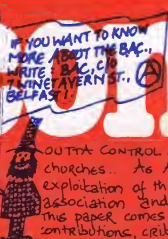


Outta Control

**News & Views of the
Belfast Anarchist Collective**



PULLING THE POLYESTER OVER OUR EYES!

The artificial fibre industry is one of the biggest employers in the North. But this year it has ground almost to a halt, as the multi-nationals pull out because their profits aren't high enough.

Courtalds, at Carrickfergus, have laid off 3,000, and at Campsie, near Derry, another 630. ICI near Larne, have sacked 2000. And last month at Antrim, Enkanlon announced the loss of 1300 jobs.

There has been little opposition from the workers, who have an uncritical view of their trade union leaders. John Freeman explained the unions strategy to oppose the bosses "No one can criticise the company" he said on TV. "Its not for me to question the internal affairs of a company" The redundancies have been agreed with the trades unions who have been silenced by very large redundancy payments and the usual argument about 'world wide recession-over capacity - fierce international competition etc.

ICI PROFITS
In 1978 ICI's profits were £421m In 1979 £613m but collapsed to £284m in 1980.

LIFE AT THE TOP
But a rather different fate awaits the executives of ICI.

Dr. Brian Smith is the ICI main board director with responsibility for fibres, which last year cost the company £181m. Rather than face redundancy, he is being promoted to head of ICI American operation. He received £90,000 which has increased to £170,000. His £204,000 home, bought largely with ICI money, is rented to him for £23 a week.

Denys Henderson, the lowest paid executive member of the ICI board - £83,016 per year - is also having a £88,000 flat provided for him. Like all other board members, he can only be sacked on 3 years notice. The Chairman, Sir Maurice Hodgson, receives £137,000 a year. Of course, the company cars, free food, private enclosures, high pensions, expense accounts, special £1,788 London Allowance, etc., also go with the executive jobs. Things are so arranged in ICI that a cadre of 2,300 executives live a life equally protected from the financial realities of the 80,000 workforce.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

Since our last issue, three more hunger-strikers have died in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh - Martin Hurson from Aghnashkeela, Co. Tyrone, Kevin Lynch from Dungiven, Co. Derry, and Kieran Docherty (an elected member of the Southern Parliament) from Andersonstown, Belfast. Eight young men have now died, with Tom McElwee reaching a critical condition.

The callous manipulation of such bodies as the Commission for Justice and Peace, and the Red Cross, at moments when some of the prisoners were struggling to live, shows that the NIO has no intentions of solving the hunger strike.

WHY ?

The Belfast Central H-Block and Armagh Committee put out a leaflet last week entitled 'Why the Hunger Strike Continues'. We are to put 'all our energy into convincing the grass roots of the Catholic Church, the SDLP, and Southern Government party that the prisoners' cause is a just one - so that they in turn will (make) demand(s) of their own leaders.' All our energies ? What of the thousands who take to the streets to protest, what of the power of workers and civil disobedience

down South ?

WHO ARE OUR ENEMIES ?

Instead of relying on those sections of society, in whose interest it is to defeat the criminalisation of prisoners, we are to concentrate on some of the most authoritarian sections. To convince the ruling classes of Ireland, who daily exploit and manipulate us, to support the prisoners, is to ask them to attack themselves.

Of course they want to see an end to the hunger strike, because the protest, and support it generates, threatens them. Their backing of the various commissions' interventions shows they are prepared to undersell the prisoners.

In short, the Big Three won't back the prisoners, unless they can sell them and us out. We must rely on ourselves, introduce new tactics and persevere at others. The 4-Day March from Newry to Dublin did not receive the support it deserved from national organisations such as the National H-Block Committee, Sinn Féin, and IRSP. The possibilities of that march, such as industrial action, and joint sharing of experiences, north and south, did not materialise.

CIVIL ORDER = PLASTIC DEATH

Since April this year there have been six deaths from plastic bullets. Scores of people have been seriously injured including fifteen year old Paul Lavelle who is in on a life support system and Kevin McLaughlin aged fourteen who is still unconscious after being hit on the back of the head by a plastic bullet on May 19th and is likely to be paralysed for life.

These lethal weapons have been described by Herman, the RUC Chief Constable as a 'minimum force weapon'... 'not intended to kill'. However this statement has been contradicted by no less a person than Willie Whitelaw, British Home Secretary and one time Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. He said that he could

Contd. on inside front page



The LOYALISTS

STATE OF SIEGE

The Loyalist State since its beginning has always seen itself as a community under siege. Throughout its history it has had to be defensive in maintaining its existence by any means necessary through the B Specials, RUC, UDR or UDA.

DON'T BE VAGUE - SHOOT A TAIG

The hard line loyalist answer to Catholics not knowing their place is to kill some of them. The sectarian assassinations carried out by the loyalist paramilitary groups may be silently condemned by the majority of Protestants, but murders carried out by the State's 'peace keepers' towards innocent Catholics are never questioned and are whitewashed over by the state.

Continued on inside back page

FROM ENCLOSURES TO BATTERY FARMS

ECOLOGY is simply our relationship to the natural world ... us and nature ... how we understand that relationship, how we act within it. The system we live in, our culture, decides that relationship... it decides our attitudes and responses to the natural world. So land, under private (usually family) ownership, and used for gain and profit through factory-type farming, is the 'key' to understanding ecology. Because people do not feel themselves to be in any degree of harmony with the natural world, with the fields and the countryside.

On the contrary, most people are denied any access to land, that right going traditionally from father to son through family ownership. The land is NOT something we all can share in, can work together ... it is seen as the way to make money for a few, to abuse as much as possible, to sell, to increase profits, to buy more machinery.*

That is the logic of private ownership. But farming has not evolved such a way by accident... it is the direct result of government policies and the development of machinery/technology. Policies and technology that see nature as something to be dominated, controlled ... as something in the service of the few. Indirectly, of course, we all get fed ... but at what cost? We shall see.



The Gov/Multi-national Connection.

Farming is more or less run by governments, who in turn carry out the wishes of huge chemical companies - always it is THEIR interests which get pushed. The farmers at the other end are only too eager to follow. Pesticides / insecticides / herbicides are manufactured and pushed by big drug companies... they are no longer an 'aid' to farming, but a short-cut to money-making, replacing all traditional methods. Government tries not to interfere, preferring taxes to real food. Agriculture becomes based on long-term disaster as the millions of tons of artificial chemicals pumped and sprayed into the ground become lethal ! Stronger and more lethal doses have to be used every year, as insects, supposed to be killed, build up resistances ... the bigger the dose of chemical used, the greater the danger to humans, animals, the soil, food. The chemicals accumulate in the soil, and slowly build

Contd. from front page

not sanction the use of plastic bullets in Britain because it would mean 'inflicting injury and death on rioters'.

If these deaths and injuries had been caused by the use of 'live' ammunition there would have been an outcry. However, although these plastic bullets have been shown to kill and maim, their name gives a false impression of their lethal nature, suggesting a toy bullet. They are actually called 'baton rounds'. They replaced the rubber bullet in 1972 because of the injuries and deaths caused by rubber bullets. The death toll of plastic bullets far exceeds that of rubber bullets. A plastic bullet is a blunt PVC cylinder, 3 1/2 inches long and

up - without notice or warning. Like radiation, the effect is additive ... maybe cancer in 10; 20; 30; years' time. The chemical industry persuades us to use all we can ... they encourage calendar spraying, spraying whether the so-called disease is about or not. They encourage spraying in advance of an outbreak; they encourage spraying to make vegetables look nice, irrespective of what harm it is doing. Meanwhile we are encouraged to BUY, to consume, vegetables, depending on how they LOOK, not their flavour or goodness. The agri-chemical industry, always claiming too much government control even where there is more likely, push cancerous products to the landowner out to make money. Slowly but surely the land is becoming polluted to the point of no return. Governments watch, always eager to deny the danger of these chemicals, yet stay in business by making into a taboo harmless things like marijuana. Of such is their logic feeding our minds shit, full of taboo.

Realising the accumulating dangers, and following in the footsteps of the American technocrats, some EEC bureaucrats issued a 'directive' which would require member states to restrict or withdraw certain chemical compounds. (The USA government banned DDT amongst other chemicals, but the multinational pushers sold their drugs, abroad, particularly in Third World countries). These 'restricted compounds' remain in use in both Britain and Ireland. They will not be banned... until 'effective alternatives become available'. A bit like saying 'we'll do away with some, when we get its equivalent on the market with a new hyped brand name.

