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CARF

Campaign Against Racism and Fascism
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CARF welcomes readers' campaign news. Send reports together with illustrations to us. Remember to give a name and address for readers to contact you at. But if CARF is to be representative of the campaigns going on up and down the country, we urgently need to increase the Bulletin's size and circulation. And we can only do this with your financial support.

CARF is back

With this issue we are once more launching CARF, as a separate and independent magazine. For 11 years we had served the anti-racist and anti-fascist cause as a part of *Searchlight*. But fundamental differences of approach between *Searchlight* and ourselves have compelled us, albeit reluctantly, to break with the journal. It is that break, however, because it was made on the basis of both principle and a careful analysis of the developments of racism and fascism in the world today, that gives us an opportunity to develop a more vigorous and responsive anti-racist forum to coordinate and service the various anti-racist initiatives that are taking place up and down the country. The issues which led to the break were outlined in a letter which we asked *Searchlight* to publish last October. But as this letter - which was written with the precise purpose of avoiding misunderstanding or acrimony in the movement - has failed to appear, we publish it below:

9.10.90

Dear *Searchlight*,

As you know, we have had differences for some time now over our working relationship, our perspectives and our editorial control. Of course, we have managed to thrash out many of these differences in the past and carried on. But now we realise that our differences are not so much mechanical ones, susceptible to logistical resolution, as ones that arise from our essentially different understanding of the events unfolding in the world today. Since its inception in 1977, CARF has maintained that there is an organic link between racism and fascism and stressed the importance of fighting both. From our earliest debates with the Anti Nazi League we emphasised the need to expose and combat the contemporary, popular anti-black racism on which fascism had raised its head again. It was not enough to situate fascism historically, ideologically linked to anti-Semitism and the holocaust, and take up the refrain of 'Never Again'. Something was happening again - if differently - and we needed to see it in a contemporary perspective (relieved of our own racist blinkers), if we were to fight it correctly. We broke with the ANL, because it fought fascism and only incidentally racism. We could not accept a position which effectively subsumed the fight against racism to the fight against fascism.

Without going into too much detail, we feel that it is over exactly the same issue that our difference with you now arises. We feel that the fight against fascism today has to involve both the fight against anti-Semitism and the fight against anti-black racism. (You will notice that it is just that type of analysis over which we have had our differences.)

While not detracting one iota from your fight against anti-Semitism, we also believe that the fight against anti-black racism, and particularly anti-Arab racism, claims as much attention as the fight against anti-Semitism. We see these as two prongs in the same fight - prongs which have to be twinned to formulate correct strategies today. Whereas you seem increasingly committed to a one-pronged approach. You interpret the fight against racism and fascism as the fight against anti-Semitism in the first instance. Moreover, your one-dimensional view then subsumes all other forms of racism to that experience. And Jewish groups, instead of allying with black groups to defeat a common enemy, end up making enemies of their allies. In the international context, this has also meant, on occasion, that Third World peoples' national aspirations (including those of the Palestinians) are interpreted as inimical to Jewish interests and therefore anti-Semitic.

*We find that, as events are unfolding across Europe and the Middle East, our differences of perspective are becoming so accentuated and CARF's priorities so down-played in your pages - to the extent of riding rough-shod over our views, and our claims to space and autonomy - that it is no longer possible to maintain our link through contributing a monthly section to *Searchlight*. Though we recognise with reluctance that our paths now formally have to part, we hope there may be ways of working together in the future.*

Yours sincerely
The CARF Collective

The time is right, we believe, for a new independent magazine devoted to the fight against racism, fascism and imperialism. For although there are many local committees and organisations fighting racism and fascism both here and in Europe, the scale of racism and its effects on black people, migrants and refugees is being ignored in the national media, in the trades union movement and on the left as a whole. But we need your help - in distributing CARF, in getting subscribers, in finding supporters, and, above all, in sending us reports from your areas and campaigns.