DEATH THROUGH PROTESTS

JOE MCDONNELL became the fifth hunger-striker to die in the prisoners bid to win their five demands. He died on July 8th, on the 61st day of his strike. There were immediate protests with marches, rallies and some rioting. The response from the Brits showed their willingness to shoot dead anyone who took to the streets.

Within 2 days three people were killed, two teenage boys and a woman. 16 year old John Dempsey was shot as he threw petrol bombs at the Andersonstown Bus Depot. Nora McCabe, who stood at the corner of her street, with two neighbours, was hit in the face by a plastic bullet. She died two days later. David Barrett was standing at the front door of his home, when 2 jeep loads of Brits opened up indiscriminately. Flax St Barracks had been fired on minutes previously and the jeeps were sent out on a raid.

CROPPIES LIE DOWN

At the funeral of Joe McDonnell, the Brits and RUC launched a snatch on the 'firing party' who had given a volley salute over his coffin. After changing clothes in a 'safe house', there was a shoot-out. Two people, a man and a woman, were arrested. In a 'follow-up' operation 4 more people were arrested.

Some youths attempted to drive off the Brits who had moved into the side street for the snatch. Amid flying stones and plastic bullets, the youths were pushed back.

There followed an attack on the funeral procession itself. About 40 Brits and over 10 RUC jeeps surrounded an end section of the procession. They fired indiscriminately at children and parents, old and young. In the ensuing panic many were injured by either falling in the rush or being hit.

As well as the propaganda coup of sniping some of the 'firing party', there was a deliberate attempt to terrorise those who had come out to express support for the hunger strikers, and pay respect to the courage of Joe McDonnell.

Occurring just two days before the big loyalist Orange parades, it has also the effect of appeasing calls for 'tougher security' from the DUP, Official Unionists and UDA.

PRISONER DEMANDS AND TYRANNY'S TRICKS

Just four days before Joe McDonnell's death, the protesting prisoners elaborated their demands. Among the most significant was: "We would warmly welcome the introduction of the 5 demands for all prisoners...[This] would not mean the administration forfeiting control of the prison...the prisoner could have his (or her) dignity restored and cease to occupy the role of established zombie."

Around this time the Catholic church again tried to 'be seen doing something'. Previously O'Flahit and Daly, and now the Commission for Justice and Peace, took part in secret talks with the NIO and the prisoners. In fact not only did they allow themselves to be tricked, but the illusion of progress created and then dashed hopes among supporters.

The refusal of the NIO to negotiate directly with the prisoners until the strike is called off is an obvious ruse to defeat the protest. The increasing attacks on the streets, and the visit of the minister responsible for prisons (Allison) to the USA, show better the intransigence of the government, and the enormous task it faces.

So GARRETT FITZGERALD is the new Taoiseach - prime minister with a clean record and as yet un tarnished image. Fitzgerald is going to be a busy man for the next year or two, trying to drag the Irish capitalist economy out of its bankruptcy......and put into force the management of the new Ireland as decided by the world bank, the I.M.F., N.A.T.O., E.E.C., while at the same time keeping discontent down by stopping people getting together.

But Fitzgerald knows what he is doing. He's been secretly training since 1977 (the year he became leader of Fine Gael) as a member of the Trilateral Commission and Bilderburg groups. These are exclusive, secret, and private clubs of top bankers, industrialists, media figures, politicians, and reactionary union bosses from N.America, W.Europe, and Japan. They meet from time to time (the Bilderburg group met recently in Dublin) to discuss their view of the world which is invariably the outlook of the biggest financial and industrial corporations in the world.