The chemicals work hand in hand with the new farming mentality - of big machinery, EEC grants, bigger fields, ripping up hedges, spraying for everything, irrespective of the workers' health or those that live or grow nearby ... the big, neat, synthetic, approach to land they use and abuse as they are led, just because it is OWNED.

To argue that this is needed to feed the world's millions shows just how far we have gone away from any understanding of the earth's potential, and got filled up with nonsense. EEC mountains and lakes is the new agri-culture. Polluted land, harmful food, with most of us divorced from the land, becomes the modern twist to ecology, just like the world government push for nuclear power; it is multi-nationals and governments which gain at the expense of a slow poisoning of us all. And to change things? Clearly, the modern wholefood shop is NOT the answer. It leaves us divorced from the rural reality, substituting pre-packed Third World commodity rice for any personal connection with what is potentially around us. The answer comes from an urban / rural consciousness ... a belief in the NEED to regain our touch of earth. And that can only come about when the ordinary people who live in city batteries feel that need.

* Granted, there are many spots in Ireland where living on the land is difficult, where survival is full-time. Such small-scale farming is being done away with by Government/EEC policies. But even then, the culture of agri-business still plays a big role.

1 1/2 inches in diameter. Even at a range of 50 yards its velocity is 47 metres per second and it is 65 metres per second at five yards. Also bullets are often 'doctored' with torch batteries and coins or sharpened to make them even more dangerous.

Instructions issued to the British Army on the use of plastic bullets state:

'The rounds must not be fired at a range of less than twenty metres'

'They should be aimed so they strike the lower part of the target's body directly' The bullets are designed 'to disperse crowds' Over the past few months it is evident that the RUC and the British Army are firing plastic bullets at people when there is no disturbance whatsoever. Mrs

On the road to Dublin

On Saturday, July 25th., about 12,000 people brought the city of Dublin to a virtual halt whilst they peacefully asserted their right to demonstrate their support for the hunger strikers in Long Kesh. With Kieran Docherty T.D. and Kevin Lynch both in serious condition at that time, the vast crowds declared their intent to increase pressure on the Dublin government to take practical and negotiating measures in support of the demands of the prisoners.

The event in Dublin was the climax of a four-day march which involved people from all corners of the 'Free State', and of the North. From Wednesday onwards local groups had made their way along country roads and major highways, making a considerable impact in terms of slowing traffic, generating interest in, and support of, the issues involved. Much-needed funds were also collected along the route and marchers carried flags and banners showing their places of origin. The Gardaí accompanied each local group and were out in massive force when the thousands of people finally met in Dublin and marched from the GPO on a route past Leinster House to the Gardens of Remembrance where wreaths were laid.

Whilst the march had many successes - such as bringing the social and commercial life of the city to a halt, creating propaganda and media interest - it must be recognised that demonstrations of this kind have a limited use and are never the sole means of shifting an intransigent State. 12,000 people were policed and contained, and it is unlikely that governments trembled as a result or felt in any way politically threatened. It will always be a combination of tactics, passive and active, that will achieve progress. For one element (whatever it is) in any campaign to regard itself as the sole means of success, is delusion. Whilst preparing for future demonstrations of this kind, it is hoped that people concerned will do more to mobilise active support from the towns where marchers stop. It is necessary to encourage industrial, commercial and social interest in supporting the campaign - from workplaces and by civil action (in significant numbers) and by autonomous organisation. Only then, when a civil population shows massive purpose, will progress be made.

Nora McCabe was fatally injured when she was hit on the head as she was standing at a street corner in conversation... the streets were quiet at the time. The number of incidences where people were hit on the head demonstrates that the Security forces are deliberately aiming for the head region to inflict the most damage. Herman insists 'they are used against rioters' Yet elderly ladies and four and a half year old boys seem very unlikely rioters'

There have never been any deaths or serious injuries inflicted on the security forces in these circumstances no member of the security forces has ever been called to account for the death of or maiming of an innocent person.

JOIN : BELFAST ANARCHIST COLLECTIVE
WRITE - c/o T. WINSTON ST., BFC
PHONE - 25624

VIDEOS : NEW VIDEOS ON THE DUBLIN EMBASSY MARCH & THE NEWRY-DUBLIN 4 DAY MARCH - THE FIRST - ONCE HALF HOUR - \$10 TO BUY SECOND - ONCE HOUR - \$20 TO BUY TOGETHER - \$12 TO BUY - CONTACT JUST BOOKS

JUST OUT 'EXCELLENT BOOKLET' 'RUBBER & PLASTIC BULLETS KILL AND MAIM' - VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY RUC AND BRITISH ARMY IN IRELAND - A DOCUMENTATION BY THE ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL JUSTICE. AVAILABLE FROM JUST BOOKS.

Contd. from front page

Loyalist prisoners went on hunger strike coinciding with the republican prisoners first hunger strike. By doing so the UDA would have to accept the repugnant idea that there are political prisoners. Whereas the British government maintain it is a law and order situation and therefore only 'ordinary' criminals exist. Pressure was put on the loyalist prisoners to abandon their protest. The UDA were not prepared to in any way aid the republicans even at the expense of deserting their own prisoners.



NO CHINKS IN THE ARMOUR

The majority turn a blind eye or are unaware of the sectarian nature of the state. With the abolition of Stormont, the direct rule regime hoping to remove the excesses of the orange state exposed the discrimination in housing and jobs through their various reports and commissions. The power of local councils to allocate houses was removed. When the Equal Opportunity Commission asked firms to sign a declaration advocating there would be no discrimination in jobs many loyalists didn't on the grounds that to do so would be to admit that there ever was discrimination against Catholics.

Various loyalist ideas exist about Catholics - which amount to racism: they are lazy and work shy; their housing is bad because when given new homes they reduce them to slums; they are dirty; they have large families due to the priests urging them to outbreed Protestants the catholic religion is all voodoo and connected with the devil.

PROTESTANT WORK ETHIC

The protestant work ethic believes that through work you will achieve salvation and there is an inherent dignity in labour. You are encouraged to work hard, to be seen to be working, and you shouldn't really be enjoying it.

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

They hold certain myths about their own community. They look down on the Catholics who rely on state benefit as if they were the only ones who do so. Yet daily more and more Protestants are signing on. And for years their prime industries such as the shipyard which employs mainly Protestants has been relying on massive government subsidies to keep them open. This year alone it lost £32,000,000. Not

to mention the other state handouts in the form of government orders, employment subsidies, low wage supplements etc.

PAISLEY FOR POPE

The Loyalists believe they are more progressive than the 'priest ridden' south. Yet they massively vote for the most reactionary MPs and councillors who at every opportunity are anti-working class, take the most right wing stands and do their best to ensure that any progressive legislation passed on the mainland doesn't effect Northern Ireland.

Think of the sort of country the DUP would like to run: total control of education by the cleric (There goes the Darwin theory), abortion would carry a prison sentence for women, so would homosexuality for the lucky ones, harsher sentences for dope; and catholics need not apply of course.

MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL, WHO IS THE MOST LOYAL OF THEM ALL?

The Unionists may not be the monolithic block they once were but unfortunately the fragmentation has only meant that the unionist political parties now lie between right wing and fascist. The politicians view with each other to see who can become the ultra loyalist and detect the slightest smell of a sell out.

Any signs of drifting towards the 'beggar-ridden' 'Free' state is met immediately with the lambeg speeches and if need be the all-out opposition such as the U.W.C. strike. Dis-loyal to remain loyal!

NOT A CENTIMETRE

With every news item mentioning their future Queen, Lady Di, especially with the 12th coming up, this has strengthened the loyalist connection and the visual opportunity to demonstrate their link with Britain by ramming the union jacks down the fenians throats.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

In one factory the workers went on strike when the management removed the union jacks and other wedding paraphernalia from the work place. They were forced to put them back again. In loyalist dominated factories throughout Ulster it is usual to find workers flaunting little loyalist mementoes.

UNABLE TO MOVE

Daily we hear reports of redundancies in major industries, which hit protestant workers now more than ever. They perhaps feel that any grass roots agitation or direct action would further de-stabilise the North and therefore play into the hands of the republicans. They therefore have little option but to rely on the politicians and trade union leaders to crawl to Thatcher. And we all know what a failure that has been.

The Loyalists are held prisoners of their own making. Just after the collapse of the Unionist party some working class leaders questioned the role of their unionist masters in exploiting the working class protestants but ultimately they would have had to face up to the realisation of their own collaboration in discrimination from which they benefitted. And this they were not prepared to do.

