THATCHER UNMOVED AS M.P.
HUNGER STRIKER NEARS DEATH!

All four of the hunger strikers are now in the prison hospital. Bobby Sands is now seriously ill. He has lost over 31 pounds. He has been on hunger strike for 48 days and his family has been told by the doctor looking after him that time should now be measured in days rather than weeks.

Frankie Hughes has had the slowest weight loss of the four, having now lost 15lbs. He is feeling tired and his tongue is dry. Roy McCreech has lost 15 lbs and is having frequent headaches. Patric O’Hara has suffered the fastest weight loss of over 21lbs now.

BOBBY SANDS MP

With hunger striker Bobby Sands getting elected as MP by the people of Fermanagh it has undermined the argument of Thatcher and Atkins and co that only a small number of people support the hunger strikers’ demands.

IF VOTING COULD CHANGE THE SYSTEM THEY WOULD ABOLISH IT!

There was a move to expel Bobby Sands from the House of Commons. In other words if it came to it, they were prepared to “f**k” the electoral system if it didn’t suit them. The liberals felt that this expulsions was a bit too extreme, and anyway this one man was no threat and would soon be dead anyway.

S S RUC

The electoral support has obviously needled the authorities who can be assured of cooling their anger by acting with an even heavier hand as evidenced in the past week, towards H-block supporters. The forces are especially eager to contain any demonstrations within the ghettos.

ALL RIGHT FOR SOME.....

The demonstrators hadn’t a chance to get near the City Hall in the recent rally. The RUC (backed as usual by the Army) stopped and arrested people who were on their way down to the city hall. Although earlier in the day they allowed an ICTU march and rally at the City Hall as part of the Unions Week of (in) Action. There we had the same boring, bureaucratic fairs who repeatedly tell us how bad things are for us (which we already know), how jobs Continued on back page

YOUTH MARCH

On Sunday March 29th, Youth against H-Block/Armagh staged a march from Whitewrock to the City centre – Of course the march didn’t get there.

The marchers were stopped in College Sq. and faced with a cordon of Brit and RUC who were happily clicking cameras.

Streets held the militant marchers back from the line of security forces and eventually got the youth to sit—-but not for long. From the back came a jeer followed by a bottle. From then on rioting broke out. The youth moved back to Derry flats where they had lots of ammunition and cover from the plastic bullets. The noticable difference between this march and others was the large scale involvement of all present.

Although a few people did get hit, the youth took it all in good spirits and were totally undeterred. The youth were eventually forced back to the flats with the Brits behind, but the Brits did not stay long as they were met with a barrage of objects and noise from the flats, with tenn ants helping the marchers. The Brits soon retreated and all was calm.

That march has proved that still the militancy of Irish youth has not been broken and the peoples answer to the Brits and RUC is still the same—OUT!

But, like everything, it had it’s faults—-but the fault was not the youths, but of those who did not attend and participate as they usually do on such occasions.

sad is it that the youth (The slaves of slaves of slaves) get no recognition. Is it merely for fashion and credentials sake that people recognise certain class struggl ers and leave the unfortunate until it becomes popular.

A WINDOW ON POLAND

On March 17th, in London, the windows of the Soviet airline offices—Aeroflot— were smashed and the words “Remember Kronstadt” daubed on the wall. This action commemorated the suppression of the Kronstadt Soviet (workers council) in March 1921 by the Bolshevik Red Army led by Leon Trotsky which resulted in the massacre of up to 10,000 revolutionary sailors and workers in 1921. In the days to defend themselves. They were hailed for the Russian revolution to have fought against the party then in power.

BRIXTON INSURRECTION

You will by now be aware of the anti-police riots, the establishment of a temporary no go area and the attacks on property in South London, around Brixton, during 10-12th April.

By Monday 13th, the area was under a full scale police occupation. We contacted a friend who helps to run an Anarchist bookshop (1211), in Raiton Road, centre of the insurrection and who lives in the same area. He told us that the bookshop, which had up a poster supporting last years Bristol riot, was one of the few shops not wrecked and burned out.

Inside the half mile long no go area, he said that communication and co-operation between all people young and old, black and white was on a level he hadn’t experienced before. Because there were no leaders or organisations manipulating them, those involved were able to use their creativity and determination to defend and EXTEND their resistance.

Realising the dangers of being isolated, groups of people spread out into nearby areas to attack police and property. It seems that people and private houses were not attacked. Police had to turn the local police station into a fortress to protect arrested prisoners. It is clear that the only “outsiders” were the police and the thugs like Whitewall who ventured into the area.

Our friend also said that people are jubilant and have a new confidence in their ability to resist the State.

The demands for the withdrawal of the police echoes similar desires in Belfast. We would like to see the entire working class of London and Belfast seize control of the city and kick out all police and soldiers. And then other towns....Europe....and......
DIVERSIONS

Over the past year, summary execution has been the key Army/Police strategy in dealing with young "joy-riders" in West Belfast.

