

# IRELAND ONE NATION!

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## AUGUST UPRISING SHAKES BRITAIN'S HOLD

The August uprising in Bogside, in Belfast and in a dozen other Northern Ireland communities marked the end of a yearlong campaign. The campaign started with peaceful marches for Civil Rights. It ended with great mass turbulence that required a British occupation army, nearly 10,000 strong, to hold the people down. A glorious new chapter had been added to the age-old story of Ireland's struggle for liberation from British rule, reunification of her divided land, and social justice. Ireland is still not free, and even greater struggles can be expected. August showed that the Irish revolutionary tradition is still very much alive and that the days of British rule in Ireland are numbered.

The recent campaign began with demands for electoral reforms (such as one-man-one-vote in local elections) and for an end to discrimination against Catholics in jobs and housing. Its members at first were largely middle class liberals, along with students who added to the demands their own empty calls for socialism. Its tactics were non-violent protest marches combined with requests for assistance from the British Government.

Although a movement with little mass participation and incapable of challenging British rule in Northern Ireland, it met with brutal repression from the local authorities. This soon began to win it the mass support it had so far lacked. In August, 1968, the police harassed a peaceful march in order to keep the marchers away from the town centre of Dungannon. In October police attacked marchers in Derry with batons and water cannon. In January a peaceful

march across Northern Ireland was ambushed at Burntollet Bridge in County Derry by armed thugs, many of them police out of uniform. In April a sit-down demonstration in Derry was broken up by police and assistant thugs with such barbarity that even hardened press reporters from London expressed their shock and disgust. Meanwhile the Special Powers Act (praised by South African Prime Minister Vorster), which allows for arrest without warrant and detention without trial for an indefinite period, was supplemented by a revised Public Order Act which made even the various non-violent forms of protest illegal.

New tactics emerged as the movement gained an increasingly mass character. Water pipelines were blown up. More militance was shown in demonstrations. Workers and poor farmers now entering the movement brought with them the revolutionary republican heritage of the Irish people. The political illusions of the Civil Rights movement began to evaporate---the illusions that the British imperialist government is the people's friend, that non-violence can free a people held down by violence, or that socialism can be built in a land divided and dominated by foreign imperialism. In response to this new mood the British garrison in Northern Ireland was increased to 5000 men by April 21st. These were assigned to patrol "essential key installations in rural areas," according to the Defence Ministry, not yet to aid the police against the demonstrators.

August saw the movement reach an altogether higher stage. First in Belfast, then on the other side of Ulster

in the Bogside ghetto of Derry, then in Belfast again and all over Northern Ireland the people rose up, to be met with gas and bullets by the police. Belfast added several names to the roll-call of Irish revolutionary martyrs. When the police could no longer hold the people in check (by their own admission they had suffered 800 casualties since October) British troops, now increased to 6,600, were called into the cities. By August 20th the Times could write: "The British Government last night virtually took over responsibility for preserving law and order in Northern Ireland."

The people of Northern Ireland are now face to face with the British imperialist state, in the form of the Army, which has steadily increased in size since August and is now planning for a permanent occupation. To the people it is now very clear that the system which denies them votes, jobs and houses, the system which divided their country and holds it divided now, is British imperialism. None of these wrongs can be righted until British imperialism is driven out of Ireland. Only the Irish people can free Ireland. It is no use appealing to the government in Dublin, itself controlled by foreign imperialism. And no help can come from the United Nations, dominated as it is by the Americans and Russians. These powers, given a chance, would ravage Ireland the way they have ravaged Vietnam and Czechoslovakia. It is the task of British workers and progressives to say: **BRITISH IMPERIALISM, GET OUT OF IRELAND! LET THE IRISH PEOPLE SETTLE THEIR OWN AFFAIRS!**



# BRITISH IMPERIALISM GET OUT OF IRELAND!

## N. IRELAND: COLONY AND PUPPET STATE

## BRITAIN'S OLDEST COLONY

The political crisis in Northern Ireland arises from four features of its economy.