LOYALISTS KILL NON LOYALISTS

Any progressive protestants who see through

the contradictions of loyalism will challenge the right of the state to exist through its use of discrimination in housing and jobs. They, unfortunately are forced to keep quiet or get out of a loyalist community by intimidation. And it is almost impossible for any new generation to unmask loyalism for the reactionary face that it is. Protestants are isolated by a sectarian mental and physical wall.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU READ

They rely on state information via TV with all its lies and distortions. Newspapers like the Belfast Telegraph and Newsletter only serve to reinforce their position and ideas. They listen to their leaders to interpret events and show them the way. Socialist organisations have little or no way of openly selling their papers and any papers which have been issued by predominantly working class groups like the UDA have been obviously sectarian and racist.

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

Occasionally tenuous links are created between protestant and catholics such as in the latest agitation against rent increases. The organisers have tried to stay clear of involving any politicians less they should lose support from one side or another. Unfortunately if the campaign should receive widespread support it only takes the orange or green card to be played to smash any joint action. (The DUP have already made inroads in certain areas.)



Passing the myths from father to son

Lately young people step out of the loyalist mentality and begin to meet catholics through cultural activities. They may well reject the blatant sectarianism but this is at the expense of becoming apolitical, or a total rejection of anti-British activities because they see any opposition as an extension of the IRA campaign.

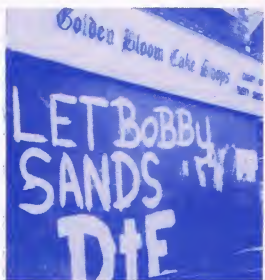
Some youths become 'super' loyalists and join the ranks of the various paramilitary groups.

Ultimately the British state wants a bourgeois solution. It doesn't really matter to them what politicians are in power so long as British companies and multi-nationals can get cheap labour for their factories and sell their shitty goods. And even install a cruise missile here to protect the British 'way of life'.

THE FINAL SOLUTION

Now that the British Government and the multi-nationals are the main employers in the North it will be easy to apply economic sanctions on the loyalists to accommodate the catholic politicians. They just have to start by withdrawing subsidies to ailing industries, welfare payments etc. No longer can the loyalists consider standing on their own feet especially with the decline of any economic backing from the native capitalists whose support they did have at the state's inception.

The British can take a chance of the loyalist backlash, but given the depressive economic future pointed out to them they will accept some form of power sharing or immigration... but how would the republicans react and are there any alternatives to this bleak future. REPUBLICANISM EXAMINED NEXT ISSUE!



NOWHERE TO GO - BUT THE BOAT!

There's little enough for young people here, but now, the Harp Bar, the centre for punk music has closed its doors to punks. Though not because punk is dead. The punk culture has probably lasted longest here because it strongly reflects the state of things in Northern Ireland. And as most kids are on the dole, it is the easiest cultural image to adopt, as you don't need the money to buy fancy clothes.

HAVE A HARP

The owner of the Harp Bar didn't make enough profit because people weren't buying enough booze. It was a grotty place anyway. The owner, who doesn't give two fiddles as to what sort of music is put on, and quick to spot a good thing, has turned it into a Country & Western Club. Obviously he thinks the music is more conducive to people getting pissed. Anything for a fast buck.

NO ANSWER

There are a few clubs where pub owners let people run it themselves. They take the money on the door, which goes towards providing the music. Any live bands have, of course, to be acceptable to the pub owner. Ultimately, you end up working for the bar man lining his pockets.

GOOD CLEAN FUN

BJ's Rock Club in the cinema in Holywood obviously suffers from its location in attracting large crowds and therefore is unable to pay for top groups. It also doesn't have a licence, and a lot of people feel they need to get stoned to enjoy themselves, but that's another story.

DRINK UP AND FUCK UP

Apart from that, there are also the various

straight clubs where you can listen all night to dead disco and fulfil your lifetime's role as a passive consumer, watching the spectacle.

NICE BOYS AND GIRLS ONLY

Many leisure activities are usually on someone else's terms, i.e. private enterprise, church, state, school. It's almost impossible to organise our own activities when all the resources belong to these groups, and you have to conform to their rules to get to use them.

THEIR CULTURE

Mainstream culture reflects and reinforces the consumer, authoritarian capitalist society we are forced to live in. Resistance culture is a reaction to it and challenges, at times, the status quo in very dynamic new ways. However, the system often has the knack of absorbing revolutionary ideas and selling them back to us at a profit. Grass finds themselves constantly being ripped off by entrepreneurs.

HANG ON

But wait, don't despair, think twice before going to London, for soon there will be something round the corner in Belfast.

Harp Bar with instant plastic facade.



ally the British state and its efforts to maintain 'authority'; and why do we have a guerrilla war, mass demonstrations, wholesale rejection of that authority? Surely it is because there is resistance to imperialist control, including a cultural resistance.

Some of us are not sure of what 'great and heroic past' he's referring to, but struggles such as the hunger strike, the street battles and demonstrations against overwhelming military and media odds are 'heroic' (if he insists on the term). That the methods, organisation and culture have elements of reaction is common to any social movement of rebellion, and is partly explained by the intensity of exploitation and repression, and partly by the small presence of revolutionary groups.

On prisoners, 'There is absolutely no reason whatsoever to assume that one side will be likely to be more sympathetic than the other to anarchism'. Apart from the conclusions of analysis, we have found by experience that the prisoners who contact us, and who adopt anarchist positions, are those from the 'republican side'. We remain open to all approaches, as is evidenced by our Book Scheme, which is open to ALL prisoners.

Finally, the constant use of the term 'Ulster' reflects a continuing respect for the ideas of the UDA. 'Ulster' refers not to the 9 counties, but to the arbitrarily-partitioned 6, which were big enough to prove viable as a state, but small enough to ensure a loyalist majority. It was used by those who became disillusioned with Britain's commitment to a sectarian state.

RAIDS IN LEEDS

On Saturday 11th July, a working-class council estate in Leeds received a dawn visit from the anti-terrorist squad. A house was surrounded by armed police, their weapons trained on the windows and door, and the occupant - an anarchist - was woken up and taken away. The house was searched with a sniffer dog, floorboards were taken up, internal bulletins of the North-East Anarchist Federation and the Direct Action Movement were photographed and a metal detector was used in the garden. A next-door neighbour who came out to find out what was going on also had her house searched. She later contacted friends of the detained man to let them know what had happened.

At the same time two other anarchists were raided and all three men were taken to a suburban police station where cells had been prepared for them four days previously. Anarchists and others pestered the police station where they were held (the police, incidentally, denied all knowledge of the detained men) all weekend.

During their interrogations of the three anarchists, the political police revealed that one of the anarchists, who had recently been to Ireland on holiday, had been followed while in Dublin. They also revealed a detailed knowledge of those attending hunger-strike demonstrations and vigils. The political police said they had received information that the three anarchists were plotting to blow up the Royal Wedding but at 2.30 pm on Sunday afternoon, the three men were released without being charged with anything. This incident is yet one more proof that, not only in Northern Ireland, but increasingly in England too, a dawn visit by the political police is a fact of life for political dissidents.

TAKE NOTE

Why don't you subscribe to OUTTA CONTROL - GAINING GROUND? £3 for 12 issues. If outside Europe, and you want it sent Airmail, double the amount. All international payments in Sterling money orders.

☐ If box is ticked, your subscription is due - send c/o Just Books, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1. Tel: 0232 25426.

H-Block Posters, produced by the Anarchist Information Group. Give-away prices: 50p for 50 posters. (Same address as above).

NEW POSTER. 'Harrassment every day, signing on every week, Outta Control every so often'. Posters 3 pence each. Postage rates 15p per 1-10 copies, 20p per 10-20 copies, 20 or more copies postage free. (Again, same address as above).

CARNISORE 81 * Free Festival * 12-16 August Workshops on uranium mining, nuclear power, missiles etc * exhibitions * creche * top Folk * Rock * and new wave bands * NOT to be missed.

PRISONERS BOOK SCHEME. Wise Up! Get political. Do you realise what it's like to be locked up 23 hours a day? Stuff the booze to-night, send what you'd spend on a night's drink so that we can continue to send books free or at least half price to any prisoner who asks. Send to: Just Books, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast BT1. Tel: Belfast 25426.

A REPLY TO A LETTER WHICH APPEARED IN OUR LAST ISSUE.

El Faro's letter provoked much controversy some anger when the Collective discussed putting it OUTTA CONTROL. Its merits were to dispel the illusion of 'independence' within the world of international capital; and an emphasis on the capitalist nature of imperialism.