The latest fatal incident took place on the 25th March on the Grosvenor Road, after three young men in a stolen car were chased from Saffronfield by a UDR landrover patrol. The UDR (predictably) said that they saw a gun being pointed at them from the back seat of the car. They opened fire, killing one person, Patrick McNally, and capturing another. Local witnesses to the killing say that at no time was there a gun in evidence — not that the UDR seemed to care, putting on an exuberant "victory" display of clenched fists for the occasion.

This was only one of many such incidents to take place recently. In the past 18 months, three young people have been shot dead, another 38 receiving gunshot or crush injuries, and two more dying in cabs.

The usual Army/Police justifications are that they find it "impossible" to distinguish between joyriders and terrorists, or that a gun was seen to be pointed at them and that young people engaged in such activities could only expect to "face the consequences", although they're usually shot in the back. Local Police and Politicians have made much the same sort of statements, "They can only expect the consequences", coupled with calls for the return of the URC into the area.

Incident are too frequent to be just a series of coincidences, the inclusion of thieves from local people, savage beatings, rapes etc. has also increased, causing increasing fear and uncertainty in the community. Young (and not so young) hoodlums seem to be gaining increasing strength. The RUC, having been somewhat excluded since the establishment of the No go areas, are attempting to use this as a pretext for their return. Indeed, some of the hoods have been found with guns which were known to have previously been in the possession of the RUC. For their part, the Provisionals haven't had much success with their policy of assassinating a pretender to the terror throne — seen by many as being indistinguishable from state rule by force of arms and fear.

The situation is proving difficult to work at... The RUC and their dirty tricks, the Army/UDR and their policy of shoot to kill, the hoods ripping of those who can least afford it, going for soft targets such as old and single people. The RUC certainly know what they're doing in their attempts to bring about "normalisation"—already their soft 'arm is moving in.

Last Summer, amidst a blaze of publicity, "External Organisation" announced that they were intending to start a new scheme — The West Belfast Auto Project—by which young persons engaged in joyriding would be referred to them, to be included in their project. External is a four year old body, consisting of social workers, probation officers, lawyers and other people who do professional activities are concerned with the criminal justice (sic) system in N.Ireland. Other activities of External include "Probationary and after care hostel". They describe their aims as being "primarily diversionary and preventative". In other words, channelling what the state would regard as potentially dangerous energies into safe, controlled projects...a public relations exercise in which, approved and granted bodies can achieve.

External arrogance in analysing the conditions that young people live in disgusts: "Taking and driving away motor cars has become a feature of the youth sub-culture in the West Belfast area. It has replaced for those involved, the excitement which they found in street incidents at the height of civil unrest. It is symptomatic of the adolescent stage of development (we'll beat it out of them eventually), it provides the opportunity to impress the peer group—being involved in taking and driving away confers status and esteem."

So, External objectives are not concerned with changing the way in which people relate to motor cars as "status" symbols—of course not—"the need to achieve and impress is supposedly a healthy one—of the foundation stones of the present society in which the real needs of people, old and young, aren't facilitated for... Ext's end is merely one of containing the frustration that exists as a result of a highly alienated society, television and drink clubs to temporarily relieve the misery (artificially), creating a misery of their own, "diverting" the problem. What we do not need is another cheap Vanguard, telling us to look away from ourselves to a foreign body who will take on the impossibility of solving all—they won't. What it means is leaving all to a system which is trying to regain respect and return the police into the midst of our lives. (External admit that, to be successful, they need to work alongside the police). This is one of the roots of the alienation...so many groups and organisations, armed or unarmed, who we are told to leave all problems to. We are told that it is unnecessary for us to even think about such problems as joyriding...leave it to the system. If we are ever to take our lives into our own hands, we should immediately address the problems around us, without such obstacles to REAL community involvement as social workers, probation officers, arrogant middle class liberals "doing their bit" for the social good.

In Spain there exists independent "cultural centres" rooms, houses, cafes, where people go to meet, discuss and learn from each other and work on problems which are immediate to their lives, unlike our "own" state run community centres. Hopefully, in the next issue, we'll be carrying an article that we'll be able to learn something from. PS, isn't it funny that almost all buildings for sale in the working class ghetto areas sell with licenses for the sale of alcohol?

S-ELECTIONS

Even full of holes, Reagan is still vying with Thatcher as to who can snarl the loudest at the Russian war-lords, who in turn are busy trying to stop most Polish people from claiming back some of their lost dignity. The big-Time generals are bumbling and spending their way to an undemocratic war...any war. So preparations are being made at all levels... late last month even the 26 local district councils were given their instructions by the Department of the Environment on how to behave when things got out of hand. The people of the South, who have no say in the National Assembly, are left with the British Government, which set up nuclear war was triggered, or even if the local scene got too hot to handle. The main centre of control would rest in Armagh, housing the "centre for regional control". This bunker is the nerve centre, sending out instructions to military and police control areas, again in secret underground bunkers (like the one up the Malone Rd.)

The job of the 26 regional councils is merely to supervise what is left of a disaster, to take orders from the police and military to bury the dead, to hoard the food. That small self-appointed fools can sit down and talk about such madness, take their brief from an insane government, sitting in a police and military back-up and then ask us to VOTE for them—any of the them—in May, is beyond comprehension.

