

The standing army and the people's militia

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Left Unity is against the standing army and for the armed people. This principle will never be realised voluntarily by the capitalist state. It has to be won, in the first place by the working class developing its own militia.

Such a body grows out of the class struggle itself: defending picket lines, mass demonstrations, workplace occupations, fending off fascists, etc.

As the class struggle intensifies, conditions are created for the workers to arm themselves and win over sections of the military forces of the capitalist state. Every opportunity must be used to take even tentative steps towards this goal. As circumstances allow, the working class must equip itself with all weaponry necessary to bring about revolution.

To facilitate this we demand:

1. Rank and file personnel in the state's armed bodies must be protected from bullying, humiliating treatment and being used against the working class.
2. There must be full trade union and democratic rights, including the right to form bodies such as soldiers' councils.
3. The privileges of the officer caste must be abolished. Officers must be elected. Workers in uniform must become the allies of the masses in struggle.
4. The people have the right to bear arms and defend themselves.
5. The dissolution of the standing army and the formation of a popular militia under democratic control.