

Fascists attack left-wing bookshop in central London

Robert Stevens
6 August 2018

The Socialist Equality Party denounces the attack by around a dozen far-right thugs on the Bookmarks bookshop in central London on Saturday evening.

Bookmarks is run by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and is the official bookseller of the Trades Union Congress.

A tweet from Bookmarks explained, “About 6:45 this evening Bookmarks Bookshop was attacked by about a dozen masked wearing [sic] fascists. They threatened staff and attempted to destroy books and other materials.”

A press release by the SWP and Trades Union Congress-backed Stand Up to Racism organisation said the fascists “carried placards reading ‘British Bolshevik Cult’ [in a reference to the BBC state broadcaster] and one of them wore a Trump Mask. Books and magazines were ripped and torn, with displays wrecked.”

It cited a member of staff at the bookshop who said, “Books on Islamophobia were ridiculed and thrown around. They chanted about Muslims and paedophilia and called us traitors. While not mentioning [far right leader] Tommy Robinson the links are there to see.”

The release continued, “The far right activists also shouted about [Labour leader Jeremy] Corbyn and anti-semitism and then took Abram Leon’s ‘The Jewish Question’ off the shelf holding it aloft as proof of the anti-semitism of the left. The attackers also make threats to return and ‘show what they can do’.”

The shop was attacked just as it was closing, with a spokesman for the Metropolitan Police saying, “Police were called at approximately 18:35hrs on Saturday, 4 August to reports of a protest inside a shop on Bloomsbury Street, WC1.

“No other offences were disclosed at the time. Police received a second call a short time later stating that the

group had left the premises after causing some damage inside the shop. There were no injuries. An appointment has been made for officers to speak with the complainant. No arrests have been made.”

The attack is part of an orchestrated and well-funded resurgence of far-right activity in Britain and internationally.

An article posted on the SWP’s web page reported that one of the people employed in the bookshop, Noel, said, “I recognized one of people in the crowd... He had been in the book shop a week before arguing with other customers. He had been coming out with alt right slogans, fake news nonsense stuff, and we had to get rid of him.”

At least some of the assailants attended a far-right rally that took place in central London earlier Saturday. According to information on the placards and a “Make Britain Great Again” banner carried by the group, it was organised by the People’s Charter Foundation. The same placards as described by the bookshop employees were held by participants at the rally, including ones reading “Bolshevik Brainwashing Cult.”

According to a twitter posting by Jo Phillips, a member of the pro-Corbyn Momentum group, “This was meant to be a protest about the BBC etc. Sharon Klaff gave a horrendous speech on Labour and Israel. They all went to the pub. Some clearly decided to go terrorise folk in Bookmarks.”

Klaff is a Zionist who lives in London and is a columnist with the online-based *Times of Israel*.

Phillips later posted a still from a video showing Make Britain Great Again leader Luke Nash-Jones confronting a Bookmarks representative inside the book shop. Nash-Jones is a member of the UK Independence Party (UKIP). Phillips wrote the “video has now been removed but this is what it said.” The

still has a caption underneath reading “MAKE BRITAIN GREAT AGAIN INVADES COMMUNIST BOOK STORE--BOOKS IN THIS STORE ARE HATE SPEECH.”

From footage of the earlier Make Britain Great Again event, a number of participants, including Nash-Jones, wore red Donald Trump-style “Make Britain Great Again” caps.

Despite the fact that on the still, three unmasked faces can be seen, including that of Nash-Jones, confronting a Bookmark representative—with Nash-Jones and another wearing the same Make Britain Great Again caps they had on earlier—plus the fact that central London is awash with CCTV cameras, there are no reports that the Met have yet arrested or charged a single person in connection to the attack.

The People’s Charter website states in bold large type, “STAND AGAINST MARXISM.” It adds, “We do more than protest.” At its rally Saturday, Nash-Jones denounced Frederick Engels, Karl Marx’s closest collaborator, “because he meant to abolish our nation, abolish our flag...”

The group not only has connections to UKIP, but also the right-wing anti-EU Bruges Group. Patrons of the People’s Charter Foundation include Robert Oulds, chair of the Bruges Group, and Elizabeth Jones, a member of UKIP’s National Executive Committee.

Jones spoke at Saturday’s rally and praised the “battle that [far-right leader] Tommy Robinson is so bravely fighting.”

Oulds was a Conservative councillor in the London Borough of Hounslow from 2002 to 2018. From 2006 to 2009, he was Chairman of its Planning Committee and from 2009 to 2010 a Cabinet Member at the council. He chaired the Slough Conservative Association from 2006 to 2008 and the Brentford and Isleworth Conservative Association from 2013 to 2016.

The attack on Bookmarks came just three weeks to the day after fascist thugs savagely beat Steve Hedley, assistant general secretary of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union (RMT) in central London. Hedley, his partner, and several other RMT members were attacked after he spoke at a counter-protest held by Stand Up To Racism against a far-right demonstration of around 15,000 fascists.

People’s Charter Foundation members were present at that march, with a Make Britain Great Again banner

on display. The fascists were demanding the release from prison of Robinson, who had been jailed for contempt of court.

Robinson was released on bail, in a court decision celebrated by the far right, just three days prior to the attack on Bookmarks.

The involvement of the Bruges Group is another expression of the crossover of personnel with far-right groups. The day before Hedley was attacked, Steve Bannon, a former Goldman Sachs banker, hosted a meeting at a five-star Mayfair hotel. Those present included former UKIP leader Nigel Farage and Ben Harris-Quinney, chairman of the Conservative Party think-tank The Bow Group, founded by Geoffrey Howe and with a membership reading like a roll-call of the Thatcherite right.

Joining the Tories and the mass media in creating the ideological climate for such attacks are the Blairites in the Labour Party and various Zionist groups. The attack on Corbyn over bogus charges that he is an anti-Semite—organised by Labour’s right-wing—reached frenzied proportions as the attack on Bookmarks took place.

Klaff said at the rally that the “left today is the party of anti-Semitism. However much Jeremy Corbyn tries to wriggle out of this space he has played a role in this for over four decades, without too much about his role at all being mentioned by the BBC.” She referred to a meeting that her organisation, Campaign4Truth, held in Parliament in November 2015 that was hosted by Tory MP Mike Freer.

This grotesque slander of “left” anti-Semitism was reiterated by those who attacked the Bookmarks store. Like many other far-right figures, Robinson was previously employed by Rebel Media, founded by Ezra Levant—a fervent Zionist.



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