THEY MARCHED THEM UP TO THE TOP OF THE HILL AND THEY MARCHED THEM DOWN AGAIN.

On Saturday 28th March Ian Paisley held the final Carson Trail rally in demonstration against the Anglo Irish discussions. A counter flow system operated with as many people coming down hill from Stormont as going up at any one time. The bands as they arrived at the foot of the Carson statue turned and dandered back down, whether to march up again or just to keep on walking to the pub, everyone's guess, it's no wonder the big man intermittently kept shouting 'And they are still coming in the gare'.

The march was merely a numbers game—the guesses wide and varied from 100,000 (Paisley) to 50,000 (IRUC) just under 10,000 (Irish Times) between 8,000 to 6,000 (maxim). Peter Robinson took great pains to minimise the occasion reporting the large turnout, not often is it possible to walk up to the main platform without having to push through a crowd.

Impressions varied—it wasn’t quite the drunken atmosphere of other loyalist/orange marches. It was slightly more colourful than an H Block demo with a lot more bands in their civil go oranges, reds, whites and blues—the right hand straight up to God during the 1,000 Jesuit folk song. The short prayer lasting well over a quarter hour damming everybody and everything and containing the usual religious hoose poems wasn’t even entertaining and attracted the 30- age group only. (1,000 actually stood for the meeting). Whereas everyone younger was attempting to make a day of it—whether that was boozing, queuing up to buy crisps or scrap with the Gran streethead.

Well, phase two has ended and the talk is still going on... and so we go to rest, whether Haughey's his problems are over, or whether they really have been, whether directly or indirectly through the E.E.C.
CND: Disarming peoples energy

About 200 attended the CND lecture/meeting at Queen's University on Tuesday 2nd April. The panel numbered four, a chairman, two political hacks, Killeffder of the Popular Unionist Party and an unknown from the SDLP, plus Bruce Kent, director of CND.

Killeffder kicked off with a half hour oration about how good he was to be opposed to nuclear missiles, considering many a good 'un has been pushed into the political wilderness for such a stand.

The person from the SDLP was barely audible, muttering something about "the crisis" before his heard engulfed his throat.

Lastly Bruce Kent spoke, an extremely articulate, smooth and witty deliverer who launched straight away into the CND analysis of why we have nuclear missiles. Firstly, we heard of the institutions who foster confrontation, domination...the State, churches, multinationals...and because of these characteristics, these institutions have forced us to live under a nuclear threat. The CND director then made proposals as to how we should best oppose the Trident missiles...and that is through these very institutions who have created the confrontation, domination, exploitation and hierarchies. Indeed the churches should be at the forefront of opposition to nuclear missiles! In fact, it is obvious that all these institutions should be got rid of.

The local Belfast CND branch takes the Bruce Kent analysis to an extreme. They state on their application form that they are opposed to the removal of any uranium from Ireland unless there are some guarantees that it won't be used for missiles...and who is to give these guarantees? Of course the State, the same State who is pushing to have nuclear missiles, and also the UN, which is a totally absurd suggestion.

Opposition to the nuclear arms race then has to follow certain lines suggest the panel, a panel which represents the thinking of CND in general and CND Belfast in particular.

Killeffder is convinced that the best strategy is to write to your MP, and when he asks how many of the 200 present had in fact written to their duly elected representative (he) he was met with silence. There was only one sensible voice who suggested that they wouldn't even talk to their MP if they called to their front door.

CND opposition is one of co-operation, where you join CND, pay your membership and the committee will do the rest...it will petition, appeal or whatever on your behalf...occasionally they will ask you out to parade in a march from point A to B and so participate in the numbers game.

Panaceas of this kind will do nothing to change the state's plans on nuclear arms, as can be seen from the massive and ineffective CND rallies of the '60s. The renewed interest now seems to have been stimulated by the growth in the independent anti-nuclear groups, but is much more superficial. CND policy is one of opposing the bomb alone - it does not involve itself with nuclear power, uranium mining (unless it is for bomb production), the existence of armies and ecological questions. The reason we have the bomb is due to the development of the state, capitalist, multinationals who manipulate and exploit on that strength. Nuclear power is not very different in that it is developed by the same people for the same objective, one of centralised exploitation. To be opposed to one we've got to be opposed to the other. To be opposed to the nuclear industry in total is to be opposed to the notion of the state and exploitation - This is one responsibility which can't be co-opted by the CND committee. CND's support seems to be based on open-style protest, but requiring no opposition or resistance to the state.

A question that must be asked is why were the special branch invited along to stand at the back? Piss, who did the inviting? I also think that the whole format of the meeting must be questioned. What is the benefit of three personalities regurgitating words to bolster their failing ego? In the discussion that followed, why was it that only a dozen or so people participated? Were the other 190 empty of thoughts and suggestions? - I think not.

I think it would have been a more worthwhile evening if organisers energies had gone into seeing that there was information available that could have been brought away, read, and thought about. Also, every one present could have broken up into workshops and discussed, rather than differentiating between Trident and Cruise missiles, how they are going to challenge the nuclear state and get on with it. Create your own independent groups, ideas and activities.

