

ULSTER: BRITISH TROOPS OUT

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FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM



Bogside, Sunday: baton-wielding police advance on demonstrators

WILSON'S decision to allow British troops to guard 'key installations' in Northern Ireland is an ominous threat to the embattled people of the Six Counties fighting for their basic civil rights. The troops will free the brutal RUC and the even more thuggish B-Specials to attack and terrorise demonstrators. There is little doubt that the acts of sabotage were carried out by extreme Paisleyites in order to bring in British troops who could be used to put down the people if civil war should break out. Socialist Worker demands the immediate withdrawal of British troops and expresses its complete solidarity with the heroic workers of beleaguered Derry.

Police terror in Bogside

Eamonn McCann and Sean Reed

DERRY:- The moderate leadership of the Civil Rights movement was swamped last weekend as the people of Bogside fought to defend their area against the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Appeals to 'go home in peace' from John Hume, MP for Foyle, and members of the Citizens Action Committee were howled down as the residents fought off the riot police with sticks, stones and petrol bombs.

The attack developed after the government banned a march from Burntollet Bridge, scene of last January's ambush of the People's Democracy march by B-Specials in civvies. Ulster's new Police Minister, Porter, visited Derry on Friday and was told by the local Tories that they would use firearms to stop the march. Porter then banned the march.

re-erected. This laid the foundations for the present brittle peace which could be shattered at any moment by the simmering rage of the general populace. The street defence committees set up in the wake of the PD march last January have been reactivated.

Defence plans are being laid and any further police attack will be met with organised and disciplined resistance. The fact that the police used guns on Sunday morning has led to discussion of the formation of a citizens' army - a demand put forward by the new MP for Mid-Ulster Bernadette Devlin and Eamonn Melaugh.

Meanwhile Wilson has agreed to send in troops 'to guard key installations'.

In the long term it is an assertion of the fact that British capitalism will intervene more and more directly if O'Neill fails to maintain 'law and order'.

This is certainly on the cards. As O'Neill's position grows less credible every hour, as the antiquated brand of effete liberalism neither serves adequately the needs of the system nor satisfies the aspirations of the people, he will go very soon.

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After him we will get a 'strong man' with the slogan 'Here's your one man, one vote - and the next Popehead who opens his mouth in public will be up and against the wall'.

British socialists must organise to struggle for the withdrawal of British troops, who are being used to release RUC and B-Specials to suppress Derry. Only a major and immediate mobilisation to this end can have any real meaning.

Socialist and civil rights supporters in the Six Counties must mount a campaign to lift the pressure on Derry by drawing off as many police as possible.

Comrades in the South should raise the demand that the Green Tory government arms Derry. Their refusal to do so can be used to expose their complicity in the oppression and their role as commission agents of British imperialism.

If it comes to civil war, then only the united action of all the Irish working people and their allies can provide the material base to resist Orange reaction and their Westminster supporters.

A demonstration has been fixed for this Friday (April 26), to the London Ulster Office in Berkeley St W1. For details of times ring 01-8084847 on Thursday and Friday.

Fascists disrupt

NATIONAL FRONT fascists disrupted a meeting in Haringey on Tuesday called to protest at the council's plan to wreck comprehensive schools and disperse immigrant children.

When Socialist Worker editor Roger Protz spoke he was howled down and threatened by fascists - but it was Protz who was arrested and charged with 'threatening behaviour'.

International Socialists are planning a march against the schools plan this Saturday starting at 2.30 at Manor House station.

May Day: strike against anti-union laws

WITH MAY DAY now only a few days away support for a strike against anti-union laws continues to grow. It is clear that whatever the numbers out on strike, May 1st will symbolise a new resolve in the labour movement.

The fight back is beginning on a national scale. It is a struggle against the Labour government itself. It is not just one false step which is being opposed, but the whole pattern of Labour's rule since 1964.

The proposed legislation to shackle the trade union movement is the result of the entire policy of this anti-working class government. For five years now all the ills of the British economy have been laid at the workers' door.

