assassin with seven alleged hits to his name".

Despite knowing of his underworld links, the BNP refused to sack him. Earlier this year, a leading BNP officer even suggested that Owens "take out" a Labour politician in revenge for Griffin's own arrest.

Searchlight
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREE
VOTE HOPE NOT HATE
STOP THE BNP
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006

AGAIN!
Burnley BNP councillor's fall ... AGAIN

Burnley BNP councillor's fall ... AGAIN
Burnley BNP's scrotor of shame

WWW.STOPTHEBNP.COM

Burnley BNP councillors fail ... AGAIN

BURNLEY BNP councillors are "incompetent". That's not our view but the opinion of BNP leader Nick Griffin.

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DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREE
VOTE HOPE NOT HATE
STOP THE BNP
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006

BNP'S LINKS TO TERROR

BNP and extremist Islam: the politics of hate

WWW.STOPTHEBNP.COM

BNP's links to terror

THE BNP claim they want to defend British society from terrorism, yet nothing could be further from the truth. The BNP, and its leader Nick Griffin, have been linked with a host of terrorist organisations over the past 20 years.

Griffin actually travelled to Tripoli in 1986 as a guest of the Libyan Government in order to raise money at a time when the Libyans were behind international terrorism. Griffin was also a supporter of the Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini, another sponsor of terrorism, simply because of his anti-Jewish and anti-American views.

At a time when there is so much danger in the world, the BNP, with its terrorist connections, simply cannot be trusted.

Below are just some of Griffin's terrorist friends.

William Pierce Griffin was a big admirer of William Pierce, leader of the National Alliance. Pierce also wrote *The Turner Diaries*, a fictional account of race war which inspired Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh to kill 168 people in 1995. Pierce addressed a BNP national rally and his Nazi organisation was later involved with the American Friends of the BNP, which channelled money to the BNP from the USA. When Pierce died in 2002 the BNP published a glowing obituary for him which mentioned his "high regard" for the BNP.

David Copeland London 'nail bomber' David Copeland, whose reign of terror in 2001 killed three people including a pregnant woman and injured 129, was a member of the BNP. Inspired by William Pierce's *The Turner Diaries*, Copeland hoped his bombing campaign would ignite a race war of which the BNP would be the chief beneficiaries. Copeland is currently serving six life sentences in Broadmoor.

Mark Payne Mark Payne is the BNP's deputy National Treasurer but before his full time job in the BNP he ran Fourteen Wörks (UK), the British arm of the US Nazi book club that backed the Nazi terror group 'The Order' in the 1980s. The Order tried to ignite a race war in America, including a plot to poison the water supplies of several cities. Payne sold books, tape recordings and T-shirts glorifying these terrorists. He was also in the right-wing skinhead band Avalon, which was linked to the British Nazi group Combat 18.

Roberto Fiore One of Griffin's longest far-right associates is Roberto Fiore, once a leading member of NAR, an Italian fascist terrorist group active in the 1970s and 1980s. This is the group that bombed Bologna railway station in 1980 killing 85 people, including two young British travellers. Griffin and Fiore were involved in a number of shadowy business ventures and Griffin's father Edwin acted as Fiore's accountant.

Tony Lecomber Griffin's right-hand man for the past ten years, Tony Lecomber is supposed to be the new respectable face of the BNP. But he has five convictions under the Explosives Act, including possessing homemade explosives, hand-grenades and bomb manuals. Lecomber also boasted that a terrorist attack on London would be good for the BNP.

Horst Mahler Griffin has close links with Horst Mahler, a leading member of the National Democratic Party, a German neo-Nazi party. Mahler moved to the extreme right after a career with the Baader-Meinhof terrorist gang in the 1970s, which later became the Red Army Faction. Mahler continues to condone terrorism. He is on record as saying that the 9/11 attacks on America were "justified".

page 6 SEARCHLIGHT Defending Democracy

● Worried about your pension?
● Worried about the future of the NHS?
● Worried about your children having a decent future?