Hunger Strike

As far as we know, the 31 Marxist and Anarchist prisoners of the Red Army Fraction/2nd. of June Movement have called off their hunger strike. This follows the death of one of the hunger strikers. They were demanding to be treated as prisoners of war, get free association and communication, an end to electrical surveillance and the release of two who are critically ill.

Despite deliberate media silence, many actions, demonstrations, riots, pickets etc. were carried out in support of the prisoners. Since the death, rioting has occurred in several West German Cities and is likely to continue, with the police on alert for riot duty.

"Amnesty International" now say that they will take up the prisoners case (which they have supposedly been doing since 1979), although on previous performances, we can expect very little from them.

Make Rio Tinto Stick.

Irish and British anti-nuclear people are planning activities against Rio Tinto Zinc, May 4th-11th. They are the world's most corrupt and powerful multi-national mining concern and amongst other things, are directly responsible for thousands of deaths in Namibia...in their attempt at extracting uranium to feed the western nuclear machines.

May 4th-11th...to make Rio Tinto Stick!!

Govt. at Work

The British war machine is spending £3,000 million on their air defences. A large chunk of this (£100 million) is going to U.K.A.D.G. .....United Kingdom Air Defence Ground Environment (Improved) .....the communications network which manages and directs the nuclear weapons. A large part of this bill—80%—is being donated by the US dominated NATO. Most of the money will be spent on 50 undergound "command and communication centres"—many will have computers to handle information from radar aircraft and new radar installations. Planes and remote fixed radar will feed information to central control centres, where it is decided which missiles and which aircraft will attack—already 2 new military radars have been ordered....at Buerh in NE Scotland and Berberela in the Outer Hebrides.

Twelve such stations will be built in the 1986-8, and when war is imminent, when the British/US generals are ready to attack the warheads will be moved to a "safe site". It is thought that one of the 12 mobile radar units will be at Bishops-court, and in time of war moved to St. Annges (Fermanagh) or near Ballycastle. But won't the Russians respond and go for them? Not quite. The British and Americans plan to build decoys—radar that will transmit identical signals, give out the same amount of heat...so that any retaliated strike with a nuclear warhead will head for the decoy. So the mobile radar at Bishops-court gets shifted North...it is a decoy station that the British military are currently building at St. Johns Point in SE Down, a mere 12 miles away from there? Wouldn't it be a pity if the entire population of Downpatrick and the surrounding area were to get wiped out—just because the British war mongers operated a decoy?
groups as to any negotiations with the government. This would clarify publicly any agreement which the British state might reach. They would find it more difficult to wrinkle out of it.

NO CENSUS

The mass burning and non return of the census forms has provided yet another way of resisting Thatcher. Some local groups have merely said "our area", no census" while others have used the census forms and another weapon.

Shooting the census forms shall be classed as an attack on police simply collecting census forms. It is certainly grabbing the wrong end of the stick. It was indeed carried out by an anti- 2D Block supporter; she did not deserve to be shot because other people decided to co-operate and fill in their forms. Are the 23,000 people employed by the state also enemies? The action of seizing the census forms from the collectors can only lead to government delay in getting them again or prosecuting those who have not returned them.

ELECTIONS

With the timely death of Frank Maguire in Fermaghnath, this had given the opportunity to put forward Bobby Sands as a candidate. It was a straight fight between Unionist Harry West and Bobby Sands (the anti unionist candidates having temporarily withdrawn from the contest until Bobby Sands resigns or dies when the election can be properly fought). Although not going directly as a Sinn Fein candidate but on the label as an H block prisoner standing Bobby Sands is a departure for Sinn Fein who have usually abstained from and boycotted elections in the North. They didn’t recognise the British State (though they go in for elections down South thus showing that they are ultimately statists) However will the voting of the IRA O/C Bobby Sands be between Sinn Fein and the total legitimisation of the military struggle or do the votes of the massaggan people simply mean a peaceful way of rejecting Britain’s policies/irresistance or for humanitarian reasons a third alternative but to vote for Bobby Sands (or stop a loyalist getting the election of being elected)?

DON’T VOTE ORGANISE

Perhaps people should understand the democrat process and abstain from voting and any other election or face thereby supporting the prison struggle indirectly and thus the electoral system completely. Okay, West would have got in but the system efficiency and power would continue to dominate as always. One way or another we must do something different don’t we?

The election has provided an armchair revolution. If the next time the GPO occupied in Fermaghnath and the main media. The organisers believe they are in the position. They are all in the same boat when it comes down to it, and the alternative seems to be to accept as inevitable a world war and annihilation.

Occupations are on the increase in Ireland (like Euroweld and Britain)—it’s about time they were spread out, co-ordinated, over flowed into the north with others who had moved onto the offensive against this exploitative and destructive system. As we seize control in this way, we shall begin at the same time to transform our lives and environment.
CONTRACEPTIVE JAB
ROYAL EXPERIMENTS ON WOMEN

In the early seventies a new contraceptive drug was added to the existing list. This drug was hailed widely as an answer to all women's problems concerning pregnancy. Why? You might ask, was it safer? was it more effective than the pills on the market? did it have no side effects? On all these questions the answer was a resounding no—but it did have one different feature from other contraceptive drugs. You didn't have to take it once a day, it was injected, only once every three to six months and you were guarded for that whole period. No more worries about forgetting, easy, quick and cheaper.

