The Employer of Unemployed People... D.H.S.S.

(Direct quotes in italics)

A DHSS internal memo, leaked to Outa Control, discusses why the department had decided to tax those people claiming benefit, whether that is Unemployment Benefit or Supplementary Benefit, from July of this year.

The memo tries to explain that taxing benefits is not a new phenomenon and had been thought about since PAYE was introduced, and that both the Tories and Labour are interested in the idea.

There are four main reasons given why benefits should be taxed: Firstly, consistency, since pensioners and widows are being taxed on some of their benefits, i.e. retirement pension, widows' pension, and widowed mother's allowance, then it is consistent to tax all benefits.

Secondly, it is consistent to tax everyone all year round rather than a year (employed) and some for part of the year, or not at all (unemployed).

The third reason is Revenue - it is estimated that from July 82 a full year equivalent of £300,000,000 will be raised. So clearly the amounts of money at stake are considerable.

In the short-term, the total annual benefits received by a claimant will probably not be equal to or above the income tax threshold. But, if benefits are index-linked again (as is proposed) they will quite likely rise in line with inflation, and total income will exceed the tax threshold and income will be reduced in real terms. As rent allowances increase this year to accommodate the 20% rent increase allowed to the Housing Executive and private landlords, total receipts by individuals claiming will increase, which will tax many into the first tax bracket, and thus real income will fall.

The fourth reason given: Work Incentive. No tax refunds will be paid whilst Unemployment Benefit is claimed, irrespective of whether or not any benefit, Unemployment Benefit or Supplementary Benefit is actually paid. Of course tax refunds will be made when benefit stops being claimed, usually on return to work.

Finally, a small reference in the memo to the situation in ‘How the department uses unemployed people to do jobs’. The Social Security Department will set up tax records for all claimants from the Pensions Act... in effect the Social Security Department will become the employer of unemployed people, as long as they are claiming Unemployment Benefit.

The Routine of Unemployed People...

As John Z. di Lorcian returns to the U.S. a little richer, a lot of his ex-employees will return to the dole a little less healthy.

Ten months ago, the Body Press Shop of the D.M.C. was paid a visit by the Factory Inspectorate, who have as yet not released their report.

Many of the workers are being exposed to the health hazard of the dusts and fibres from the cutting and trimming of fibre glass used in the body work of the cars. Rashes on the lower arms and ankles are common, as are nose and ear bleedings. A few people have had to be removed from the area, since they contracted dermatitis.

Another effect, which will take years to detect, will be the lung-reasing, caused by the minute needle-like fibres.

One worker, who had been ill with a bad chest collapse within hours of returning to work in the Body Press Shop. Set against this, is the Companies record of health and safety, where they have even removed the guards from the cutting tools, to speed up Production.

No Matter Who You Vote For... The Govt Gets in!

The Election is over and gone and as far as we can see not a lot has changed. We have another hang Dail within which deals will be done so that either Haughey or FitzGerald can have the money they lust for so much. We may have a new Fianna Fail as a result of these deals, but for people in general, not much will change.

The election itself was caused when the so called Socialists Kenny and Blatter (SF/FF) decided they could not stomach any more of the monetaristic shit of the Coalition, VAT on clothes and footwear was too much for even this pair of opportunists.

This election was, supposedly, about economic issues. We were told that for the first time in an election the economic argument were central, and it was about who could deal most effectively with the “crisis”.

What a lie! The two main coalitions parties are basically agreed about how the crisis will be paid for. Extort as much money as possible from the working class. The debate was about who could screw the workers most and get away with it. The parties agreed that there was not much of a difference between their fundamentals. FF threw in a few extra taxes for the rich to get the working class vote.

A central argument through the campaign was that we were living beyond our means and that there was a need for us all to tighten our belts. I would like to know how someone getting £20 on the dole could live beyond his/her means. At the same time Paddy Gallagher, that well known capitalist and buddy of Charlie, can afford to pay £12000 for a salmon (twelve hundred quid for a fish) at a FF fund-raising do. I was.

He has so much means that it’s probably not possible for him to live beyond these.

One of the notable things about this election was the number of alternative reforming candidates. They ranged from a feminist, through the unemployed and over to various shades of anti-imperialists.

These people argued that the election could be used to highlight issues and give people a chance to register a protest, which may be true. But it did not and there.

Most candidates were going on about what they would do for everyday when they were elected. None of them stood as candidates on this basis.
GLAD TO BE GAY

Continued from last issue.

Q. The Carpenters Club is a recent feature of Belfast, is it the only gay club? Do you ever go there?

A. Well, The Northern Ireland Gay Rights Group say that it doesn’t alienate nationalist gays, but we found out different the other night. Me and a few friends from Dublin went along. We were giving out “Gay Against Imperialism” leaflets, and I was wearing badges. “How can we demand rights from a government we don’t recognize?” and “How can anyone be liberated when Ireland isn’t free?” and they said “Take off those badges or you’re not coming in.” They tried to kick us out by saying we don’t have political life in a gay centre, and we tried to argue that being gay is political, and NIGRA is itself political, and why should you ever come to a gay club because you don’t agree with it. We tried to argue on their terms, not to win over, but that we had a right to express our views. But it didn’t work, and we had to leave.

