

In his opening remarks Mr. FITZ said that he had attended Connolly Commemoration meetings in many parts this year, but that he felt that the meeting here was the most significant of all because in Derry there existed the type of situation which CONNOLLY fought against, a situation where the majority were being exploited by the minority.

Continuing he declared that now it appeared that nothing was to be gained by talking at Stormont or Westminster and that the time for action had arrived. He said that if the people taking part in the meeting had decided to march on the route originally planned, the political Gestapo known as the R.U.C. and the 'B' Special Constabulary would have fled to the hills.

Mr. FITZ stated that it was being frequently said that the Six-County area was part of the United Kingdom, but that this was so in name only. He somewhat counteracted his earlier statement by saying that he still accepted the constitutional position and was trying to work within it to try to right the wrongs which had existed in this area for so long. He maintained that if the area was an integral part of the United Kingdom then why did the same system of electoral franchise not exist as existed in Britain? Why did we not have a Parliamentary Commissioner? Why did we not have a Race Relations Act?

Answering these last two questions he said that the introduction of such legislation in the North would undermine the position of Unionism here and there could never be democracy whilst Unionism existed. There could never even be British democracy while there was a Unionist Government at Stormont and it was up to the ordinary people of the North to change this.

At this point he launched an attack on the Nationalist Party for tolerating the position in Derry where with a Nationalist majority the City Council was composed of Twelve Unionist members and eight Nationalist members when it should be exactly the reverse.

Referring to the praise being given to the Prime Minister, Captain O'NEILL he inferred that here credit was being given for something which had not been done. The Prime Minister he maintained had uttered pious platitudes about how the community should live together and a lot of people had been taken in by this attitude when they should really be aware that Captain O'NEILL was just as strong in his views as PAISLEY. The only difference was that whilst PAISLEY would walk over you with hob-nailed boots Terence O'NEILL would do the same only wearing carpet slippers. He did not intend to permit any to walk over him.

Attacking the local representatives of the Trade Unions he stated that it was a shame that no officials were present at the meeting and he insinuated that if the Union leaders were not fit to lead they should get out of office.

He dealt briefly with the situation at Shannon Industrial Estate where a foreign firm had refused to recognise the official Union and the Southern Government had backed them to the hilt. He maintained that exploitation was as rife in the South as it was in the North and where it was not foreign exploitation it was exploitation by Irishmen.

Returning to the question of constitutional methods he challenged Captain O'NEILL to charge him with going beyond these and indicated again that if constitutional methods did not bring social justice and democracy to the North then he indicated that he would be prepared to go outside these methods.

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He said that the time had come for the people of Derry to take the law into their own hands and that it was time that they brought their politics out into the street.

Closing he intimated that he would in the not too distant future give the people of Derry the chance to bring their politics into the street as his ambition was to set up a Socialist Republican Party in the City and give the people a chance to right their wrongs.

Throughout the address he dealt with James CONNOLLY's ideals and how he personally had been effected by reading some of his writings. He hoped to do all in his power to bring into practice many of the aims of Connolly, but he would only be able to scratch the surface no matter what progress he made.

He closed by appealing to those present to go home and re-dedicate themselves to the teachings and ideals of CONNOLLY and in doing so they would help to bring about a change in the situation in Derry and indeed in the whole of Northern Ireland.

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