Well, that was what the drug company who produced it claimed anyway. The drug was marketed in the USA by a company called Upjohn—its name was Depo-Provera. In the USA though, to sell a drug you must have the approval of the Food and Drug Administration. As with all drugs the FDA initiated investigations and in 1971 refused it a licence, banning the drug after research showed that it caused breast cancer in dogs. Upjohn immediately appealed the decision but ten years later the drug is still banned in the USA and more recent research has shown a connection between cervical cancer and depo-provera.

So after that you might be forgiven for thinking that was the end of it...you were wrong. Upjohn having spent a considerable amount of time and money on the development of depo-provera had to make up their losses...and they have. They simply exported the drug out of the USA to any country that wasn't as fussy as the US Food and Drug Administration. In practical terms that means most Third World countries and also many European countries including Britain—but we'll return to that.

This process is known as 'dumping' and is a common practice in the USA. Drugs, chemicals, pesticides and baby products have all been dumped on the third world when turned down or banned in the USA. Although the US government has banned the item if we take depo-provera it is the US government under the guise of the US agency for International Development that exports the item. AID buys up large quantities of products to send to developing countries—in particular it buys up contraceptives because it believes that people outside the USA are breeding too much and should be stopped. It then distributes these products at a cost to countries around the world and South America, African and Asian women end up using products which have been declared unsafe for American women. So over 5 million women in 70 countries have used depo-provera despite the huge risks involved.

The drug is injected by a doctor or nurse and is effective for up to six months depending on dosage. As well as the links between depo-provera and cancer, the drug itself has many side effects including constant nausea, dizziness and headaches AND a high chance of infertility. The problem though is that once you have the injection then the side effects are with you until the drug wears off—there is no way to stop it. Upjohn themselves recognized that the drug should only be used in cases where a woman has completed her family, or in older women where all else has failed—yet the drug is used wholesale as a family planning method among young women throughout the third world.

But lets get nearer home. In Britain the Committee on Safety of Medicines who control drugs does not have the power that the FDA has—so although it has approved Depo-Provera for 'short term' use it has no powers to ban it. Consequently Depo-Provera has been used and continues to be used in Britain and is recommended in MIMS—a monthly reference index of drugs sent free to doctors. In the

We would like any woman who wants to make comments, write articles/small news items, coming events to contact us at the 7 Winseymere Street, Belfast. Tel: 26426
HOSPITAL CRECHE CLOSURE

The day care nursery at the Royal Victoria is to be closed down at the end of May. It was one of three nurseries in Northern Ireland, all privately run, and had provision for seventy children, with another hundred on the waiting list. This is just another example of how the cuts in public expenditure are affecting the workers—both the bus service and the internal bank, both important facilities for people working in shifts, have already been closed down.

Hospital work is not a nine to five job and apart from the usual difficulties (sickness, lack of permanency) women face when leaving their children with childminders, or relatives, the women affected at the Royal will have the extra problem of finding someone to look after their young children at unsuitable hours. This may well prove to be impossible and will force them to consider part time work or unemployment.

The provision of nurseries in Northern Ireland is scandalously non existent. Three years ago the British Government’s White Paper ‘Policy and Objectives for Daycare and Education for the Underfives’ was advocating the doubling of nursery schools and playgroups by 1983, which although it hasn’t happened yet, would still have been hopelessly too little to affect the situation.

Women have always had to work outside the home to supplement the family income or because their men were unemployed. The closures and the cuts are forcing women back into the home: and the State is in no way going to make it easier for them to compete for the few jobs going by providing good childcare provision. There are already hundreds of applications for jobs in the Royal and they are interviewing 50 people after selection procedures for low level jobs.

The State has always used women as pawns in the struggle to find and keep employment. During the last war the Ministry of Commerce ran day care nurseries in Northern Ireland because women were needed to work in industry. When the war ended and some of the men returned they were all closed down so that the women would be forced to leave their jobs for the men. The Ministry in their circular of 1945 reinforced this by a great discovery of the time ‘the best place for a child under the age of two is at home with his parents’. This view that women should be at home caring for their children and husbands is a relatively new idea. From the seventeenth century onwards, the family has become a centre for childcare and work is seen as an activity done outside the home.

The view that women should remain at home is reinforced through the media and the State by the lie of the ideal family—two parents, father employed, semi-detached house with car and the requisite two children—that the majority of us do not fit into this prescription is obvious.

The role of ‘mother’ is exaggerated. There is no way that a woman has unlimited time and energy to spend with her child. For a start she may have two, five or ten other children to consider, as well as all the other domestic chores and financial hassles to consider. She may not want to fit in with the State’s stereotype and want to carry on with her work. A purpose built day nursery, playgroup, creche, or nursery school is a stimulating environment, probably much more so than the home. Children need to mix with other children of the same age and whether it be for two and a half hours at a playgroup or all day in the nursery, women need the break too. A child cooped up at home with his/her mother all the time is more likely to emerge aggressive, possessive ego centric clinging to mother five year old we have all either been or seen— the junior version of many grown ups around him/her.