They arrive at some sort of consensus as to how the western world should be governed, should be controlled. They manage the social change of our present and our future. The task of politicians in the Trilateral Commission and the Bilderburg groups is to implement the decisions made through the discussions of top industrialists...they must implement the decisions yet made it look like democracy - our choice! Managing democracy, managing social change. To understand why the Irish economy is up to its ears in debt to the IMF, why Ireland is the dumping ground for every shit industry imaginable, why unemployment is going up and up, money spending power down and down, laws more and more severe, prisoners full - the reasons for all this are to be found within the policies decided at these secret meetings of the world elite. And what is the job of super-clean Fitzgerald? He has been attending meetings of the Trilateral Commission and Bilderburg as a member since 1977, and in 1980 was elected to the executive committee of the TC* (the executive committee makes policy decisions and implements commission proposals). Fitzgerald also helps formulate their political documents and only this year presented a report on the "Trilateral Commission and the Middle East". Mr. Super Clean must have just forgotten to mention all that during his electioneering......after all, it is a state secret!*

*To replace Executive Committee member Mary Robinson who resigned in 1980. Why did she resign? After all, she had spent nearly a decade in the secret club helping implement US government policy concerning the Shah of Iran, South African Apartheid and third world massacres. What got through to her in 1980?
If you are one of those living in a flat or bed-sitter in Belfast, chances are that you are/ing out between £10-20 per week for second-rate accommodation, often with no security of tenure. It is estimated that there are about 10,000 flats and bedsits in Belfast, all of which have private landlords, and many are single people, newly-weds, couples, and students. The "private sector" is their only hope of getting any accommodation, since many cannot afford to buy their own homes or do not have enough "points" to qualify for public housing.

In Belfast, the majority of properties converted into flats are in the University area, Cliftonville and parts of the East. Of these buildings, many were acquired by landlords for a relatively small sum and then converted into separate dwellings, often without planning permission and in disregard of fire and health regulations. Many landlords are interested only in the fast buck, and know that the authorities turn a blind eye to their activities — such is the housing crisis in this city.

Some of the dwellings are disgusting pits, and yet many people are paying through the nose to live in them. £20 a week is the asking price for a small flat consisting of one bedroom, living-room and kitchen. If you are looking for something for less, the chances are that you will be offered something that is an insult to human dignity. Dampness, vermin infestation, insecurity and rent exploitation are the lot of those living in the "private sector".

Belfast is not only the city in this country where this type of racket is rife. In Dublin, landlords are organised in a powerful lobby, and are currently trying to blackmail the authorities into allowing them to increase their rents. In Galway, a city which has grown fat through the boom created by the student and tourist influx, some enterprising landlords have put the family car onto the street and converted the garage into "self contained flats". Hardly surprising that tuberculosis, a disease that has been virtually eradicated has now reappeared in young men and women living in sheds and garages. In Coleraine — Portstewart, students at the new University pay £50-100 per year; during the course term, but are expected to fork out £60 - £100 during the tourist season. The majority, not unreasonably, pack their bags and leave.

Dear Friends,

I had visited Ulster before, but had worked out a few ideas of my own regarding a form of radical autonomy for the province, ideas which turned out to be a libertarian development of the proposals for an independent Ulster put forward by the few Ulster Political Research Group.

Since my visit to the province I feel more confused than ever, but not any more than most people over there, stricken as they are by the sectarian phobia mentality. There clearly is no easy answer as I had previously thought — I had fallen into the trap of thinking the purpose of a new strategy is to please oneself with a neat, tidy theory (i.e. Dogmatism). The central idea which must be got rid of is that of blaming British imperialism for all the ills of Ulster, a good little Irish people, a bad British influence. With such ideas, one can attack the symptom, not the cause of the Ulster occupation, it would be far better to grapple with the real problems that make the occupation impossible. It is not the lack of independence that has caused the disappearance of traditional ways of life — they have simply been forced to resist the growth of capitalist production relationships. Maybe there are some among who maintain that capitalism is British, but even in Britain it is rather American, Japanese, German.

It is obvious that an Ulster state would be synonymous to the same thing — capitalism in Ulster, even if it is called itself social. The modern state is simply the apparatus of political domination of the class in power. The state cannot be separated from the production relationship which created it, in which it creates everyday. If there is an occupation of Ulster, it is an occupation by the capitalists, if they are British, that is a local peculiarity. Frontiers and borders are paper screens in the face of the growth of capitalist production relationships on an international level. The independence of an Ulster state can only really interest the Ulster middle class. It is not from Britain that Ulster must be delivered, but from the form of social and economic organisations which has made Ulster a British province. Ulster has no friends, it is a "lie" and the condition of its survival is in its growth, Marx said. "The problem is not limited by country" yesterday, capitalism is not limited by country and the workers have no country anywhere.