1. NORTHERN IRELAND IS A COLONY TIED TO THE BRITISH ECONOMY. For over 300 years all the land and resources of Ireland were in British hands. Ireland provided Britain with food, raw materials and labourers. In return, Britain dumped manufactured goods in Ireland, crushing native industry. Britain's economic domination of Ireland continues today. Though independent in name, the south still depends on Britain for markets and investment. Northern Ireland is a colony pure and simple. 70% of investments there are British, and decisions about the economy are made in the City of London, not in Belfast.

2. THE BRITISH ECONOMY IS IN A STATE OF CRISIS. British industry is backward and having difficulty selling goods on the world market. Northern Ireland, being so closely tied to Britain, has the same problem. The main industries, shipbuilding and textiles, have been declining faster and faster. Unemployment now stands at 8.4%.

3. NORTHERN IRELAND WORKERS ARE SUPEREXPLOITED BY BRITAIN. If workers in Britain are exploited (paid below the value of what they produce) colonial workers are "superexploited" (paid even less). The average Northern Ireland worker earns little over half as much as a British worker and is three times more likely to be unemployed. One third of all families have less than £10 a week coming in; three quarters have less than £20. Low incomes mean low living standards. In half the houses there is no flush toilet, in a fifth no running water.

4. PROTESTANT WORKERS ARE SLIGHTLY LESS OPPRESSED THAN CATHOLIC WORKERS. Traditional religious differences are encouraged by employers, who like nothing better than a divided working class, one half despising the other. Protestants are favoured for jobs, and have better chances of getting houses from the protestant-dominated local councils.

These economic facts go a long way to explain the political situation in Northern Ireland. It is Britain's serious economic crisis, hitting harder at the colonial workers of Northern Ireland than at the working class at home, which has sparked off the greatest mass movement since Britain carved off her Ulster province 50 years ago. The catholic workers have been the most cruelly oppressed and they form the foundation of the mass movement. Many protestant workers, especially those organized in trade unions, have joined the movement for democratic rights, better conditions and an end to police repression. A few, who have opposed the movement, "are slaves in spirit because they have been reared up among a people whose conditions of servitude are more slavish than their own" (as James Connolly wrote more than fifty years ago).

Who is responsible for the misery in Northern Ireland? The protestant ruling class and their Stormont Government are nothing but front men for British imperialism. Their job, nandsomely paid, is to run the colony smoothly so that the profits from superexploitation of the workers can flow back to the City of London. The crisis proved that when these puppets fail to do their job the British rulers can push them out of the way and take over. British Home Sec. Callaghan takes tour of inspection... British "experts" head various commissions (to investigate police, riots, use of gas, etc.)...

BRITISH TROOPS ARE IN NORTHERN IRELAND - NEARLY 10,000 OF THEM! TO BRING PEACE?

WHEN HAVE BRITISH TROOPS BROUGHT PEACE TO ANY PART OF THE EMPIRE?

NOT IN MALAYA. NOT IN KENYA. NOT IN BORNEO. NOT IN ADEN.

THE ROLE OF BRITISH TROOPS HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO SUPPRESS THE STRUGGLES OF THE PEOPLE AGAINST BRITISH IMPERIALISM.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT IS THE AGENT OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM. WILSON SENDS TROOPS TO NORTHERN IRELAND TO SAVE BRITAIN'S PUPPET GOVERNMENT THERE BY CRUSHING POPULAR REVOLT.

BRITISH TROOPS ARE IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO MAINTAIN IMPERIALIST EXPLOITATION OF BRITAIN'S OLDEST COLONY. THEY ARE THERE TO SAFEGUARD THE PARTITION OF IRELAND ON THE OLD IMPERIALIST PRINCIPLE OF DIVIDE AND RULE.

THE PRESENCE OF BRITISH TROOPS MAKES IT CLEAR TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND THAT THE REAL OPPRESSIVE POWER IS BASED IN LONDON, NOT AT STORMONT.

THE BRITISH IMPERIALIST GOVERNMENT PROPS UP THE DECREPIT, FASCIST REGIME OF CHICHESTER-CLARK. IF THAT REGIME IS TO BE OVERTHROWN, BRITISH IMPERIALISM, THE CAUSE OF ALL IRELAND'S ILLS, MUST BE EXPELLED

OUT WITH BRITISH TROOPS! OUT WITH BRITISH RULE! OUT WITH BRITISH CONTROL OF THE ECONOMY OF NORTHERN IRELAND!