But some of us took great exception to several other statements. To say that the author is 'no more confused than most people over here, stricken as we are by the sectarian ghetto mentality' is condescending to say the least. At worst it is a rearguard of the British government's ideology, which has troops here peace-keeping between 2 hostile sectarian tribes.

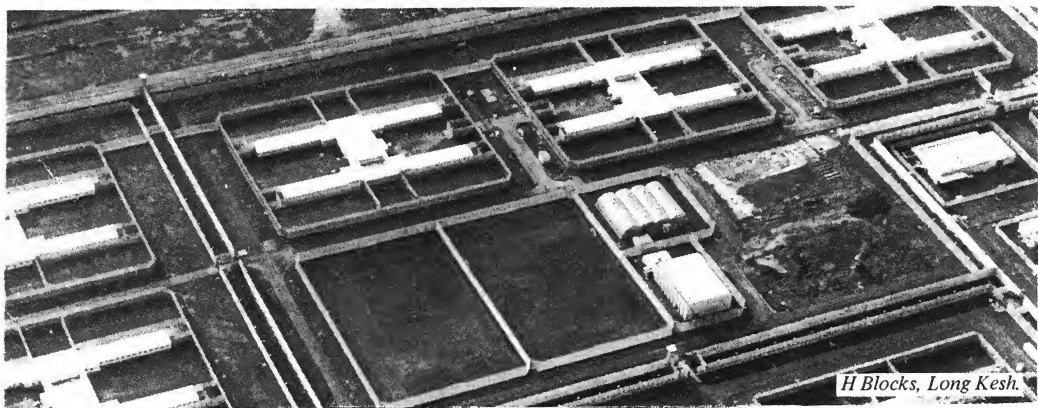
'El Falso' misses the point that the State itself institutionalised and creates sectarianism by discriminating against one section of the population in favour of another. The favoured section identifies with that State for the relative improvements it achieves.

Apparently there is 'no longer any social reality here'; life is the same as anywhere else. Nor is there any longer 'any real Irish culture', only the ruins of a great and heroic past. We see that capitalism has imposed itself on most social and cultural relations, but to assume that it alone has done so completely and successfully begs several questions - what is the role of the state, specifically

HUNGER STRIKE: TRUTH THE FIRST CASUALTY

The following letters were smuggled out of H Block 5, Long Kesh, in Northern Ireland. The prisoner who wrote them wants to explain the real background to the protest, which has of late culminated in the hunger strike — Six people have already died, and the government have shown no sign of changing their pig-headed attitude which they unashamedly display in so many aspects of their policies.

In Britain there exists great confusion about the prisoners struggle. Primarily, there is little opportunity for them to make available the facts behind the protest. The National press — 'The Times,' 'The Star,' and 'The Sun,' etc. serve only to reiterate the dogmatic and uncompromising statements made by the government in the House of Commons, the prisoners being portrayed as 'organised criminals' with 'criminally insane suicidal desires.' Such distortions, lies and myths can only continue in the absence of information on the realities of the prison situation and life in Northern Ireland — The intimidation of having armed troops and police on the streets, arbitrary arrest 'special' laws, non-jury courts, torture during interrogations.... silence cannot continue for much longer.



H Blocks, Long Kesh.

Comrades.

This letter comes to you from H Block five, Long Kesh Concentration Camp, North-East Ireland. I write with genuine pen to urge you to voice your solidarity with this prison struggle to end H Block; the continued atrocity.

We have made our stand, firmly entrenched in the uncompromising truth that we are not and never will allow ourselves to be called criminals.

I realise that for you it is difficult to understand this struggle not having a proper representation of the facts at your disposal, and as the controlled media wields savagely the dagger of Brutus in a blatant character assassination of the Irish liberation struggle. I appeal to you to seek out the real facts so much disguised and distorted by the counter insurgents within "the powers that be."

Our protest embarked in 1976. We refused to wear prison garb, demanding the return of our rights as political prisoners — political status. Violent brutality, treachery and hypocrisy have been the catalysts that dictated the escalation of our resistance erupting finally into the horrific and bloody climax of the two hunger strikes.

Four of our comrades now lie coffined and murdered, but they are not the first victims of this fanatical conspiracy, four members of our solidarity committee were assassinated for daring to oppose the gauntlet reasoning of the British government in the political arena, many other assassinations failed, the most ruthless being that of H Block campaigner and marxist Miss Bernadette McAliskey.

The first hunger strike of October ended when our five demands were met in the flexible wording of a 30 page

document which would have allowed for an "internal settlement." This suited us, and with hunger striker Sean McKenna having only a few hours to live we all breathed a sigh of great relief, only in just a few weeks time to be dealt a vicious and sickening blow by a dirty and grotesquely experienced fighter — Treachery!! — in the form of backtracking and renegue, this is the atmosphere in which it was hammered home that we must hunger strike again, this time to the death with no eleventh hour designs to defeat us.

We took the initiative to end the no wash/no slop out protest; in a bid to encourage the "step by step" approach of what we had thought was an "internal settlement."

Then it became apparent that the controllers of this prison with whom we were, through our spokesman Bobby Sands, negotiating with wanted one thing — absolute conformity. So in the face of this intransigence, under duress we took the only course open; Hunger strike.

Therefore the atrocity of H Block lies firmly on the shoulders of the British governments, all the deaths and injuries are from their hands, coupled with those who encourage their foul reasoning in this issue. British despotism.

By you expressing your solidarity now in the many forms and methods open, you can help to achieve for us our rights. By helping us to secure our five basic demands and saving our comrades lives, you can bring about an end to yet one more tale of injustice — Thankyou.

PRO H.5, L.K.R, P.O.W.

"My position is in contrast to that of other prisoners, I am a political prisoner." — Bobby sands R.I.P.

4th July, 1981.

Comrades,

I write in the hope of enlightening you and encouraging your solidarity to bring about an end to the corruption of criminalisation and the return of our rights as political prisoners.

The H Blocks were designed on a parallel with Stuttgart prison in West Germany, they are unique isolation units. The prison regime in Long Kesh where the H Blocks are located are corrupt and ruthlessly bigoted, the counter insurgency conspiracy of criminalisation was released early in 1976 with waves of petty crime by small time thugs recruited by British intelligence. While the building of the H Blocks continued half remission was introduced, cutting the number of Special Category prisoners down rapidly. Here is the first hint - why build more jail compartments when the jail population was now easily manageable after the introduction of half-remission? So, we have men back on the streets, the spates of robberies and burglaries continue. Next comes the screaming headlines - "Republican Godfathers" - "Chicago style raids of republican dens" etc. etc...The illustration begins to take shape. So too do the hideous interrogation centres raise their grotesque limbs and start with sickening haste to deliver victims back (via the Diplock non-jury courts and fabricated and grossly inadequate evidence) to the "new Maze", only this time as criminals and not special category prisoners. Many of the men released on half remission soon found themselves back in jail again, serving longer terms for alleged offences, similar in nature to their first conviction with one difference, due to expedience their sentences had in some cases doubled.

Resistance began early, the very first Republican prisoner sentenced after the removal of political status on March 1st 1976 went on the blanket - because he refused to be criminalised, and so the worlds greatest prison struggle began: reaching it's brutal climax when four men, Francis Hughes, Patsy O'Hara, Raymond McCreesh and Bobby Sands MP died on hunger strike - because they refused to be criminalised!!

You must realise that there is no moral justification for the atrocity that has occurred due entirely to British government inflexibility, intransigence and sick fanaticism. There is no moral justification for the removal of political status. This talk of a school for guerilla warfare is all nonsense, We could train and educate ourselves in the use of war materials and develop politics under any circumstances, and the blanket has taught us a more important lesson - endurance, determination. Many of us have developed the hatred we lacked for our enemies, innocence has become embittered. We educate ourselves on the blanket, it is not foolish to imagine that we will not do so under different circumstances.

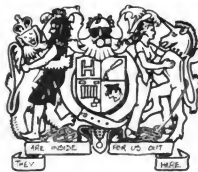
THE FIRST HUNGER STRIKE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS
DEMANDS WERE MET IN THE MARCH 1976 WHEN THE
GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE AS A RESULT FOR AN
END TO THE STRIKE AND TO THE HUNGER STRIKE
WAS TO BE ABANDONED A SIGN OF GREAT
A FEW WEEKS TIME TO BE DEBATED A VICTORY AND
A DIRTY AND CRUELLY EXPLOITED PRISONER
IN THE FACE OF ABUSE AND THE DEMANDS THIS
WAS TO BE ABANDONED IT TO THAT HE MUST
REMAIN THIS TIME TO THE DEATH WITH NO ALTERNATIVE
DEFEAT US.