On the subject of cultural and ethnic identity, I which discussed at length with different comedians, it seems that there is no longer any real Irish culture, only the ruins of a grand heroic past. There is no longer any social reality, life in Ulster/Ireland/Britain is the same as anywhere else — war, buy, consume, die — because the

People who no longer have any say in their everyday lives. Irish culture in Ulster exists only in a falsified from. If there is to be an Ulster identity it will come from a combination of free individuals, recreating a richness of individual behaviour. So what possibilities exist for the development of a truly libertarian structure in Ulster? Against the sectarian phobia mentality, Anarchists in Belfast have an almost impossible task, so it makes sense to start in the place where this mentality is at its weakest — the prisons. The destruction of those supporting those who went in from the loyalist side. All prisoners are worthy of our solidarity, and there is absolutely no reason whatsoever to assume that one side will be more likely to be sympathetic than the other to Anarchism, and to genuine libertarian struggle in Ulster. Consistent material and moral support for those prisoners is vital for when they are released they will be pressured into re-adopting the sectarian phobia mentality, anywhere.

On the question of whether or not a Republican or loyalist state is possible, it is interesting to note that the word "Faro" appears in the history of Ulster.

FLAT OFF OUR BACKS

force. At the previous rally, the protests were balanced from the City Hall grounds and towards Castle Street. On this occasion, an RUC inspector informed one of the councillors who was about to begin speaking through a loudhailer that the rally would be permitted if no one moved and no one spoke? (Paisley would certainly lose his charisma if he were to lose his voice at his regular city hall rallies). When a councillor proceeded to speak, the loudhailer was snatched off him and a sit-down on the pavement began. For about an hour those sitting down were dragged onto the road or along the pavement. Nothing was pushed or thrown, but they kept coming back to sit down. If they weren't going to have a peaceful rally, they were going to have a peaceful sit-down.

But the things in green put "plan B" into operation — arrest and bundle into a jeep those who persist. Elderly men, young women and men were bundled into jeeps, including a 14 year old girl — 34 in all. Others, who had previous arrests weren't

sure if they wanted one and were hanged back towards the tech. A column of RUC boxed them in against the shops and "escorted" them towards Castle St, and part way up Divis St. At this point one stout was thrown at the RUC, whereby they opened up and fired three plastic bullets at the still walking crowd. Despite the record of these euphemistically named "plastics", no one was injured badly.

At 33:45 we reached the Park. It was now apparent in court on Monday morning. After the trials were put back a week, the crowd of supporters who had turned up headed for a press conference at the Europe. They had in fact become a demonstration, numbering about 100. Chanting and singing, they marched up Chichester St, were forced around the back of the City hall by a nervous and uncertain RUC and continued up Howard St to the Europe. On two occasions the RUC tried to stop the demonstration, but people just crossed the road, walked on a bit and rejoined — there was a countless City Centre demonstration after all!
Military custody was first established in May 1972 when Mountjoy Prison was burned and emergency accommodation was required for civilian prisoners. The Curragh prison was opened under temporary legislation which has been renewed on three occasions. It was last renewed in 1980 for a period of three years.

At present the Curragh is the only prison in Europe which is located within an Army camp, operated solely by Army (and armed) personnel and under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defence and yet it's sole occupants are civilian prisoners.

Noel Lynch was released from the Curragh on the 3rd. April 1981. He is the longest serving Curragh prisoner as he was transferred there on the day it opened for civilian prisoners, that was November 9th, 1973. He had been a founding member of the Prisoners' Union in Portlaoise Prison in 1972 and had been elected it's president.

Union Demands Presented.

In his capacity as President of the Union, he met the then Minister for 'Justice' Patrick "prisoners have no rights, only privileges" Cooney in Portlaoise Prison in August 1973. Noel Lynch presented to him the 11 demands of the Union - All of which were reasonable.

- A call to abolish the notorious dietary punishment (then widely practised in Portlaoise);
- An increase in remission;
- Custodial remand time to be deducted from sentences;
- New communal visiting to accommodate domestic problems with screws out of earshot during visits;
- Visiting time extended from 20 minutes to 2 hours;
- Special visits and letters to be made available in the event of social and domestic problems.