On the 8th April Dr Harvey Jackson was jailed for three years for performing three abortions. At his trial the judge said that although Jackson had probably acted out of feeling for the women, abortion was none the less a serious crime in Northern Ireland. It appears that Jackson did not charge very much for his services in one case £4, and in another £20, and his defence council argued that both these sums were offered to Jackson, as he would have helped the women involved for nothing.

In all three cases the women involved suffered some sort of complication after the abortion, one woman died though she had been to another person before she came to Jackson and so he was not held responsible for her death. Jackson also had a drinking problem and the abortions were carried out in unsatisfactory conditions and in a cruel and dangerous way.

These cases point to a simple truth—that whatever the danger to them abortion gives women a choice. The fact that abortion is illegal in Northern Ireland just means that if they don’t have the money to go to England then they will find other means which may have tragic results. Whatever we may feel about the way that Jackson carried out these abortions, it is clear that he acted out of concern for the women involved.

His sentence is an indictment of both the legal and the medical professions here who can stand by and let women suffer needlessly because they cannot obtain free and legal abortions here. The results of the court case should not have been a prison sentence but a call for legal abortions in Northern Ireland, for until that happens there will always be such cases and women will continue to have illegal abortions here, or be forced to go to England to have one. After only four months of 1981 the figures for women going to England for that purpose has almost doubled, that means that the total figure for the year is likely to be well over 3000, and taking Ireland as a whole that could be around 7000!

PEGGY SEEGER – in concert

Congratulations to the Northern Ireland Women’s Rights Movement for one of the best concerts in Belfast in a long time. The concert was the one organised for International Women’s Day this year. It was held in the McMorris Hall at Queens, and followed the rally in the city centre earlier that day when the theme was women’s health.

The concert was in two parts, the first contained several women entertainers who sang in a variety of languages, and proved that the women’s movement here has a wealth of talent where music is concerned. It would be a good idea to get them all together again soon. The second part of the concert was given over to Peggy Seeger, who opened by apologising for her star billing, and praising the women who had gone before her. She was accompanied by her son, and together they played and entertained us for the rest of the evening.

I must admit that I went to the concert with some trepidation - I had heard records by Peggy Seeger before and didn’t really like them a lot. But the live Seeger does not compare with the recorded one. She was amusing on stage, vital, humorous, and at one with her whole audience.

The evening ended with all the performers back on stage singing with the audience, “The women’s army is marching”. We all left in a jubilant mood, as befitted international women’s day. I hope that it won’t be too long before we get to hear Peggy Seeger again in Belfast.
Once again this year, many British and international feminists arrived in the north to picket Armagh prison on International Women's Day, to show their solidarity with the protesting prisoners there. The preceding day had seen a conference on women in Irish society, and their relationship to the anti-imperialist struggle. Badly planned with very few women from Belfast turning up, and many more women up to 400 instead of the expected 80-arriving from overseas, the conference was disappointing. It was very much a speakers to the audience affair; no workshops to talk and explore ideas in greater depth. Maybe that would have been difficult to organise for 400 women at each short notice. I personally don't think so. Perhaps it wouldn't have felt so important if we hadn't been subjected to a series of statements about policy from the various groups, admittedly some of the more cliched coming from British feminists belonging to a revolutionary movement. 

The best and certainly the most courageous speech came from a member of Women Against Imperialism. She spoke of how their time and energy had been spent on the Armagh/II-block issue, to the exclusion of the many struggles that feminists in the north had been fighting. An exclusion that had helped to break up the group and make them feel more and more isolated. Sadly this speech was not taken up and debated. All too often we are presented with the simplistic idea that the priority is national liberation and feminist issues will be sorted out later in a united Ireland (in about six weeks time if you need an abortion!).

But the reality isn't like that. Imagine for example, if you were a single parent for whatever reason, death, separation, poverty, probably living on social security, may be wanting to get a job, but with well over 100,000 unemployed in the north, it becomes a question of luck more than ability, experience or qualification. There is no one to look after the children anyway because there are no full day nurseries. Money is short; you wiold get help in the weekly rates in the protest at St. Stephen's or get behind with electricity payments so the payment for Debt Act takes up 1/2 week out of your supplementary benefit before you even get it. . . . We all know that the list is endless and not by any means restricted to single parent families. Women have committed suicide, taken alarming doses of valium, abandoned newborn babies, shoplifted, or prostituted themselves or their daughters under the pressure. Feminists have always been the first to raise these issues and actively campaign, many of us have been through the mill and can't ignore them even if it does seem impossible to fight them all at once and yet still recognise the importance of defeating imperialism. If there is to be another conference next year perhaps we could talk about these issues. 

Sinn Fein Women's Programme

When I heard about the new Sinn Fein Women's Programme, I thought of the amazement generated when feminists read their first policy document 'Eire Nua' - they had simply forgotten half the population in their 'united Ireland'. women . . . this document is an attempt to remedy the situation.