WE THEN THE INMATES TO END THE HUNGER
PROTEST, IN A BID TO ENDORSE THE STEP BY STEP
WHAT WE THOUGHT WAS AN INTELLECTUAL SETTLEMENT.

THEN IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT
WAS TO WIN. WE WERE TOLD...
Notes such as this, written on toilet paper and smuggled out of the prison are the only means by which the prisoners can communicate on their conditions.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SAYS THOSE WHO OPPOSE THEM IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND ARE CRIMINALS

Yet there is



**SPECIAL
LEGISLATION
SPECIAL
HOLDING POWERS
SPECIAL
INTERROGATIONS
SPECIAL
JURYLESS COURTS
SPECIAL PRISONS**

SUPPORT THE IRISH HUNGER STRIKERS' CALL FOR SPECIAL STATUS— POLITICAL STATUS

ANARCHIST INFORMATION GROUP

The establishment says to our claim for free association that it would mean hundreds of men running about doing what they want, which is ridiculous because each segregated wing of a H Block holds a maximum of 50 men only!! and that's a fact. Understand now political status was not removed because of any moral reasoning, but simply as a means to alienate those engaged in the freedom struggle for the people. Any other excuse is mere fabrication.

Criminalisation has been stalled in it's track, crippled by the solid resistance in these blocks, but the British government refuse to admit defeat, and while we continue to encourage a solution by our willingness to negotiate, the British government murder by intransigence continues to spew forth corpses.

The Brits must leave Ireland, the Irish people must be returned the right of self determination. You can, by expressing your solidarity, help Ireland to achieve these rights by joining the massive siege around we have erected to collapse the continued atrocity of H Block: Thankyou.

"Freedom, equality and peace"
Venceremos,
PRO H.S.

For additional information on Ireland contact:

Gaining Ground

OUTTA CONTROL ANARCHA-FEMINIST NEWS

The right to vote, or equal civil rights, may be good demands, but true emancipation begins neither at the polls, nor in courts. It begins in woman's soul. History tells us that every oppressed class gained true liberation from its masters through its own efforts. It is necessary that women learn that lesson, that she realise that her freedom will reach as far as her power to achieve her freedom reaches.
EMMA GOLDMAN 1911

MINDING THE CHILDREN

The vast majority of working mothers have to make their own child-care arrangements privately, whether it is all day for the under-fives or after-school care for their older children. Many children are looked after by husbands, relatives and friends; a handful will be attending one of the five day-care centres in Northern Ireland and over 50% will be formally looked after by childminders.

Childminders are the largest single group of people working in the home and are, with one or two exceptions, women. Their job has little status within society and is very poorly paid. Most often their wages come out of the mother's wage (about 60% of average male wage) and childminders know that they cannot ask for more because it is not there to be given. As women, we are given virtually no recognition of the importance of child-rearing which is combined with all the domestic chores, and many men do not recognise it as a job at all. This is a view commonly held about childminders as well, some have even thought that childminding was reprehensible (a view not extended to the nannies of wealthy children), even though recent studies * have shown that many of them put lots of energy and effort into their work, teaching and enjoying the children, and they may spend up to half their wages on expenses such as food and drink, toys, equipment, wear and tear, etc..

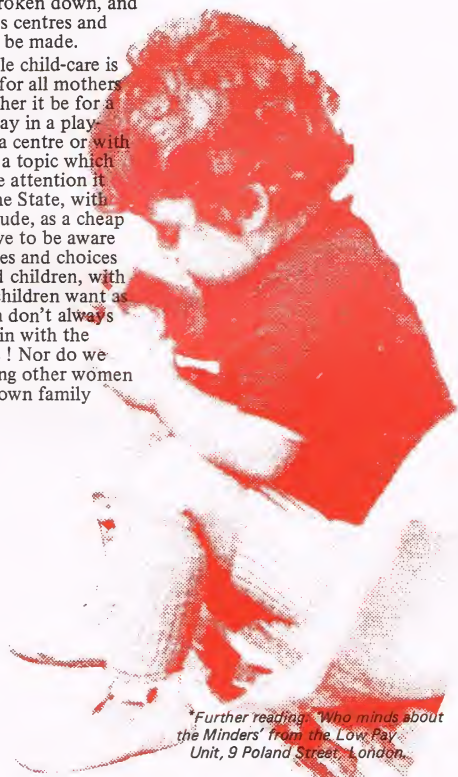
Since WW2, more and more women have been working outside the home and the increase is greatest amongst married women with young children - The depression is biting deep, and it is now a financial necessity to have two wages coming into the home each week to avoid poverty - there has been no corresponding increase in child-care facilities. The dilemma is that there are fewer and

fewer jobs around, and with female unemployment rising 3 times as fast as male unemployment, not only are working mothers being forced back into the home, but some are likely to become childminders themselves, just as the need for them is dwindling.

In some areas of the U.K., childminders have come together to set up local support groups where ideas, toys, equipment, play materials can be discussed and exchanged - isolation can be broken down, and links with children's centres and drop in centres can be made.

The need for flexible child-care is an essential choice for all mothers and children, whether it be for a couple of hours a day in a play-group or all day in a centre or with a childminder. It is a topic which has not received the attention it deserves; seen by the State, with its laissez faire attitude, as a cheap alternative. We have to be aware of all the possibilities and choices open to women and children, with emphasis on what children want as well. Older children don't always want to be thrown in with the babies, for example! Nor do we want to be exploiting other women whilst keeping our own family solvent!

The Women's Movement in the North has always recognised the importance of day care and after school care for children. Action has been confined to calling on the State for more money to provide state nurseries. One or two groups, like the crèche committee in the Lower Crescent Resource Centre have been trying to do it themselves but not particularly successfully. The latter have been trying for eighteen months and are now snookered over premises. A flexible, non sexist, libertarian day centre would be a vivid example and a positive step in the right direction.



*Further reading: 'Who minds about the Minders' from the Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland Street, London.

THE ROAD TO 1984

Only six months after Ronald Reagan assumed the office of President, feminists in the U.S.A. are finding that they are having to reassess their position and take a hard look at both their resources and their strategies for the future. By the end of the 1970s they might have been forgiven for taking a breathing space. American women had achieved a great deal in just over ten years in terms of education, legal and work opportunities. Vast amounts of funding had been used in feminist research in setting up alternative action programmes and in shelters for the victims of rape and battering. Feminists, although still fighting on issues, felt secure in what they had gained so far and some women were already complaining that the energy had left the American women's movement; too many women were now content to sit back and enjoy their gains.

Unfortunately though they were to see these gains as very short lived. Things were changing in the USA during the 70s, the most important being the prestige of the USA itself in the eyes of the world. Gradually through the decade the nation that was used to high standards of living, to denying the existence of poverty within its boundaries, to having the largest say in world affairs, found that despite all efforts, inflation was rampant, the dollar wasn't buying so much anymore, unemployment began to affect the white middle and working classes in a significant way whereas before only blacks and portoricans or mexicans had been affected. The third world wasn't doing what it was told anymore particularly the oil sheiks who put prices and caused even more problems. Finally in Iran, Americans were being held to ransom and there was nothing the USA could do except feel the eyes of the world watching and laughing at them. This came as a tremendous shock to many Americans used to being regarded as the biggest and the best. In particular it upset many of the members of big business there who felt that their 'once great nation' was losing hold of all that it had achieved.

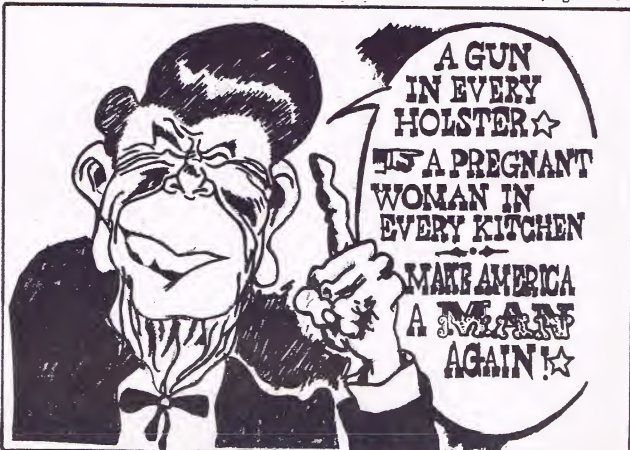
This mood began to pervade American politics and the searching question, why? left the stage open for those who could put forward a strong, plausible answer to the question....where have we gone wrong?