These four demands form the basis of the 11 demands of the prisoners union.

Cooney hyprocritically indicated his intention of introducing reforms, but vowed that while the prisoners remained an organised body neither Noel nor any other member of the Union would benefit from them.

The Transfer.

Shortly afterwards, in a prison reshuffle, the Prows who had been in the Curragh were transferred to Portlaoise prison. All the prominent members of the Union were rounded up and taken to the Curragh.

Thus on November 9th, 1973, the original function of the Curragh as a place of temporary accommodation was cast aside and the prison was transformed instead into an isolation facility for the disposal of 'troublemakers' who were seeking the implementation of prisoners' rights and much needed changes in the prison system. That is the present function of military custody.

Military Custody On A Permanent basis.

Recently there have been indications that the Government intend to maintain military custody on a permanent basis (despite public protestations to the contrary) and even to extend it's use. The existing facility is an old army prison with accommodation for a maximum of 52.

In 1976, the coalition government constructed a new building beside the old prison with accommodation for a hundred prisoners. Soldiers are billeted there at present but it can be used for the purpose constructed at any time. Furthermore, in 1980 an isolation wing was constructed inside the old prison.

At present a new workshop is being built. The new structure is large, solidly built with concrete which suggests long-term use. Further, Military Police (who guard the prisoners) are being trained in teaching methods at Mountjoy Prison. Two long vacant teaching posts have been filled this year. All these developments point to the intention to use the Curragh Prison on a long term basis.

The Prisoners.

At present there are 25 prisoners in the Curragh. This is more or less the daily average since 1973. Most of them are long-term prisoners, the average sentence being 9 years. Among the prisoners is the Anarchist Noel Murray, serving a life sentence for the shooting of a policeman.

This situation has remained unchanged despite the fact that even the Government appointed visiting committee in it's annual report for the last 8 years, has criticised the use of the Curragh for long-term prisoners.

Secondly, there has always been a large incidence of mental disturbance among prisoners in the Curragh.

At present a quarter of the prisoners are attending the psychiatrist regularly and a third are prescribed sleeping pills nightly.

This situation is due to the dumping of disturbed prisoners to the Curragh from civilian prisons where the prison authorities do not want them to the claustrophobic effects of years spent in the narrow confines of the prison compound (see map) which was originally intended to accommodate misbehaving soldiers for a few days or a few weeks: to the tension caused by the constant surveillance of soldiers stationed in watchtowers surrounding the prison with orders to shoot to kill in the event of an attempted escape; and to the hostile attitude of the military authorities and military police to the prisoners.

Harassment.

Since 1978, the Curragh has been even more unbearable as a prison. In that year a new Governor, Adrian J. Mullowney, took command and imposed a strict military discipline. More and more prisoners were put on what is termed ' Report.' The Military Police operate this system by which a prisoner...
Chamberpots contain which of returned continued. The sympathy lost major protesters on days of remission, last year June, 1986. Noel Lynch's father died. He was refused leave to attend the funeral. He was left at the gates of the Curragh on the morning of the third of April 1981 with IR £64 in his pocket. Before he left, an MP said to him "You'll be back!"

Lord 'Justice' Gibson was sentenced to 15 years penal servitude. He and six other men were tried at the Curragh for the murder of a prison guard. The trial was held in a military court, which is a higher court than the civil courts. The judge, Mr. Justice Gibson, said that the men were guilty of murder and sentenced each of them to 15 years penal servitude.

The trial ended on 22 June, and the men were taken to prison. They were then allowed to apply for bail. They were granted bail on the condition that they would not leave the country and would appear at the trial when summoned.

The prisoners continued to protest against their treatment. They refused to cooperate with the authorities and went on hunger strike. They were kept in solitary confinement and denied all forms of assistance. They were not allowed to see their families or to have any contact with the outside world.

The authorities were forced to capitulate. They agreed to grant the prisoners parole. Noel Lynch was released on parole on 22 June, and the other men were released a few weeks later. They were allowed to return to their homes and to continue their education.