If you are then it's time to talk seriously about IMMIGRATION

Over half

58% of new doctors in the NHS were born overseas

Open wide

40% of new dentists are born abroad

25%

A quarter of British medics have roots in the Indian subcontinent. This rises to a third of trainee British doctors

1.6%

Proportion of NHS nurses who are from minority ethnic backgrounds

44,000

The number of overseas nurses who worked in the NHS last year

23% - 47%

The Greater London Authority says that 23% of doctors and 47% of nurses working within the NHS in London are foreign-born

IMMIGRATION IS A taboo subject in Britain. No one likes to talk about it and when people do it is normally to criticise.

Well, we shouldn't be ashamed to talk about it. Without immigration our NHS and other public services would have collapsed a long time ago. And without further immigration we'll not be able to provide adequate pensions and public services in the future.

Unless something radical happens the future for us and our families is bleak.

Britain has a striking workforce. Unless we find more skilled workers that will not be enough money to pay for our pensions and acceptable services. People are naturally worried by change, uncertain about the unknown, but sometimes it is important to embrace change because change can be good for us.

Britain's economic success was built on workers coming into this country, be it the Irish in the 19th century or the Afro-Caribbeans and Asians in the 1950s and 1960s, and so it will again in the future.

Immigration is a taboo issue in British politics. It shouldn't be. Immigration is the key to our economic survival and we should not be scared to say so.

CRAZY BNP POLICIES WOULD DESTROY OUR NHS

FACT: PENSIONS

BRITAIN IS FACING a pensions timebomb. The value of our pensions is decreasing and people are living a lot longer. In 2001, 16% of the population was over 65 but this will rise to 23% by 2011. By 2050 there will be only two workers for every retired person. Between 1984 and 2001 the number of people over 65 grew by 30%.

FACT: NHS

THE NHS IS short of thousands of doctors, nurses and other staff. In some areas 23% of GPs will retire within five years. If we can't fill these vacancies we will all suffer. According to the Greater London Authority, 23% of doctors and 47% of nurses working within the NHS were born outside the UK.

FACT: ECONOMICS

RECENT IMMIGRATION INTO Britain has brought huge financial benefits from which we all benefit. The latest figures show that migrant workers add £2.3 billion more to the economy than they take out in benefits and services. Foreign-born workers already generate 10% of the UK's gross domestic product.

THE 'AFRICANS FOR ESSEX' MYTH

Don't fall for the BNP leaflet of lies

HEARD THE ONE about the "Africans for Essex" scheme? Well, it simply doesn't exist. It is a lie circulated by the BNP to blame black people for the shortage of housing.

As these pages demonstrate, there is a chronic shortage of council housing in the borough, but this has nothing to do with the arrival of black people. Rather, it is because the council is not allowed to build council homes to replace those properties that have been sold under the Right to Buy scheme.

Half of the council's housing stock has been sold since the early 1980s.

The BNP claim that there is a secret scheme to offer African families £50,000 to move into the borough from Tower Hamlets. Of course there is no such thing. The BNP has made it up to whip up trouble and racism.

What does exist is a scheme to keep council housing for local people. Under the Right to Buy scheme, council tenants can buy their houses or flats. While this helps people get onto the property ladder it also takes houses out of the public sector.

This council, like many others in London, offers cash incentives to people thinking of buying their council homes to buy property on the private market instead. In this way, hard-working families get a helping hand but, just as importantly, council housing remains in use for local people.

Last year 55 families moved out of Tower Hamlets and only five came to Barking and Dagenham. Of these five, only one was black.

The vast majority of newly arrived black people in the borough are buying their homes. That is the system and if they have the money they are as entitled to do so as anyone else.

Yes, there is a serious housing problem in Barking and Dagenham but it is certainly not the one the BNP talk about.

SEARCHLIGHT Defending Democracy

THE BOROUGH'S HOUSING CRISIS EXPLAINED

Council properties on the Borecoote estate

It's time to build more council housing

1980 40,000

2006 22,000

THE FOURTH OPTION

2006 BNP leaflet

THE 'AFRICANS FOR ESSEX' MYTH

Don't fall for the BNP leaflet of lies

The first housing battle

EXPOSING BNP LIES about the 'Africans for Essex' myth

MAKING COUNCIL HOUSING AVAILABLE FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

The Borough Hall, Barking and Dagenham

0203 62789 6622 30