America has always been a society of huge divides and also one of a very strong conservative tradition. During the 1960s the ultra right wing out of favour in the period of civil rights reform and liberal thinking had managed to pour much of its energies into the Vietnam war effort but once the war ended they were left with tight organisations and groupings but really no where to go. It is at this point that the right wing begins to turn its attention to home and to American politics and starts to build up networks and alliances. By the end of the 70s the 'New Right' as it came to be known under the umbrella of the National Conservative

Political Action Committee (NCPAC) came to represent a wide coalition of structured lobbies at Congress, research foundations, fundamental religious bodies and single issue campaigns such as the Right to Life Committee, the Gun Lobby, the Daughters of the Revolution, the pro-nuclear lobby and many others. Their message was pure and simple—America had once been great and could easily be great again....how? By ending all wishy washy liberalism of the 60s and 70s, by ending 'government handouts' (ie welfare) to those who wouldn't work, by building up defence, by moving against groups who

the voting population registered a protest both at the choice they were faced with on election day and signified their refusal to have anything to do with the sham by not voting. On a minority vote Reagan became President and immediately set about rewarding the NCPAC for all its help.

In January he announced one of the highest increases in the defence budget since the second world war—he also increased the amount of nuclear weapons the USA had in particular he restarted the research into the neutron bomb for the future. At the same time he announced major cuts in welfare and in government funding immediately affecting the poor, the sick the elderly and all other agencies, eg: consumer affairs, shelters for victims of battered women's centres, legal advice



were undermining the true American values of traditional morality and most importantly the family. In other words, to move against the poor, ethnic groups, feminists, homosexuals, people arguing against nuclear power...all these had helped or colluded in the downfall of America. Their message contained the potent myth that was swallowed whole by many white (often working class) Americans, and in cases, blacks as well who believed that the restoration of the old would bring about a change in their situation at this time.

Ronald Reagan, the one time actor, moved onto the stage to play the greatest part of his entire life shrewdly realising that the NCPAC had resources in terms of mailing lists, access to TV through the various TV preachers that 100 million Americans watch every week, and in time and energy which he could use, but, if they acted independently in his favour then their spending would not be counted as part of his campaign expenses and so he could not be accused of overspending on his government fixed allowance for the Presidential campaign. Undoubtedly, the NCPAC's help was one of the crucial factors in the campaign but it was help given with strings attached. Not only would Reagan be expected to broadly agree with their ideas he would also be expected to support the various single issue campaigns within the NCPAC group—ing—and he was to fulfill these promises.

Reagan was elected by one of the smallest polls in American history. Almost 48% of

by limiting severely if not shutting down entirely their work.

He publicly supported the gun lobby even though he was shot himself. Two days after his inauguration (which costed \$11 million) he invited anti-abortionists into his office to pledge support. At the moment he is attempting to cut federal funding for all sex education programs run in public schools. The backlash then is well underway and American feminists are beginning to reel at the losses of hard fought battles.

The abortion issue provides a good illustration of their situation. In 1973 feminists took a case to the Supreme Court over abortion. They claimed that the fact that abortion was illegal in some states of the USA was inherently unequal as it put women in an inferior position to men in terms of their freedom of action—it was therefore unconstitutional. The Supreme Court found in their favour and so all the states had to repeal anti-abortion legislation immediately. (The USA system of government is complicated. All government comes from the Constitution written in 1776. It is the law in the USA. Government is divided into three branches, the Congress—it legislates, the President—carries out legislation and foreign affairs, and the Supreme Court—guardians of the Constitution. Each of the 50 states also have their own governments who have the right to make laws for that state alone. To clarify the situation then, when the Congress legislates new laws, they do NOT automatically become part of the constit-

REVIEWS

HERSELF ALONE

by Seamus Finnegan
directed by Julia Pascal

It was a strange experience, spending a week in London escaping the 12th celebrations, to go into an Islington pub at lunchtime and find oneself living through a play about the lives of three Belfast women, all born the same year as me, and educated by the same order of nuns as I was.

The play concerned one day in the life of the women. Bridget is happily living in London with a man she has a good relationship with; Patricia, a teacher, also living in London, is planning to return to Belfast to take part in 'the struggle' - while Fionnuala paces her cell in Armagh Jail, defiant and bitter. Through dialogue, monologue and appeals to the audience, their lives unfold. The bare stage, with only one chair as prop, became transformed into an arena where the claims of nationalism and the counter claims of feminism confronted each other. It wasn't always an equal match, due to the playwrights presentation of the situation, but it was thought provoking and it certainly raised many fundamental issues.

Patricia, frustrated by the indifference of the British, their liberalism a mask which barely disguises their chauvinism and contempt for other nationalities, cried out in anger that she could no longer live in the heart of the enemy. Not only was she, a member of an oppressed country, living in the imperialists' capital city, she also felt her psyche to be different, her whole manner of relating to people, of expressing herself. An analogy could be made (but wasn't) to the experience that many women have in relation to men. Both have been colonised/oppressed. But Bridget, while accepting much of what Patricia feels, argues that it is impossible to go back, to return to the dead weight of the Catholic Church, forced to conform to the image of Catholic womanhood, pressurised into marriage and regular church attendance. Her choice is her survival as a woman. The paradox is that as an Irish, ex Catholic woman, she can live more freely in London than she could in Belfast. In the meantime, Fionnuala serves her sentence in Armagh, on lock up as part of the penalty for protesting her right to be treated as a political prisoner. As one would expect she is uncompromising in her Republicanism. The audience is made to feel uncomfortably aware of the reality of ghetto life, of the material reasons why someone would choose to devote their life to armed warfare against the British state. Finne-

gan, a Belfast man, uses the character of Fionnuala to bludgeon his (obviously liberal/left) English audience into a recognition of their guilt—because they are members of the oppressing race. Its a nationalistic diatribe and it angered me. It appeared to say that international solidarity was a myth, and that racial differences were overwhelming. At one point Fionnuala lashes out against English feminists for not expressing support for her, declaring that 'my sisters are the men in Long Kesh', because they were united in military struggle while feminists were concerned with the unimportant question of the universality of women's oppression.

I had the feeling that if the play was performed in a more political setting—for example, at a woman's conference, or at a meeting on Ireland—it would have provoked an angry response from people who would (and quite rightly) have refused to be guilt tripped in this heavy handed way. Perhaps Finnegan chooses his prey carefully? But despite everything, the play has some important things to say, and we could all benefit from discussing its content. However it would be a brave person who would put it on a venue where we could see it!

PLAN OF ACTION?

IRISH WOMEN SPEAK OUT A Plan of Action



Produced by the Council for the Status of Women. Co-op Books, Price £1.20.

Anyone interested in discovering what are the main problems facing women in Ireland today can find most of them voiced in this book, which is a report of the Women's Forum held in Dublin in November 1980. The two day conference was attended by over 1000 women who discussed issues ranging over health, education, violence against women, employment, lesbianism, women in rural areas and women in conflict situations.

The book attempts to summarise both the factual information presented by speakers, together with the comments and views aired in the workshops - not an easy task as anyone who has attended a large conference will realise. It is the range of views that I felt to be one of the book's strongest points, for they show that increasing numbers of Irish women, not just feminists, are becoming more aware of the problems facing them, and more vocal about what is needed in terms of legislative, social and economic change.

This conference was planned as a follow-up in Ireland to the United Nations Conference on Women, held in Copenhagen in 1980. The Copenhagen Conference recommended various measures for all governments to take to eliminate the discrimination and inequality that take place within the family, and at national, local and family level by implementing a programme for change. In theory, this progress is then monitored at international level, as all governments are required to produce reports to the U.N. The Irish Women's Conference received government funding, and, in the closing address, the then Minister for State, Department of Labour expressed on behalf of the government, his keen interest in receiving the National Plan of Action from the Conference. I wonder how he'll react to the following recommendations that arose from the Workshops:-

'An end to the Catholic Church's control over education in Ireland'

or

'A national programme of education covering sexuality in general and lesbianism in particular, to take place in schools, community and health centres ...'

or

'Encourage and facilitate the establishment, particularly in local communities, of plans for the systematic development of child-care services and facilities.'

Each Workshop produced lists of radical, far-reaching demands calling for divorce legislation, sex education in schools, alternatives to prison, repeal of the Family Planning Act and more.

The Problem is that a set of demands don't constitute a plan of action, however 'correct' they may be. There was no discussion on how women can work for the changes in society that they want. While the book is interesting, because it is Irish women speaking out, it doesn't deserve the sub-title, A Plan of Action..

YOUNG PEOPLE - WRITE ON !

