IRELAND
ONE NATION!

AUGUST UPRISING SHAKES BRITAIN'S HOLD

The August uprising in Bogsie, 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 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 the mass support it had so far lacked. In August, 1968, the police harrassed 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 Bogsie 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 500 casualties since October) British troops, now increased to 6,000, 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 Czecho- slovakia. 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 GETS OF IRELAND!

N. IRELAND: COLONY AND PUPPET STATE

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

1. NORTHERN IRELAND IS A COLONY TIED TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE. For over 300 years all the land and resources of Ireland were in Britain. Ireland provided food and raw materials to Britain and other colonial powers.

2. THE WELFARE STATE IS IN A STATE OF CRISIS. British industry is hard-hit, and factory owners and workers are demanding payment on Britain for markets and investment.

3. NORTHERN IRELAND IS A COUNTRY WHERE there is no freedom of speech, no trade unions, no political parties, no freedom of the press, no freedom of movement, no freedom of association, no freedom of religion, and no freedom of the people to vote for their own government.

4. THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND ARE SLIGHTLY LESS OPPRESSED THAN CATHOLIC WORKERS. Traditional religious differences have been softened by unemployment, which have better chances of getting jobs with the Protestant-control property owners.

BRITISH TROOPS ARE IN NORTHERN IRELAND - NEARLY 10,000 OF THEM.

TO BRITISH PEACE?

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

NOT IN MALAYA, NOT IN KENYA, NOT IN BORNEO, NOT IN AFRICA.

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

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT IS THE AGENT OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN THE SERVICE OF IMPERIALISM.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTED BY THE BRITISH WORKERS.

BRITISH TROOPS IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO MAINTAIN IMPERIALIST EXPLORATION OF THE ANCIENT COLONIES. THEY ARE THERE TO SECURE THE PARTITION OF IRELAND ON THE OLD IMPERIALIST PRINCIPLE OF DILETTE AND RULE.

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

THE BRITISH IMPERIALIST GOVERNMENT PROMPS THE DECREPIT, FASCIST REGIME OF CHURCHILL-CLEER.

IF THAT REGIME IS TO BE OVERTHROWN, THEN IMPERIALISM, THE CAUSE OF ALL IRELAND'S ILLS, MUST BE EXPELLED.

OUT WITH BRITISH TROOPS: OUT WITH BRITISH RULE: OUT WITH BRITISH IMPERIALISM.

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

ONLY A UNIFIED PEOPLE WILL SUCCEED IN GETTING BRITAIN OUT.

GREAT STRIDES TOWARD UNITY HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN NORTHERN IRELAND DURING THE PAST YEAR. EAMONN DE VALERA AND THE INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST PARTY ARE IN TALKS WITH THE IRISH WORKERS TO FORM A UNIFIED GOVERNMENT.

BUT THE REAL DIVIDING LINE REMAINS. THEY ARE THE SECRET WEAPON OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM WHICH IT USES ALL ITS POWER TO FOMENT.

MORE AND MORE PROTESTANT WORKERS REALIZE THIS AND ARE TAKING A LEAD IN THE MOVEMENT.

IRELAND IS NOW A COLONY FREE FROM BRITISH IMPERIALISM.

WE CALL ON ALL WORKERS IN IRELAND TO JOIN THEM AND FORM A UNIFIED GOVERNMENT.

DOWNS WITH THE IMPERIALIST LABOUR GOVERNMENT WHICH IS THE ENEMY OF WORKERS EVERYWHERE.

BRITAIN’S OCCUPATION ARMY

Britain’s domination of Ireland began 800 years ago. Not long before, Ireland’s culture had been among the most advanced in the world. The British invasion brought poverty and misery to the people. The British invasion put an end to all this. Although the Irish succeeded in fighting the British rule to a small area around Dublin, the history of Ireland has been a history of the fight for freedom from Britain.

As capitalism developed in Britain, so did the expansion of British imperialism. 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 British colonies was motivated by political considerations. Britain tried to force her new religion on the Irish, but the catholics just settled on Irish grounds and refused to accept it. Finally, the Irish joined the catholics against the protestant invaders in the struggle for independence. The conquest proceeded with great barbarity. Cromwell’s campaigns in the east of Ireland saw the complete destruction of towns and villages. In one year (1635) the Irish people produced agricultural goods to the value of £10 million, of which they received £6 million while the balance went to (in British landlord) profits (and the British Government) and others (to the Church).

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 requoted 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 hatreds to keep Northern Ireland as a colony.

The Republic of Ireland is still dominated by foreign economic interests (American, German and Norwegian). Today’s situation is much the same as that of the Irish Republican Army. The life of the people and the country are ruled by the interests from north and south, and the taking of all businesses into the hands of the people can be achieved by a prosperous and socialist united Ireland in days to come.
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. closed down a factory, throwing out of work 1,100 men from the catholic Bogside area. Today 19% of Derry men are unemployed and 2,000 families homeless, most of them catholic. 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 peoples 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 Bogsiders 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, General 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 make trouble, the unarmed people of Bogside and the Dublin government, considering the risks 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 a possible collapse of the British 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 Bogsiders 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 frontline fighters only numbered 300 there were thousands in support. Old men, women and children carried baths filled with petrol, tore up rugs for fuses, made the petrol bombs in "factories" at the rate and carried them up to the front in wooden boxes. 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-storey 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.