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Britain

Solidarity and unity now

- News from around the world -

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Anti*Capitalist Resistance statement on far right violence sweeping Britain and Northern Ireland in August 2024

The tragic murder of three young children by a 17 year old in Southport in July 2024 has been manipulated by opportunistic fascist forces to organise a series of riots across England. They have kick started a response from across the organised workers' movement and threatened muslim communities.

The initial 'reason' for these protests was rapidly abandoned as they became excuses for violent racism targeting mosques, hotels housing asylum seekers and any individual Black people they could find. Whilst the counter protests often outnumbered the reactionaries, that wasn't always the case, and, even where it was, communities were left vulnerable after the anti-racist protest had ended.

What we are seeing is the consequences of decades of neoliberalism; gutting our communities and turning us all into competitors in a global market, austerity stripping back our lives to the bare minimum, racist tabloids pumping out anti-immigrant hate to sell newspapers, politicians from both the Tories and even Labour stoking anti migrant sentiment to scoop up votes. The consequences of this are being played out now.

Whilst the riots themselves only involved a few thousand people in total, they point to a far right that is increasingly confident and believes that they have a much wider layer of support around them. The weekend before the tragic events in Southport, Tommy Robinson held a rally in Trafalgar Square of around 15,000 people, which he claimed was the 'largest patriotic rally' in history and also said it was close to 100,000 people.

These riots are another example of the growing threat of fascism to draw in wider numbers of far right, populist authoritarians. Conspiracy theories and online rumours, amplified by fascist social media accounts, encouraged people to take to the streets. They advocate for climate conspiracy theories as much as they perpetuate racist lies about immigrants. Many involved in or sympathetic to these riots deny the accusation that they are far right or fascists.

The far right no longer focus exclusively on race, instead they talk about multiculturalism being the problem, they target Muslims but claim this is not because of race but because 'they are a different culture', they claim not to target Black people but immigrants and refugees, which everyone knows is a code for Black people. They don't complain about too many non-white people in movies or TV shows, they argue that modern film and TV is 'too woke'. These codes, dog whistles, and inferences are the swamp in which reactionary ideas swim – plausible deniability whilst you throw a brick at a mosque. This framing even allows them to attract a handful of people from ethnic minority groups who support the Islamophobic agenda or want to protect their limited securities under capitalism by adding to the chorus of hate against newly arrived refugees – a "pulling up the ladder" approach.

For some years, much of the far right has made common cause with Zionism and supporters of the Israeli state. Both groups seek to redefine antisemitism as opposition to Zionism and Israel, rather than as racism directed against Jews, and thus to direct criticism against the left rather than the right. And both groups share the same ultimate aim of removing Jews from Britain to the apartheid Israeli state. [\[1\]](#)

The same people also target trans people. Tommy Robinson's demo was called on trans pride day, and a steward of the trans demo was attacked. Anyone on the margins, anyone who doesn't conform to their rigid ideal of white,

cis-heterosexual, right wing and 'patriotic' life, is a target.

The shift from presenting as classical Nazis (as the National Front once did) to a more amorphous 'post-fascist' far right populism is only an evolution of their strategy. They know they can reach larger numbers if they moderate their language, but behind the talk of multiculturalism it is clear that they want an all-out war against anyone who doesn't fit their vision of a pure white Britain.

These violent nationalist racists are hoping to organise those people attracted to increasingly right wing ways of seeing the world, blaming refugees for a lack of housing, blaming immigrants for low wages, blaming trans people for undermining their concept of gender. For all their claim of protecting women and children, they are deeply misogynistic and oppose feminist demands for women's bodily autonomy. They want to force women into a traditional family life, and in some cases out of paid work

Their politics of grievance blames everyone except for those with power – all that anger targeted at some of the most marginalised and vulnerable in our society.

What the Labour government does to improve the quality of people's lives and whether it calls out racism when it manifests is crucial. Labour Chancellor Rachel Reeves continuing the austerity agenda is only going to make the issue worse. Trade Unions and community campaigns need to fight for a reversal of these politics of scarcity that only drive more people into the arms of the far right.

While mobilising against the boot boys is important, we should not downplay the threat from the Faragist and Tory right whose policies and rhetoric have normalized feelings that could easily have led to the murder of asylum seekers this weekend

ACR stands in solidarity with communities being subjected to these violent riots and those who fear they might be next.

The far right must be opposed whilst their demonstrations are still small – given the decline of living standards and the growing crises within capitalism they are likely to continue to grow. Defence of our towns, hotels housing asylum seekers and immigration law offices through mass community mobilisation is central.

Self Defence is no offence for the communities that they are targeting with their violent race hate. We cannot rely on the police to protect us. The police force is institutionally racist and queerphobic itself, and calling for more police powers only continues the recent trend towards authoritarianism.

Trade unions and the workers' movement must make the fight against the far right a greater priority. There must be an open debate in the workers' movement about how to defeat this reactionary wave. Trade unions need to discuss this issue at all levels and ensure it is debated at the TUC in September. Unions should take the initiative in organising unity meetings and rallies, which give a space for all those who want to speak out against the far-right to do so and be actively involved in organising counter-mobilisations to fascist demonstrations. They must also continue and increase their equality work, opposing all forms of oppression and discrimination

The large protests in Liverpool against the far right and the alliances being built between the left and the communities mobilised around Palestine show how we can build a mass movement to defeat these ideas and the fascist thugs. The sizeable trade union contingent on the Trans Liberation protest on 27 July shows a way forward too, linking the workers' movement into wider social issues that can improve people's lives in practical ways.

Solidarity and unity now

The protests also must be defeated politically. We need to advocate for the kind of politics that can undercut the grievances and despairs that are fuelling the far right. We defeat fascism by showing to people that socialism works and that the labour movement can fight to defend living standards.

We say:

- Build united resistance to the far-right and fascists
- Defend migrants, refugees and trans people
- Counter fascist threats, defend mosques.
- Self defence is no offence
- Organise resistance to Labour's austerity policies
- Build a mass ecosocialist movement that fights for social ownership, participatory democracy and radical abundance as a way to counteract the despair and hatred of the far right.

August 5 2024

[Anticapitalist Resistance](#)

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[1] This paragraph has been updated subsequent to initial publication.