During the last two years there has been increasing support for the protesting women prisoners from feminists in Britain and abroad. In the light of this it has become embarrassing for Sinn Fein not to have a programme on women because there is a lot of potential and importance in such international support. As any group though can write up a programme, the test will be whether Sinn Fein will give active support to the issues they have outlined.

So what is in the document? Well there would be divorce, equal opportunities for women in employment, changes in the educational system particularly to eliminate sexism, contraception would be available within the family, all in all a lot of stress has been placed on passing laws to make women more equal - laws which we know from experience can be broken, repealed, ignored or have so many loopholes to be useless anyway.

The main criticism has to be the 'there will be no abortion clause' for this is a very Catholic country, and the majority of women don't want them anyway. Since when have Sinn Fein recognised majorities? Besides which over 5000 women leave Ireland north and south every year to seek abortions in England, over 10 years that starts mounting into quite a sizable number the majority of whom are Catholic! To ease the situation there would be no illegitimacy, as that is the only reason women have abortions. No law will remove the stigma, and the social and economic difficulties of having a child on ones own - that is where action is needed. The choice whether or not to have a child should be the woman's choice and hers alone, only she can decide what affects her. No woman should have to go to Gestalt before any state, any state's morality, nor any state's religious lies and beg for an abortion. Finally, feminism doesn't get a mention!

We were told that this was the first step towards a programme on women and that some Sinn Feiners felt that it didn't go far enough. It reads like the sort of list that feminists might compile of issues to be dealt with in the short term (although I doubt if many feminists would accept its shortcomings), rather than a picture of a society where women are liberated and not oppressed.

The Unity Meetings are open to all women and to all women's groups. They take place every month and have instigated campaigns such as the Debt Campaign, Abortion Campaign, Rape Crisis Centre etc etc.

The Unity Meeting of April 4th was a noisy experience. We hope that it was not too overwhelming for any woman who was there for the first time. As we tried to make our voices heard above the sounds of children playing at our feet, we decided that a creche was absolutely essential -how we organize one is to be the topic for discussion at our next meeting.

The meeting decided that a women's newsletter for the North would be invaluable in developing contacts and providing a forum for communication. The first issue - for women only - will be out at the beginning of May.

The main discussion concerned the local Government elections - what could the women's movement do to make its presence felt?

A series of questions are being compiled and sent out to candidates asking their views on childcare, health, equal pay, pay for paid workers, cuts in the social services etc . . . which will also be sent out as a press statement. Many issues will be raised at this election but it will be the first time that women have made it plain what their priorities are.

Next Unity Meeting: 9th May at 11am, Women's Centre, 10 Donegal Street.

Deadline for articles for newsletter: 24th April. Send articles to women's centre.

NOTE: 16th May - International Day of Action on Contraception, Abortion, Sterilization, Stalls in Cornmarket from 11am. Disco Students Union in the evening.

CRECHE CLOSURE CONTINUED FROM FACING PAGE

A society which is geared towards all people's needs, where no one, especially children, is underestimated, is not a pleasant dream, unattainable and unrealistic. To want community nurseries community after school day centres, nurseries in places of work which are controlled by the people who use them, is not a luxury that we forgive when the State wants to crazily balance the books. The closure of the creche at the Royal will become an important issue during the next two weeks and all support should be given by feminists to the hospital workers in the fight to save their creches.
...and for those of us trying to get pregnant

Present studies indicate that the average male sperm count is declining at a fast rate – in 1923, it was around 109 million sperm per cubic centimetre of semen – today it is around 50, (20 or below is regarded as sub-normal) Why? The decline is linked with a dramatic rise in the last 30 years of chemicals – in particular pesticides such as DDT and agent orange, and in radiation levels as more nuclear power stations are built. Other causes include sterilising agents used in hospitals, regular smoking of marijuana and increase in YD levels. Men at greatest occupational risk include

- workers in Medicine, Dentistry, smelting storage, battery production, chemistry, bakeries, glass factories, radar, aviation, radiation and X rays.

AND MALE IMPOSSIBILITY –

Often male impotence is linked to psychological problems – stress, anxiety in performance, general worries, but the following have also been given as causes and should be considered if the problem arises:

1. Drugs like tranquillizers, antidepressants Tagamet (for ulcers), excess alcohol,

2. Diabetes, where nerve damage has occurred.

3. Prostate operations.

4. Operations on the Colon and virtually all abdominal surgery will cause temporary impotence.

- Remember though – Occasional impotency is "normal" in men.

DEPO PROVERA

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE middle seventies the drug was experimented in the poorest and highest unemployment areas of Glasgow where it was felt that women were unreliable and that injectable contraceptives were the only guarantee of no pregnancies particularly amongst so-called "problem" families Depo Provera has also been used on mentally handicapped women and women in mental hospitals. It is also used for the treatment of menstrual disorder or where women have a history of painful periods. The CSM recommended that depo provera should be used in only two cases – where a couple are waiting for vasectomy or where a woman has been in contact with German measles and should not conceive for a certain period. But there is nothing to prevent a doctor using a drug in whatever way they choose and it is clear that CSM's guidelines are widely disregarded.