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The British State can now add another dead hunger striker and insurrections in three British cities to its long list of atrocity and repression. Whilst people are protesting at the horror, the grief and the frustration of the policies of this government, it sits in Westminster swaddled in smugness, and superiority: an implacable brick wall. It has been the Irish who have been constantly looking at new initiatives to stop another hunger striker dying. Relatives tour the United States, publicising the issue, thousands demonstrate in the streets of the North every week and it is all condemned in the British media as IRA propaganda, just as they are trying to condemn the riots in British cities as racial violence when it is clear to everybody that it takes the police to enforce Thatcher’s policies in England never mind in the North and that judging by all those bleeding policemen it won’t be long before the Army is called in too. At last people in Britain are waking up to the fact that they are living in a police state and they are seeing for the first time, the same tactics used against them as have been used against us.

The British government are doing nothing, nor are they remotely interested in doing anything. In London, Liverpool, Manchester or in Northern Ireland. “There can be no U turn” has now been incorporated into the English language as an absolute truth. Police harassment and brutality, petrol bombs, riots and CS gas are words usually reserved for Northern Ireland not Britain, and Liverpool got its first whiff of CS gas this week.

The Toxteth part of Liverpool is an area of walk up flats, terraced houses and redevelopment, where repairs and maintenance are not being done because the repair teams have been cut back. It is an area where one school has closed down and a direct of closure hangs over another, which if it happens will mean that children will have to be bussed out of the area for secondary education. It is an area of desperate unemployment, in a city with unemployment figures the highest since the war, with over 60% of young blacks without a job.

Police harassment and brutality is no news to the people of Liverpool. Although the police have been very violent, brutality affects both whites and blacks. People still remember the Jimmy Kelly Incident a man who died whilst in police custody. He had been walking home drunk one night, singing, and was stopped by police on wasteground. Local people who had heard him and witnessed the incident felt that he had died as a result of police violence and this view was not helped by the photographs of his body, covered in big gashes. Although the family mounted a campaign for a public inquiry and had the support of local councillors, they were refused it.

The media has been harping on about racial tension all the time, trying to find a scapegoat to blame as usual. The fact...
LET THEM DIE!

Over the past couple of years it has become easier for women's groups in the North of Ireland to discuss the subject of abortion more publicly. Letters proclaiming that women have the right to choose whether or not to have an abortion have been published in the local press and the subject has been aired on radio and television. For women in the south of Ireland, it is a very different story, with no support coming from outside the feminist and left wing circles. The subject of choice for women is still virtually taboo with the anti-abortionists pressing for more and more reactionary measures. The recent beginning of a campaign for a pro-life amendment to be made to the Irish Constitution has been received with fervour by all the political parties, competing with each other to be even more anti-abortion than their rivals, and by some of the most influential gynaecologists and obstetricians. Unlike the North, there have been no subsequent updates to the British 1861 Offences against the Person Act which means that at present a woman is liable to be imprisoned for life for aiding or procuring an abortion. The only way in legal terms that this can be eased is by the woman herself, whose life was in immediate danger, taking out a Supreme Court case to defend her own life. The Pro-life Amendment Campaign want to make the 'right' of the woman secondary to that of the unborn foetus by guaranteeing absolute right to life to the foetus—thus, The State recognises the absolute right to life of every unborn child from conception and accordingly guarantees to respect and protect such rights by law.

Such organised opposition to abortion and to contraception from groups outside the Catholic Church has been growing during the last four years, since the Catholic Church realised that it was not strong enough to go it alone. Organisations like the Irish Family League and the League of Decency have come to the fore, plus the ubiquitous British organisation SPUC (Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child). Like LIFE in the North, SPUC knows that they have lost in Britain and are making an enthusiastic last stand in Ireland.

Feminists have tended to veer away from arguing over the moral, biological and scientific data presented by the anti-abortionists. The issue has been over the control of our own bodies and the choice for safe and legal abortion to be quickly and freely available to all women who choose to have one....and rightly so. However the proposed amendment is so serious and has such a good chance of succeeding that maybe we should start to question openly the claims of SPUC and LIFE, particularly on scientific grounds. A woman's life cannot be thought of as secondary to that of the foetus.