THERE WILL NOT BE JOBS NOR HOUSING NOR CIVIL RIGHTS FOR ALL - LET ALONE SOCIALISM - WHILE THE LEECH OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM CLINGS ON IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

OUTSIDE EUROPE MANY COLONIAL PEOPLES HAVE JOINED TOGETHER AND RISEN UP TO DRIVE BRITISH IMPERIALISM OUT.

THE IRISH PEOPLE ARE ON THE MARCH TOWARD REUNIFICATION AND THE LIBERATION OF IRELAND FROM IMPERIALIST DOMINATION.

ONLY A UNITED PEOPLE WILL SUCCEED IN GETTING BRITAIN OUT. GREAT STRIDES TOWARD UNITY HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN NORTHERN IRELAND DURING THE PAST YEAR, BUT RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS REMAIN. THEY ARE THE SECRET WEAPON OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM WHICH IT DOES ALL IN ITS POWER TO FOMENT.

MORE AND MORE PROTESTANT WORKERS RECOGNISE THIS AND REALISE THAT THE INDEPENDENCE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IS A MYTH AND A SHAM. THEY SEE THAT THE PRICE OF PRIVILEGES OVER THE CATHOLICS IS A BRITISH MILITARY DICTATORSHIP.

IRISH WORKERS, BOTH CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT, ARE BECOMING AWARE THAT THE COMMON OBJECT OF THEIR HOSTILITY MUST BE BRITISH IMPERIALISM AND ITS OCCUPYING FORCE. THE "PEACE" WHICH BRITISH TROOPS ARE BRINGING TO NORTHERN IRELAND IS AN ENDING OF RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES FOR THE COMMON FIGHT TO THROW OUT THE BRITISH AGGRESSORS AND STOP IMPERIALIST EXPLOITATION.

THE THOUSANDS OF IRISH WORKERS IN BRITAIN WILL NOT STAND IDLY BY WHILE THEIR BROTHERS AT HOME ARE GRAPPLING WITH THE FORCES OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM.

WE CALL ON ALL WORKERS IN BRITAIN TO SHOW THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THEIR IRISH WORKING CLASS BROTHERS - BOTH HERE AND IN IRELAND.

THE WILSON GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS SENT TROOPS TO NORTHERN IRELAND IS THE SAME GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS LAUNCHED AN ALL-OUT ATTACK ON THE WORKERS OF BRITAIN.

DOWN WITH THE IMPERIALIST LABOUR GOVERNMENT WHICH IS THE ENEMY OF WORKERS EVERYWHERE!

LONG LIVE THE STRUGGLE OF THE IRISH PEOPLE WHICH WILL SURELY END FOR ALL TIME THE CENTURIES-OLD MURDER AND ENSLAVEMENT OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM!

British government representatives placed in key Stormont offices... Above all, British troops replace local police, whom they are empowered to disarm. It is transparently clear that British imperialism rules in Northern Ireland and is responsible for all the misery there. It is therefore absurd for some people in the Civil Rights movement to call for assistance from Westminster against Stormont. How can you recruit the

puppet master against the puppet? The truth is that Stormont, the police, the B Specials and the Paisleyites would not last a day against the "risen people" of Ireland did they not have British imperialism behind them. As puppet-in-chief Chichester-Clark put it, speaking from the steps of Stormont Castle on August 15th: "In the last resort our enemies face not only the determination of Ulster but the might of Britain."

Britain's domination of Ireland began 800 years ago. Not long before, Ireland's culture had been among the most advanced in Europe and Ireland had been famous for its gold and its poets. The British invasion put paid to all this. Although the Irish succeeded for a time in confining British rule to a small area around Dublin, the history of Ireland henceforth was to be a history of the fight for freedom from Britain.