In Northern Ireland the situation is no different. Depo Provera is being used here. Over the last two years Depo Provera has been dispensed by the Royal Victoria Hospital to women both as a contraceptive and to clear up menstrual problems.

The RVH is clearly running some sort of experiment, it is fully aware of the dangers of the drug and the guidelines laid down by CSM, yet it has never informed any women of its dangers, in fact few women have even been told the name of the drug they have been injected with. In recent months several cases of prescription by GP have come to light in Northern Ireland – so the drug is effectively being used on a widescale.

The medical profession is once again treating women as guinea pigs and testing drugs without the consent of the women involved.

If your doctor offers you a wonder contraceptive that you get through injection as him/her what it is called. Remember the following:

1. Depo Provera has been linked positively with both breast and cervical cancer.

2. It has particularly upsetting side effects

3. It may cause infertility.

4. It has been BANNED in the USA.

You have the right to refuse to be experimented on – USE IT.
FLOWERING
Hang plants upside down in a dark, cool place to dry. This usually happens in July to the end of the month. There are two mating types: male and female. Male flowers look like this: the seed is 'born'. Female flowers are used to pollinate the male flowers. If no pollen is available, the female flowers will not be pollinated and will not produce seed. The male flowers produce pollen. Male flowers are useful for pollinating female flowers. Female flowers that have been pollinated will produce seed. To grow your own cannabis, you will need both male and female plants.

SOIL
If you are growing cannabis indoors, you will need a grow tent or a greenhouse. This will help to control the temperature and humidity. The soil should be well-draining and rich in organic matter. You can use a mixture of peat moss, perlite, and vermiculite. The soil should be warm and humid. The ideal temperature is 21-24°C (70-75°F). The ideal humidity is 40-50%. The soil should be疏松 (loose) and aerated. You can use a soil添加物 (additive) to improve the soil's texture.

SPRING
Plant the seeds indoors between January and March. The seed should be planted in a room with a temperature of 21-24°C (70-75°F). The ideal humidity is 40-50%. The seed should be planted in a pot or a grow tray. You can use a grow light to provide extra light. The seed should be watered regularly. The seed should be germinated for 7-10 days. The seed should be transplanted to a larger pot when it has grown roots.

THE DREADED WEED
Cannabis is a popular drug. It is illegal to grow or sell it. The drug is made from the dried flowers and leaves of the cannabis plant. The drug is smoked, eaten, or used in a variety of ways. The drug can be addictive. It can cause mental and physical problems. It can cause memory loss and paranoia. It can also cause hallucinations and nightmares. The drug can cause a dangerous and life-threatening condition called 'cannabis psychosis'. It can cause a variety of physical problems, including respiratory problems, heart problems, and liver problems. It can also cause a variety of mental problems, including depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder.

SITE
The most important need for a plant is light. The sunnier the site, the better the plant will grow. The better a window, the better the plant will grow. The better the plant grows, the better the drug will be. The better the plant grows, the more powerful the plant will be.

DON'T LEGALISE DOPE - END LAWS
Justice (is a myth)

At present in north of Ireland, (U.K. laws) it is illegal to possess, supply or cultivate cannabis, cannabis resin or any other form of cannabis. Cannabis is classified as a class "B" drug. Sentences for your protection?

Possession - 1st time - 2 months or £600 fine or both. After 1st time - 5 years or fine or both.

Production: 1st time - 6 months or cultivation $1000 fine or both. After 1st time - 14 years or fine or both.

Supply: 1st time - 6 months or $1000 fine or both. After 1st time - 14 years or fine or both.

These laws take the choice of smoking cannabis or using any drugs away from people. It is your choice - calling drugs dangerous and locking the whole affair away like the drug squad want to do. Only causes problems and puts people in jail. Smash the laws; they're wrong! No matter what the laws are, people will do what they want, so why punish anyone?

The police can't bust "one-time users" or "experiments." This has been shown to be shit; they'll bust anyone!

When arrested, the drug squad will want you to play along with the "innocent, only user" image. Saying that you were "seduced" by drug "pushers" and are now very sorry, and thankful to have your evil ways corrected.

This is often the case - say nothing! If you stand up in court and say with you live and use drugs, you're liable to get jumped on and hung!

Another chance to break!

HELP If you get bust, phone "release" in London [01-603 886-64]

This is the 24-hour emergency number. Release mainly helps people who have been busted for cannabis offences, and can give you advice, help, support and help get you lawyers. Or phone just boots [Belfast 254-261].

Between 10am - 6pm on weekdays + Saturday, whatever happens. Demand your right to make a phone call in the police station. If this request is refused, get help from somewhere.... also get to know your "rights" before you get bust - it can help!

Ilegal supply to

Legal supply to

Big Doc

I know what's best for you! Just take 20 uranium. Every 2 hours, pull your chute and swop on the TV. Everything'll be fine.

If you are arrested or questioned on drug charges, try to remain silent. You have a right to do this. If as a result of "accidently falling down stairs" you feel inclined to talk, stick to what concerns you.