This brings us to SPUC in particular. They are essentially a religious group, hiding behind a veneer of quasi-scientific knowledge and straightforward lies—their Founder-President and 'scientific expert' was appointed by the Pope to the Pontifical Academy of Scientists a couple of years back. Unlike the Pregnancy Counselling groups and the Women's Right to Choose group who present all the information and the options open to women and do not pressure them into having abortions, SPUC and similar organisations rely heavily on emotional appeal and gloss over actual facts. They continually misquote statistics about maternal deaths during abortion and childbirth to uphold their argument; they talk about murdering the 'unborn child' yet see no objections to carrying those same unborn children to meetings in pickle jars to show to people—where did the sanctity of life disappear to? Their literature is well known for its technicolour photographs of six month foetuses, given as examples of a 12 week abortion....how many women are aware that in countries where abortions are legal and easily obtained between 8-10 weeks, the foetus is about the same size as an adult's thumb nail with no obvious human characteristics and that it is only in countries where abortion legislation is restrictive that the problems of later abortion exist. SPUC and like groups are restricting the choice of Irish women by imposing their religious views on everybody—they are so fanatical that they would rather see a woman die than grant her an abortion.

It must be stressed that many women when shown colour photographs of childbirth or someone having their appendix out feel just as sickened by all the gory details and blood as they would when shown pictures of an abortion.

The anti-abortion feeling in the South spills over into other areas of pregnancy as well—a woman, for instance, who has had a malformed or handicapped child will not be screened in subsequent pregnancies to determine whether the baby is normal. Her choice is between the birth of another possible handicapped child or the abortion in England of what may well be the perfectly healthy baby that she wants. At least in the North, the Genetic Counselling service will offer immediately an abortion to women in these circumstances, on the National Health Service.

Through the Irish Pregnancy Counselling Association and the Women's Right to Choose Group, women in the south have been able to get information and counselling about abortion before going to England. Thousands of women travel to London or Liverpool every year and most arrive with little idea of what lies ahead—how to get to the clinic, who will help, what the law is, what the standards of hygiene are—many are trying to get abortions on the NHS so they give British addresses although it is a well known fact that most Irish women are too afraid to give their real address anyway...some will be wearing disguises, most will not engage in any
conversation with other women until the abortion is over, maybe, not even then. These two groups have been invaluable to Irish women and need this support of Northern women. Attitudes to abortion are similar [throughout Ireland and it is going to be an uphill struggle for all of us to get free abortion on demand. Joint action between the Northern Ireland and abortion

MUJERES LIBRES

Known as Mujeres Libres, there are several groups scattered throughout Spain. The following article comes from a meeting with some women out of the Madrid group in their premises which has also been under the control of the Kommunistische Unions and a libertarian Ateneo.

-First of all, we should like to make it clear that we regard ourselves as an affinity group rather than an organisation; that is, we are a group of women united by a set of ideas which place us in the libertarian camp, the camp of the anti-authoritarian.

Q: How do you see the Women's Movement today?

A: Basically we dislike all-laws, but we accept the meaning which many women invest in word feminism, that it does not mean man's inferiority to women but a relationship of equality between the sexes in the context of an egalitarian society.

The Women's Movement has gone far in theoretical terms and gone deeply into the women's situation, but in terms of participation and organisation it finds itself in a moment of crisis. Many organisations or groups are only female wings of political parties and consequently do not campaign for liberation as women, instead as they are hindered by political interests and considerations (electoral prospects, for example).

We hold that the introduction by such groups (connected to the parties) into the Movement, or the notion that the organisations/groups of the Women's Movement should be organisationally at one with the parties who deem themselves the authentic representatives of the working class, is one of the present factors behind the present crisis of the Women's Movement. A substantial part of the Women's Movement has lost its autonomy and as a result many women have been disillusioned to discover that in practice this means that their concern must take a back seat to some supposedly strategic broader concern.

Q: What are your relations with other organisations within the Women's Movement?

CE: Here in Madrid, we are in touch with them through our participation in the Platform of Women's Organisations with a view to mounting specific actions to improve women's circumstances. On the abortion issue for instance all women's organisations are agreed. Then again there is one specific campaign upon which nearly all feminists are agreed, but which we have agreed not to join.