As capitalism developed in Britain, speculators began to covet the rich land of Ireland. Attempts to settle colonists were opposed by the Irish, and Britain embarked on a war of conquest. Here was the source of the religious differences which today plague Northern Ireland. Originally all Irish were catholics, as were all British. The official switch to protestantism in Britain coincided with the brutal conquest of Ireland. Britain tried to force her new religion on the Irish, and the colonists she settled on Irish lands were all protestants. Not surprisingly, the Irish clung all the more to catholicism and opposed the protestantism of the aggressors. Today's protestants in Northern Ireland are the descendants of the colonists planted by Britain 300-400 years ago.

The conquest proceeded with the greatest barbarity. Cromwell's campaigns cut the native Irish population by half. Tens of thousands were sold into slavery in America; the rest were driven from their homes and deprived of all rights. The purpose of this was to guarantee for Britain a supply of cheap food and raw materials and a people who would labour for Britain's profit. During the so-called "Great Famine", when 1.5 million Irish people starved to death, food enough to feed three times the population was shipped out to Britain under cover of British guns. An official government report showed that in one year (1835) the Irish people produced agricultural goods to the value of £36 million, of which they received £6 million while the balance went in rent (to British landlords), profits (to British merchants), taxes (to the British Government) and tithes (to the Church).

Again and again, throughout the centuries, the Irish people rose up in rebellion, but without success. Then in modern times the Home Rule struggle merged with the developing workers movement to produce the armed Easter Rising in 1916, led by James Connolly and Padraig Pearse. Although the rising failed and its leaders were murdered by the British authorities it gave a great impetus to the independence struggle. The Irish Republican Army waged a liberation war against Britain's notorious Black-and-Tans from 1919 till eventual success in 1921 with the granting of political autonomy in the south. But this was only a partial victory. Six Ulster counties were artificially amputated from the remaining twenty-six so that Britain could keep a firm hold on the most highly industrialized part of Ireland. Ever since, Britain has used the traditional religious hostilities, combined with "bait" in the form of slightly less abject living conditions for the protestant majority, to keep Northern Ireland as a colony. In the south the Republic of Ireland is still dominated by foreign economic interests (American, German and Japanese, as well as British) which suck the lifeblood of the people and keep the country poor. Only the expulsion of all foreign interests from north and south, and the taking of all businesses into the hands of the people, can lay the basis for a prosperous and socialist united Ireland in days to come.

## COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN (MARXIST-LENINIST)

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# THE BATTLE OF BOGSIDE

The people of Derry are among the most oppressed and exploited in Britain's colony of Northern Ireland. In 1967 the British-owned Monarch Electric Co. shut down, throwing out of work 1,800 men from the catholic Bogside area. Today 19% of Derry men are unemployed and 2,000 families homeless, most of them catholics. Although there are twice as many catholics as protestants, electoral manipulation gives protestants control of the council and allows them to monopolise the council houses.

In face of these intolerable conditions the catholic workers began to rebel. The authorities reacted by sending the police in to terrorise the people of Bogside. There had already been two such occasions earlier this year. With a big protestant march planned for August 12th the people of Bogside knew what to expect and began building barricades on the 11th.

The battle raged from the 12th to the evening of the 14th. The aim of the police and of their many willing assistants was to break into Bogside and beat up the people. There were 1,000 police and they were armed with riot shields, batons, lead pipes, bricks and stones, water cannon and CS gas. The Bogside had bricks and stones, petrol bombs and barricades, and their aim was to keep the police out. Fighting went on continuously and the police appear to have made two major charges into the Bogside both of which were beaten back with heavy losses to the police. When the fighting ended the police had completely failed in their objective; the people had succeeded in theirs. It was a notable victory.

The battle ended with the police withdrawing and the British Army intervening. This outcome raises two questions. Why did the Army intervene? And why did the police not use their ultimate weapon - guns? By the evening of the 13th the police, according to the Observer, were "very weary". The Sunday Times reports that at lunchtime on that day Gen. Freeland, commander of the British troops, told the Defence Ministry in London that he "did not think the exhausted police could hold Bogside in check for more than another 36 hours." The authorities now had two alternatives. One was to send in armed B Specials against the unarmed people. The other was to send in the troops (not, as Bernadette Devlin put it, to "protect the poor", but to protect the police) under the cover of a "peacekeeping operation" to "separate the combatants". The first course was a non-starter. Derry, unlike Belfast, is just over the border from the Irish Republic. If armed police had begun to massacre the unarmed people of Bogside the Dublin government, under the control of foreign economic interests, might not have inter-

vened (Lynch refused even to send gas-masks) but the Republican movement certainly would. The result would have been not only a bloody defeat for the police but quite possibly also a political crisis in the south as mass sympathy shifted from the government to the Republicans - a result that would have been disastrous to the future rule of British imperialism in Ireland.