Your poems, stories and drawings wanted for a new book of your work to be published later this year. Send things of any length and any subject, with your name, age and address to: Young People Writing, 7 Winetavern St., Belfast BT1. Tel: 25426 (day)

THREE MONTH STRIKE AT E.B.S.

One hundred and six workers, members of ASTMS, have been on strike since April 29th at the Educational Building Society... Nineteen branch offices in Dublin, one in Cork and the head office are included. The majority of the striking workers are youngwomen on strike for the first time. The pickets every day are almost 100% women. It is a long and bitter dispute and still looks a long way from victory for the workers. They are seeking parity with the Irish Civil Service Building Society which which would mean an average increase of £10.84 per week.

The EBS are refusing to concede the claim which would cost them in the region of £92,000 per year. In the 12 months up to December 1980 their profits went up to 14.7% to £2.5m, their assets stand at £215.6m and they are ranked at the

the 12th biggest financial institution in the country. So who believes that they can't afford to pay? They thought nothing of spending £18,500 on potted plants for the head office or of giving a gift of £2000 to the Garda Boat Club.

The EBS are attempting to maintain their usual service by using non-union staff, many of whom were recently given promotion in return for staying out of the Union. They are also trying to pressurise strikers back to work - in Cork the striking branch manager is being threatened with foreclosure of his mortgage.

So far there has been little movement in the dispute even though the workers have been out for over 3 months now. Recent talks with management produced nothing acceptable to the workers. Two conciliation conferences have resulted in no more than an offer of parity with the Irish Permanent which would mean virtually no extra money, but would be tied to an increase of four hours on the working week.

The strikers had a very successful march through Dublin about a month ago, to highlight the fact that they were still out on strike. Over 200 people took part in the lunch-time march through the city, and workers from other



I think, if women don't like the way we run things here, they can go back where they came from. That's what I think.

building societies joined the march in solidarity. In June a very good social was held for the strikers in a Dublin pub and was supported by trade union activists, H-Block activists, anarchists and socialists. It raised £60 for the strike fund, but apart from that it gave the strikers a boost to know how many people supported them.

The strikers are appealing to other trade unionists and members of the public for support. Collections have been organised in other building societies, but with the strike dragging on so long many of the workers are suffering financial problems. They ask people not to cross their picket lines and that mortgage repayments be held back until the strike is settled. They also want postal workers to refuse to deliver mail to the E.B.S., and some progress has been made on that within the post office.

Meanwhile, however, the strike goes on, and there is no sign of the management coming to a decent settlement. One of the strikers said 'They seem intent on beating us. We therefore need lots more solidarity and help from other trade unionists in order to win. No-one of us wants to be walking up and down here for months. We need to start collections everywhere we can and involve members from other unions with ideas on how we can win.'

The Strike Committee can be contacted through Mary Devine, c/o E.B.S. Strike Committee, A.S.T.M.S., 38 Lower Leeson St., Dublin 2.



JustBooks

7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1

JUST BOOKS.....an alternative bookshop run collectively by anarchists. Its aim is to provide radical literature in Ireland and beyond, literature that is censored by most of the straight bookshops whose over-riding concern is profit. This booklist is one of a series due to appear periodically, most non-establishment topics of interest to be covered. Suggestions on additions or general advice is welcomed.

We can also order specific titles you may want, though those deemed 'ideologically unsound' will most likely be out of print. Unfortunately we need finances to survive and this explains the rather precise nature of the postal rates for sending books, and the need for money with your order. In the case of prisoners, books are either free, or half price paid for by their friends on the outside. Any prisoner who contacts us is welcome to this service.

Much thanx.....Just Books Collective.

ANARCHIST PAPERS AND MAGAZINES

FREEDOM...fortnightly, 25p. Regular, 100 years old.

Anarchist Worker...occasional...20p....Dublin anarchist worker paper.

Fifth Estate...occasional...30p....American, graphically inspiring.

Bayou la Rose...30p....occasional...American, plenty on ecology.

Xtra...30p....occasional...English, and as they say, 'paper for the armchair terrorist'.

Open Road...45p....Ambitious Canadian paper with an internationalist outlook.

Anarchy...30p....very occasional...sometimes stimulating.

Peace News...25p...fortnightly...sympathetic to anarchism, plenty on anti-nuclear activities.

Solidarity...26p...bi-monthly...abstract anarchic theoretical journal.

Gaining Ground...5p.in Ireland, elsewhere 10p....monthly...Belfast anarchy-feminist paper,

always stimulating, topical, well laid-out and original.

Outta Control...5p. in Ireland, elsewhere 10p....monthly...news and views of the Belfast

Anarchist Collective...like Gaining Ground, it innovates rather than follows.

ution but are measured against the constitution by the Supreme Court who decide whether the new law is constitutional or not. But the Supreme Court cannot bring an action against itself an individual or group must do that. Finally there is provision within the constitution to bring about amendments which are added on—this is done when two thirds of the Congress vote in favour and ¾ of all of the 50 states vote likewise—as this is quite a tall order it is not surprising that only 26 amendments have been added in 200 years!)

To get back then to the abortion issue, pro-choice groups are now afraid that anti-abortionists will try, given their huge majorities in Congress, and in all the State legislatures, and their Presidential support to bring about a Right to Life amendment to the Constitution which will effectively make abortion illegal once again by declaring the fetus to be a human person and immediately stop all doctors from performing abortions. It may also affect those contraceptives deemed to be abortifacient in their action, eg: the IUD and certain brands of Pill. What worries the pro-choice groups most is the fact that they believe the anti-abortionists will succeed!

So from a position of security given the 1973 Supreme Court decision feminists in the USA are once again faced with a hard struggle to retain their control over their own bodies. Many feminists are now seeing that they cannot depend on legal reasoning or the courts nor does the fact that the majority of Americans support a woman's right to choose offer any protection. In electoral terms the moral majority is in power and means to change things to their liking. Once won, rights are never immutable, they can always be taken away. The backlash in the USA has come down heavily on the women's movement, it is being cited as the chief cause in the breakdown of the family and home life seen as the basic corner stone of a strong America. The new witch hunt has begun.

What then are the feminists doing? Having let organisations fall away, and support and an energy reach an all time low—American feminists are starting to regroup again to build up resources and money and energy all of which the opposition has in abundance. It is a salutary lesson for all feminists that the fight never ends in this type of society that one gain doesn't entirely defeat the enemy and that while we rest on our laurels, they are still organising and planning for the future.

Already in the USA people are realising what Reagan represents...his plans to make America great means their hardship, their poverty while business never had it so good. But they also know that they are stuck with him for a while yet. Feminists in the USA are on the march again...who knows what will happen by 1984!

The Human Life Bill has already passed the committee stage in the US senate. It denies all abortions and IUDs and progesterone pills are defined as murder. Women in America are calling for international solidarity. Letters protesting at the Human Life Bill, Human Life Amendment, withdrawal of Medicaid for abortions and to all restrictive legislation to be sent to The Hon Strom Thurmond, Chairman and Members of the Senate Judiciary committee, Room 2226 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, US, and to Reagan. He supports the bill—use strong language.

HEALTH NEWS

CONTRACEPTION

When worries over the safety of the pill as a contraceptive became widespread some years ago—one of the chief concerns of women was the possibility of blood clots. The building up of blood clots in women using the Pill did not seem to be because these women had a tendency to build up more clots than other women—rather women who were susceptible seemed to be unable to break up the clumps of red blood cells as they formed. [a normal occurrence in healthy people].

Recent investigations of this problem indicate that clot prone women seem to have low levels of protein in their blood which is released when a clot forms and is the body's natural defence mechanism against such attack. Further investigations revealed that women who take regular exercise have higher levels of protein than less active women by as much as 50% depending on the amount of exercise undertaken. Researchers are now suggesting that women who use the pill should take some form of regular exercise and so minimise the risk of blood clotting.

Many women gave up the pill after the scare stories and there was according to FPA figures a large switch in contraceptive methods particularly to those thought to be safe with minimal if any side effects. Consequently many women turned to spermicides for protection and the drug companies moved quickly into this lucrative market the number of foams, jellies creams and suppositories available, multiplying over the last few years. All these products contain sperm killing agents and the advertising surrounding them was often misleading because many manufacturers indicated that these products could be used on their own—while the FPA has recommended their use ONLY in conjunction with a sheath or diaphragm.