For five years the government have shown, slowly but surely, that their only interest is to modernise British capitalism. If welfare has to be sacrificed, a few crocodile tears may be shed. If rents have had to rise so much that they have lowered the standard of living of hundreds of thousands of workers, that is just too bad.

Whose interest?

All this is being done in the name of the 'national interest'. Just what is this national interest?

Was it in the national interest that the seamen's attempt to improve their appalling conditions of work should be belittled and blamed on a handful of agitators? That wages should be frozen for over a year, while prices and profits soared?

That Castle, Wilson, Jenkins, Short and Benn in turn over the last few weeks should attack militants in industry as enemy number one?

What national interest is this which says that the highest priority of the Labour government must be to legislate against the trade unions? It is clearly the hoary old capitalist search for ever greater profit at the expense of the workers which is being dressed up in a new guise.

The 'national interest' demands that the workers pay... Just who the hell do they think they're fooling?

In a class divided society there are only class interests. The interests of the working class in a society where there is production for use not for profit, democratic control of industry and society are the interests of the overwhelming majority of people in our society.

Tiny handful

The so-called 'national interest' is the interest of that tiny handful of people who control and decide on the destiny of vast masses of people.

It is the interest of the capitalist class. It is the class the Labour government decided to serve when they came to power in 1964.

This was not an 'error' which a different leader could have avoided. The whole trend of the Labour Party for years before it came to power was in this direction. Remember the wild applause when Wilson made his speech about the new Britain to be forged 'in the white heat of the technological revolution'?

Already a conception of what the Labour government would do which was funda-

mentally anti-working class was being accepted. Socialism had become something to be handed down from above by a wise and benevolent leadership.

So instead of modern technology liberating people from the drudgery of labour, it brings redundancy. Instead of spending on social services, on health and education, we still spend about £2,000m on arms. Just about enough to enable Britain to send troops to Anguilla...

To this notion of 'socialism from above' which turns out to be nothing but a recipe for continuous exploitation, we must counterpose the most important concept in the whole history of socialist theory - that of working-class self-activity.

There can be no other foundation for those who take the problem of overthrowing class society seriously. It shows the possibility of a new and different society, stalking behind the facade of the old.

Instead of capitalist repression and exploitation the workers themselves can take power and abolish production for profit, and abolish classes.

The whole aim of the anti-trade union legislation is to

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attack working-class self-activity, to attack the very foundations of what makes socialism an alternative form of society.

Shop floor organisation has always been the most important defense the workers have had against the employers' attacks. The shop stewards work with the men they represent and are in constant touch with the real needs of the workers and the day-to-day problems they face.

It is on the basis of links between shop stewards in the same factories and industries, and between these in different industries that a meaningful working-class alternative to capitalism will be built.

Police agent

It is this possibility which the Labour government's legislation is designed to attack. Instead of trade union organisation being the instrument of defense of the workers the government would like it to be the police agent.

The strategy behind productivity bargaining has been to take power out of the hands of the stewards and to put it into those of union officials. But it is a slow process and officials in the more democratic unions are not going to be turned into policemen overnight.

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Black-white march on Sunday

WOLVERHAMPTON:- 3,000 are expected to march here on Sunday (April 27) in the Black-White Unity Mobilisation against racialism in the heart of Enoch Powell's constituency. Support for the mobilisation has poured in from many

parts of the country, and the call to come to Wolverhampton has obviously struck a chord.

Strongest support has come from branches of the Indian Workers' Association and IS, but local groups of the International Marxist

Group, Labour Party Young Socialists, CARD and VSC are also rallying to the call.

Coachloads have been promised from as far away as Aberdeen and students from Oxford University and LSE have promised large contingents.

Certainly rank and file socialists of all persuasions will be discussing Left unity on the streets of Wolverhampton and demonstrating it.

'If you want to go to Wolverhampton from London ring Chris Russell at 01-340 5911. Return coach fare is 14s.