As for the people of Bogside, the important question to answer is how they were able to defeat the police assault on their community. First, the Civil Rights movement's approach of non-violence in the face of violent attacks in order to win the support of someone else (usually British imperialism) was scrapped. The Bogside relied upon themselves and employed violent resistance to violent attacks. As the Observer reported: "Moderation died... it seemed to the Catholics that they had now become involved in something quite different from the protest movement of the civil rights campaign." Second, on this political basis it was possible to fully mobilise the masses. Although the front-line fighters only numbered 300 there

were thousands in support. Old men, women and children carried baths filled with petrol, tore up rags for fuses, made the petrol bombs in "factories" at the rear and carried them up to the front in milkcrates. Doctors and nurses set up casualty wards. "Priests, politicians, people, fused together in a common will to fight." Third, they showed great tactical inventiveness. Two ten-story blocks of flats covered the entrance to Bogside. From the roofs of these flats petrol bombs were rained down on the attackers. Experiments showed that a kind of napalm effect could be achieved by mixing soap and oil with petrol, that the effects of CS gas could be minimised by improvising gasmasks out of handkerchiefs sprayed with vinegar. Finally, they conquered through their courage and determination. The defenders of Bogside may well have studied the articles on street fighting by James Connolly, Commandant of the Irish Citizen Army and the greatest leader the Irish working class has ever had. Certainly they demonstrated that Connolly's fighting spirit lives on in the Irish people.

## BEWARE OF FALSE 'LEADERS'

When any mass movement surges up certain people tend to be chosen as "leaders" by the press. More often than not the ideas of these "leaders" conform much more closely to those of the monopolist newspaper owners than to those of the people in the movement.

Bernadette Devlin is a case in point. This "miniskirted Joan of Arc" (as Fleet Street likes to dub her) is no more a genuine leader of the people of Northern Ireland than Tariq Ali is a leader of students or Victor Feather a leader of workers in Britain. Like them she has been given this position by the press. If we look at the statements that they quote her as making it is easy to see why.

In April, in her maiden speech in the House of Commons, this "leader" (of a people with a revolutionary history of violent struggle extending over hundreds of years) declared herself a believer in nonviolence. A few days later she presented her "solution" to the Northern Ireland problem when she said: "I would be prepared to go along with the suggestion of direct rule from Westminster" - an opinion the Times quotes her as still holding in September. Not surprising really for one who sits at Westminster, but hardly acceptable to the people of Northern Ireland, all of whose problems stem from the fact that their land is a colony of British imperialism and is already ruled from Westminster.

All Miss Devlin's "leadership" in the August Uprising was consistent with her opinion that British imperialism is the benefactor of the Irish people, not their oppressor. She called for control of the police by British officers and for British troops to be sent in. She said that "the Bogside were glad to see the troops", that "now things were going to be for the better for the people of Ulster", and that "the British Army must remain to protect the poor".

Interlarded with these words of praise for British imperialism in Northern Ireland, of course, were many denunciations of the British as "devils of slavery to the Irish", etc., and many fine-sounding calls for a "socialist workers republic". But she never explained how the British Army was going to free the slaves from the devils of slavery - let alone what sort of "socialism" it was going to install in Northern Ireland (perhaps the Harold Wilson variety!).

It was somehow fitting when, at the height of the crisis, Miss Devlin took off for what the Times called a "royal progress" through the United States. After all, the Irish people were in the safe hands of 6,600 British troops. And she was all right too, with an escort of New York cops (a police force notorious for its brutality to the poor and Black) and with a seat in Parliament and an attentive press to look forward to when she got back to Westminster.