

# workers power

Not 'voices for withdrawal'  
but ACTION to get the  
TROOPS OUT NOW!

FOR A LABOUR MOVEMENT BASED CAMPAIGN

Eleven years into the war in northern Ireland - after 2000 deaths, internment without trial, the establishment of no-jury courts, the torture of Republican prisoners, the passing of the notorious 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' and the widespread repression suffered everyday by the nationalist population at the hands of the British army - the Liberal backed 'Committee for Withdrawal from Ireland' is tentatively raising its voice in favour of a 'policy of withdrawal'.

The fact that the committee fails to demand the immediate withdrawal of troops on the basis of demanding an end to British domination in Ireland is not surprising. The Liberals, Lords, Churchmen and hangers on who make up the leaders of this campaign reflect a tiny section of ruling class opinion - a war weary section - who are "flying a kite" for withdrawal. Their 'withdrawal' can take place at any future date, preferably after smashing the Republican resistance, comforted in the knowledge that the Protestant dominated UDR, trained and armed to the teeth by the British army, is sufficient protection for British interests in the North.

What the committee will not recognise, and never will, is that there is a war going on in Ireland. On one side is the British army and its agents in the north and on the other is the Republican and nationalist population that will not accept the partition of their country and their forcible retention within the state of their oppressors. The British ruling class is pursuing this war in order to prop up the sectarian orange state which was created by an enforced division of Ireland, the very basis of which is discrimination against and repression of the Catholic minority within it.

That is why the British working class has no interest in defending such a policy, why indeed it has a duty to defend the Irish people against an army sent there to defend this creation of British imperialism. That is why we support unconditionally the right of the IRA and other Republicans and socialists to take up arms against the British army - something the Irish people will do as long as their national unity is denied. We stand foursquare for the defeat of British imperialism in Ireland. The only solution to the present situation in Ireland is the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of troops thus allowing the future of the six counties to be determined by the Irish people alone.

## HOW TO GET THE TROOPS OUT.

The committee for withdrawal has held one demonstration, the bulk of which was made up of the left and trade unionists marching behind a troops out now banner - almost a year later they are holding this rally. They might have added a few more 'influential' names to their sponsor list but they clearly don't intend to do the one thing which could break the presence of British troops in Ireland - to mobilise the working class against it. Only the labour movement, acting in solidarity with the struggle in Ireland, has the power to paralyse and defeat the British ruling class's campaign of repression in Ireland - through massive demonstrations, blacking of supplies to the army, strike action etc. The Liberals would run a mile from such a campaign.

Yet it is not only the Liberals who, understandably, back away from this task, but their erstwhile supporters in this campaign - the Socialist Workers Party, the IMG and the Labour Lefts. The SWP with its claimed 4½ thousand members and its ability to mobilise over a thousand trade union delegates at its rank and file conferences, has a consistent record of shying away from building such a campaign. They proudly told us in a leaflet given out at the August demonstration that, "Our primary task in the weeks and months ahead is to build on the forces mobilised by the August 12th demonstration, a genuine movement inside the British working class which can put real muscles into the struggle for a complete British withdrawal, political, economic, military." Where, we would ask SWP members at this meeting, is there one shred of evidence that your organisation made this its 'primary task' - or ever has? The IMG likewise with its dominant position in the Troops Out Movement has blocked every attempt to make the main focus of the TOM the building of such a labour movement based campaign.

Both these organisations have at every opportunity dropped the fight in the working class for 'Troops Out Now'. The IMG's 'International Tribunal' aimed at mobilising 'concern' over violations of human rights in Ireland was one example - and one which, as predicted, ended in a pathetic fiasco. Now the SWP is attempting a similar retreat devoting its energies to a 'Charter 80' campaign - hoping to mobilise around 'the international concern for human rights'. We also support the campaign for political status for Irish prisoners, but we don't separate it from the fight to defeat British imperialism in Ireland. For the SWP it is a soft option alternative to using their not inconsiderable industrial base to start the serious work of committing the trade union movement to troops out now. Is it little wonder that both these organisations now trail the Liberals in this 'committee for withdrawal'?

We don't underestimate the difficulties - the short shrift given to opposers of 'bipartisanship' on Ireland at the Labour Party conference and the recent Tameside events - shows the determination of the British ruling class and its agents in the labour movement to prevent such a movement growing. But it is the only way forward which offers a chance of success.

The recent conference organised by Tameside trades council which called for a trade union based campaign for troops out now, self determination for the Irish people, the repeal of the PTA and for political status, offers yet another chance for the left to build such a campaign in the labour movement. All trade unionists and

Labour Party members should support this initiative to ensure the widest possible support. Members of the SWP and the IMG who believe that the major priority is to build a troops out current in the working class should force their leaderships to stop tailing the Liberals and Jimmy Carter's 'human rights' campaign and to mobilise in support of it. And if sections of the Liberals and their fellow travellers want to contribute in this struggle, let them take their pacifism into their own parties and paralyse their own class with it - not ours.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE REPUBLICANS AGAINST THE BRITISH ARMY.

TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND NOW. NO TO PHASED WITHDRAWAL.

LET THE IRISH PEOPLE AS A WHOLE DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF THE SIX COUNTIES.

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