We mean the campaign for a divorce law. Falling back upon the old libertarian idea about free relationships without institutional bonds we refuse to campaign for divorce because we take the line that a campaign for divorce keeps the institution of marriage alive by rationalising it. We are for the non-institutionalisation of a couple's relationship as well as the same thing in all human relationships. In that sense we take communal relationships as our model against the nuclear family and the monogamous couple...without seeking to impose it of course.

We think too that the campaign for divorce would involve us in an American style process in that we would be feeding the highly profitable marriage and divorce industry. That may seem utopian and it has brought down upon us the charge that we are a token group far removed from the concerns of the bulk of women. But we think one has to move far beyond what some narrow minds term the realities. And thus we accept the fact that we may be out on a limb here. In fact, any time that anything specific has been achieved in terms of legal reforms the real lives of many people have gone further still. For example, in the area of marriage-divorce-marriage business, there is an increasing number of people who do not bother to marry and do not institutionalise their relationships, and this is happening not just in what are termed advanced societies such as Northern European countries, but here in Spain also.

Q: How do you stand with regard to the Mujeres Libres of the past?

A: In 1938-1939, the Mujeres Libres organisation comprised libertarian women who have more or less disappeared. We are women and libertarians too but changing times mean changes in the form and content of our struggles.

For example Mujeres Libres used to campaign for basic educational facilities for women but today the State provides that already. We take the view that the real Mujeres Libres during the Civil War need to be studied but without idealising them.

Q: Finally is there a lot of male chauvinism among libertarians?

A: In this society where one is manipulated and moulded from birth so that you internalise your role as little boy or little girl and where you are as "big brother" as a result, it is very hard to escape this manipulation. Thus it is in trying to rise above these real traumas of our childhood one finds, unconsciously, anti-woman-chauvinists. Individuals who are for a free society, a just and egalitarian society but who in the moment of truth, patronise and undere their female colleagues.

Only by realising our hypocrisies can we overcome them and that is why we exist as a specific women's group.

Campaign and the Women's Right to Choose group is in the making and there will be a conference in Dublin at the beginning of November to discuss the whole question with various "stans" for the Southern State and Westminster to contemplate....any woman who wants to take part should contact the Women's Centre about the next NIAC meeting.

STOP PRESS—STOP PRESS—STOP PRESS—STOP PRESS

A new gay club, the Carpenters Club, has just opened in central Belfast. Named after Edward Carpenter, utopian socialist and gay liberation pioneer of the late 1800s, the club aims to provide a non-exploitative place of entertainment for homosexuals and gay men in Belfast. There were only about half a dozen women there the night I went but I hope that if more women support the club we will in time feel the club is for us as much as for the men and a friendly and progressive atmosphere will be encouraged. I did find my ears battered by the heavy disco music and my senses dissertated by the peacock pattern of the lighting; other dancers tossed back into the cafe-area looking pale and shaken, so it wasn't just my age! I also found (a more serious criticism) my pocket emptied by the high cost of membership (£1)—there should be a reduction for those not in employment. For more information contact NIGRA or Carutfriend at Belfast 22023.
that there is not really any anti-black feeling in Toxteth where white people have been living with black people for years does not seem to deter them. It was clearly and definitely a "mixed" riot and that the incident which sparked it off, a black youth riding along on a bike, stopped by police and accused of stealing it, could not have provoked such a spectacular response had there not been grievances against police harassment for years previously. In fact everybody has been saying that this was going to happen in Liverpool for ages and Thatcher's policies have put the lid on it... or blown it off! Liverpool like Bristol has one of the oldest established black communities in Britain. It is a well known fact that both cities owe much of their prosperity in the past to being part of the slave triangle between Africa and America. The black community in Liverpool has been there since the nineteenth century. It has received few benefits. Money has been spent in Liverpool on providing community facilities for ethnic minorities, there is a Pakistani centre and a Caribbean centre, but Liverpool born blacks have been ignored, and anyway they want jobs first not centres. It is significant that the Peoples March against unemployment originated in Liverpool earlier this year and that there was a big response to it. It was one of the peaceful ways in which Liverpool people have been protesting for years, and was duly reported and then ignored by the British government. Although a majority of cities in Britain declared their city council to be an equal opportunity employer years ago, Liverpool have only recently done so, even though people have been pushing them for quite a while...there are still few blacks employed by them.