Apart from this though, these contraceptives have always enjoyed a good reputation in terms of health safety, but if the tentative findings of a recent report are verified by more research, then this reputation may end. Research indicates that women who get pregnant while using this form of contraceptive (a fairly significant number) may be more likely to

have children with birth defects. In the research program women who got pregnant while using spermicides around the time of conception had babies who suffered from TWICE as many severe birth defects as did the infants of non-users. It is thought that sperm which survive the onslaught of spermicide in the vagina and later become implanted in the uterus stand a good chance of being damaged in the process.

At the moment the research findings can only be regarded as tentative and cannot prove a conclusive link between spermicides and defects in babies but the researchers do suggest that women wishing to become pregnant should give up spermicides at least two months before doing so, and stop using them immediately they suspect that they may be pregnant.

SPONGES

In America the USA Food and Drug Administration wants to stop the sale of sea sponges which in recent years have been used by women fed up with paying high prices for tampons, as substitutes for the tampons. The sponges can be inserted into the vagina and collect menstrual blood there—although they are expensive they can be used over and over again and so work out much cheaper than commercially produced tampons which yield a very high profit rate for their producers. Sponges have also been widely favoured since the discovery of Toxic Shock Syndrome which was linked with the use of tampons particularly those which were not 100% cotton.

But the FDA are arguing that although the sponges may be totally natural they nonetheless contain quantities of sand which is impossible to remove, they are also likely to be contaminated with pollutants because they come from the sea and no sea is without pollution. Lastly because of their organic nature they provide a good basis for germs to grow and are difficult to keep in a sterile condition between periods—all of which can lead to irritation of the vaginal walls and in severe cases to infection of the area. The FDA calls sponges 'experimental medical devices' whose safety has yet to be proved.

CHOP CRAWLEY

The Central Library is one of the few places in down town Belfast that actually welcomes children. There they had their own space, plenty of reasonably good books and inspiration. It was, of course, very much under the control of the women workers, but a far move all the same from the authoritarian nature of most primary schools.

Now we hear that this autonomous space is to be done away with, the 'kids section' shunted into the back of the adult section where quiet and boredom is the highlight of the day. The workers are angry....the person responsible for the chop is the aptly named Mr.Crawley...in all his wisdom he has decided to replace the kids space with a business reference section. The workers in

the different departments are isolated. There is no solidarity to tell Mr.Crawley to fuck off. Crawley does what he wants and has the reputation in the professional library circles as having more power than sense. Crawley is employed by the Education and Library Board who know of many of his antics but are content to let him continue in charge. Crawley has been known to physically threaten some of his staff....the arch patriarch. Twelve years ago library staff went on strike basically because of him. Crawley saw to it that those involved in the strike got demoted and sent out somewhere else. The three who supported him got promoted and remain his assistants always at his beck and call.

The workers have already had a half day strike over the issue....Mr.Crawley's plush office is just up the stairs. Are there 50 kids who would like to spend the afternoon there?

PARALLELS

This article continues the discussion on the recent rioting in England. Last month's article was written collectively with an Irish feminist who had lived in Liverpool until recently. The following has been written by a London anarchist on the rioting in Brixton.



Recent riots in many parts of London and other English cities are leading some people to draw parallels between the developing situation there and that of rioting in Northern Ireland. I will, for the purpose of this article, be using Brixton as an example of the situation in England; this being the area I feel most qualified to write about, as I have been involved in the work of a Bookshop there.

Rio's in Brixton have had, exclusively, a spontaneous beginning, usually as a result of a particular incident involving over policing on the streets, or following examples of police harassment. There is no doubt that the massive force of police deployed in Brixton (ostensibly to try to cope with a soaring crime rate), is a source of great anger and frustration within the community there. Not only are the sheer numbers seen as an unnecessary harassment, but also the methods of questioning and intimidation have led some people to describe the area as one of occupation by a force that is neither trusted or wanted. The riots are certainly not racial in nature, nor are they in any way engineered by outside tacticians, as some media commentators would have their public believe. If one was pushed to describe the nature of the riots, assuming that one could narrow it down any way, the nearest one could come to would be to say that they are, broadly, anti-authoritarian. People, in clashes, with the police, are saying that they want control of their own streets and are gaining the confidence generally to rebel against all which oppresses them. All places or people seen as authoritarian can be the subject of attacks in the rebellion that follows. Looting has been seen partly as an attack on consumerist values and as an attempt to get essential goods which many people cannot afford. Unemployment, bad housing, crumbling social services and racial discrimination, provide an under tow of discontent, but no single factor can be called the root cause of rebellion.

Police tactics in riots can be seen to have developed quite quickly and a familiar pattern of isolation dispersal and ultimate containment has followed, plus familiar series of raids and arrests in attempts to continue the process of intimidation and

control. Various shades of political organisations (not involved in the riots nor instigators of them) have sought to capitalise on the situation after the event, but have in the main been met with the scorn that they deserve. Countless media persons and politicians have stalked the streets looking for good copy and each way the people lose out and their voice goes largely misunderstood or ignored, or re-interpreted to serve various vested interests.

In the aftermath of riots, when all areas are tense — seemingly waiting retribution of various sorts, or seeking to make something out of new found confidence—police raids and arrests have created unease and unrest leading to anti social acts of mugging and threats between various distinct sections of the community. In some cases, minority groups feel more vulnerable and unless steps are taken quickly to improve communication and understanding the situation can only get worse.

From this brief outline, we can begin to draw certain parallels between recent events in England and some in Northern Ireland. Similar patterns of spontaneous rioting against an occupying force emerge. Details of weapons used—bricks, petrol bombs, sticks, barricades, make twin lists. However, it should be noted that the enemy in Northern Ireland is a much more directly identifiable one, and its powers far greater, its weaponry more sophisticated its tactics seasoned with practice. Indeed, the campaign of resistance to the enemy in Northern Ireland is fought consistently on many fronts, as it has to be, and riots are often an unco-ordinated expression of frustration and anger rather than concerted attacks by blacks on whites in Brixton, where one group is singled out for attention if it appears to be more privileged or part of the system of oppression. Unequal opportunities in employment exist in both England and Northern Ireland and the growing numbers of attacks

England and Northern Ireland as do factors of deprivation in housing and low incomes. The Irish, at war against what is regarded as a foreign occupation, have a long tradition of the use of violence to ensure that their voice is heard. Violence, and often only violence, has been effective in achieving progress. Violence is a reflection of the failure of politicians and all those who seek to control our lives. Brixton, Belfast, Bristol, Toxteth, have all shown the determination of some to rebel against and to resist a common enemy. No one can predict what the likely outcome of general rebellion would be, but it is unlikely that people having tasted first progress and gained confidence on their streets will rest content to sit in apathy from now on and

not take long term decisions for their own lives.

Rioting is a spectacle—it draws attention to a minority of a community who exhibit anger, courage and determination in the face of crushing odds. Concentration on the spectacle in the streets, however, ignores the existence of those whose streets are being defended and who feel powerless and without a voice behind closed doors, largely forgotten, and for whom the prospect of taking on, unarmed, an armed police force, is frightening. Pictures of riots show largely young and male participants. Those people on the fringes of disturbances and who take advantages of the disorder to loot shops and other premises, can be seen as coming from wider sections of the community, and feature the young and old, male and female, black and white. There are signs, on both sides of the sea, that people are moved to take what they need instead of waiting for or allowing an authority to make decisions for them. Anarchists certainly have a great contribution to make in the creation of a new life, once demands are fulfilled and once freedom from occupation is ensured.

UNITY MEETING

The August Unity Meeting took place on the 1st in the Women's Centre. The first part of the discussion centred mainly round the current issue of the women's newsletter, Women-rite. Was the newsletter for women only? should it be on sale to the public? should articles be published in other newspapers such as the abortion article in Scope, without the knowledge of the women's movement or reference to the fact that it had first been published in the newsletter? Women's groups outside Belfast who were present at the meeting had not received any copies of the newsletter. Obviously these are teething problems, magnified by the fact that the newsletter was out of date—reference was made to the Rape Crisis group on this point—and had not been a true collective effort. It was decided to send out the remaining copies of it to women and groups on the mailing list and anybody wanting a copy should contact the women's centre in the next week. The subject will be an ongoing discussion but one positive point made was that the discussions that took place at the unity meeting could be further elaborated and debated in the newsletter, for women only, and that articles could be made public every so often—say every six months.

The book on Irish women was discussed and articles invited for consideration. The idea for a woman's music workshop was mooted and women from the Rathcoole group suggested a more social atmosphere for women to get together—a party is being arranged for September. The last part of the discussion was on the role of the centre. For further details of the above and of the lesbian feminist group contact 16-18 Donegal Street. Tel 43363