Areas like Toxteth may have realised to some extent what British repression means to people in the North of Ireland. The Irish Catholic State will not give an inch. We have seen that happens to 30,000 people who go to the poll and vote for Bobby Sands, the only peaceful, and legal protest that the British Government has left us, so that through this totally meaningless gesture of democracy it can be publicised world wide as well as to the people of Britain, that people do think the prisoners five demands are reasonable and should be granted, and, that it is not just a "handful of extremists" who think so...and what happens...30,000 people are accused of being IRA supporters thus thugs and hooligans so their vote is of no importance even if they did play the game. The British media are now virtually saying rather than implying that all Catholics are thugs and hooligans hooligans (this does not seem to exclude the Catholic hierarchy) and that as much all catholics in England should dissociate themselves?

London, Liverpool and Manchester may yet experience at first hand the treatment meted out to "thugs" and "hooligans". The British State has been quick, too quick, to point out that sototes in Manchester are "just looters and arsonists" so playing on the traditional conception people have about "citizenship". They want to cloud the issues involved, the social and economic crises that they have themselves created. The simplicity with which and the British policy of criminalising political activity is too clear to mistake

It is a sad lack in women's papers that there is little or nothing written about women living in the country in Ireland. Ireland is a predominantly rural country and yet the problems faced by rural women have hardly ever been discussed in feminist circles in Belfast for instance. The following was written out of a conversation with a friend of ours who has been living in Co. Down for the last ten years...we would welcome more articles on the subject.

COUNTRY LIFE

Why did you move out to the country?

I moved out to the country in the early seventies after having lived most of my life in Ardoyne. As a teenager most of my thoughts had been on how to enjoy myself, although I knew what was going on around me, the pressures people were living with and at that time the continual threat to people of sectarian assassinations. I felt those pressures too and I wanted to get away from it but wasn't until I was twenty or so that I really began to think about what was going on around me. Living in the country where I do you don't come in contact with people who share the same views or stimulate your interest to get involved as a person in your own right although that is coming together for me now.

Did you feel isolated?

Yes, it can be a problem. At first it is a novelty for friends to come out and see you but it wears off. You can get very dependent on friends coming out to see you, it isn't simply a matter of popping round the corner or if you want to break the day in the going for a wee dander in the town. But you gradually become more in tune with the country.

I love the silence and tranquillity now, coming into Crossgar for instance, when before I wouldn't have seen any beauty in a country lane...it was just boring to me.

How do you think your children's life here differs from your own in Belfast?

Well, there is plenty of space for them to play and no traffic for a start! They don't have to establish themselves as street fighters and I don't have to go out and do battle for my children. It could get quite rugged in Ardoyne with mothers scraping over their children.

Kids book

REVIEW—ANGELA'S STORIES

At last I've found a really fascinating children's book that written for and about children living in working class streets in Belfast. There are eleven beautiful wee stories about how a single parent and two children move from a small flat into a house of their own with their own yard on Majuba Street and become adopted and make friends in the community. Its one of those books that are impossible to review, you just see something in every line that you want to write down. Its full of Belfast axioms and colloquialisms—the house they move into looks like a three minute warning, they go to the chippy on a Friday night, they have races on their bikes up the entries, they talk to each other in "real" language—"Mammy, me Da, wee boys, wee girls, yous, yous, taste of tea, etc etc.

Fasnet admit that the characters are socially stereotyped and the stories are funny and so real, so full of ideas and traditions that even so they actually helped me to talk to my daughter and son about the role they were expected to play out on the street. There were knowing smiles between us when we got to the conversation between Sandra and Betty and Sandra says "I'm glad you came to live in our street. There's only been wee boys up til now"—well worth reading and The Bus Run got them thinking!

Available from Fasnet Co-operative Press, 99 Shankill Road, Belfast. Price £1.50 or from Just Books, 7 WINESTRAW STREET, Belfat.