We had already been in, and we were going for a carry-out when they told us to take off our badges. And when I argued, the onlookers gave us leaflets. They said they would take off their badges, but it was our argument was that it wasn’t us who were looking for fights, and if there was going to be a fight it would be someone picking on us, because of our views, which has direct relevance to our views. That’s how they think. That we can’t achieve gay liberation without socialism. If someone started on us it would be their fault, not ours. But they kept saying we don’t want trouble, we’re all allies together, and we’re all united without division, and don’t want politics brought in. But that’s totally unrealistic, that pretending there is no divide in Northern Ireland, and no natural question.

At first they were dead moderate, saying they didn’t want trouble between Catholics and Protestants, but when we pressed them further and said do you really think the cause of the troubles is a religious one, we got down to it that what they wanted was partition, and they admitted that. One of them got back to the UK when we threatened to write to NIGRA and IGM, saying their views were wanted without partition, and finally told us to get out, they couldn’t wear it at all.

Q. Are there any other social scenes where gay people can go without intimidation?

A. There are, but they’re very middle and upper class. I remember when I was at work I found Cara Friend (Gay counselling service), when I was 15 or 16, and all they said was “just come out!” I tried to explain that I was from a working class Catholic background, my ma and da were devout Catholics and there was 11 kids in the family, and couldn’t just come out, I wasn’t ready.

Q. Did they offer you accommodation?

A. Oh, no. That time the impression they gave me was we’re only demanding gay rights to bring us into line with the mainland. We’re being denied our rights as British citizens. That’s why never really kept up contact or got involved.

At places like the Carpenter or the Midland Hotel, all they say people who go in, it’s not that there are more homosexually inclined people in the middle classes. It’s that the pressures are greater against working class people coming out. And all those people who do go to the Carpenter or wherever, if they’re walking through town, they wouldn’t make a point of showing their gayness, they’d just sort of hide it, and just off as straight to avoid any trouble. They would just stick to their own gay ghetto and wouldn’t see it important to confront the wider community with it, so they don’t have that much hassle.

Q. How is it where you live now? You’ve moved to the Falls Road, haven’t you?

A. Well, I’ve been there since the New Year. There’s a lot of hassle, with people shouting things, but there’s been no violence. It’s a cultural shock for the most part, people apart from anything else, it’s not that the kids are being malicious, it’s just that they’ve never seen anything like it before and can’t cope with it.

There was a kid who stopped us on Royal Avenue today and said “Are you frickin’?” We said, “What do you mean, frickin’?” She said, “You’re ye, in, homosexuals?” We said, “Aye.” She says, “You shouldn’t be laughing.” About that, people will laugh at you. She wasn’t laughing, she was just concerned about us, but we said, “Don’t worry about it, love.” Some people are malicious, but they get away with it if you’re suspicious. It’s important. They do realize there are gay people about. There are a lot of kids about who are homosexually attracted, but would never come out, because they think we’re the only ones in the world. When I was at school the teacher used to make jokes about gay guys. They were fascist, I went to St. Malachy’s and there was no way I would have come out there. Now I wish I had.

It would have been just too much. You would have the whole heap against you — the priests, the teachers, and the kids.

Q. How do you think things will go now?

A. I’m really pissed off, and thinking of moving out, it’s just too much hassle. All the gay friends I knew from Turf Lodge & Derry have tucked off to London, The problem with Derry, where there’s more gays, though they’ve still stuck to their ghettoes, and there’s a lot of queer-bashing because of the influence of the Catholic Church, the galls are very heavy against gays.

Q. Do you get much hassle from the RUC, UDR or Brits here?

A. The RUC wouldn’t bother lifting you if you were just linking arms. They could walk off, sort of hit you in the back of the head, or just silly kick back at them and say things like “Don’t litter yourself, you ugly bastard.” That cuts them down.

NO TO STARTBahn WEST
FRANKURT

Since the mid-sixties the German government had plans of building a new extension to the Frankfurt airport, a new runway. Until Spring 1980 a lot of anger was expressed by people who were living in the area by writing petitions, collecting signatures, forming groups, and peaceful demonstrations. The first major active resistance started at the 3rd of May 1980, when people started to build a whole village of huts on the actual site, determined not to move. Since then there have been quite a lot of demonstrations, some of them ending up with heavy clashes with the police.

WHY RESISTANCE?

The building of Startbahn/West will result in the destruction of the environment, and the green parties (or FDP type people) oppose for that reason only. The setting of about 260ha of the forest will cause immense damage. There will be additional noise problems and pollution (the region has already the most highly praised air in Germany). Another important reason for resistance is that the Startbahn/west will be built for military use by US Air Force. They are the ones who are pushing and insisting on the building of it. The Startbahn/West will be a military and strategic opportunity for the American and German state. The Americans will use it as their base to get to the Middle-East. For example, the thickets of the forest will reach the military standards of the US regulations of carrying heavy military transport machines. There is no doubt about it that the US will use it for their military aims and they have been in the past on a smaller scale.

Because the Startbahn/West is so strategically important to the USA, to the German state. It just will not give in on petitions or Volksentscheid, but will use its full power to smash any opposition. As long as people realize this, they might have a chance to find new ways of resisting Startbahn/West, resisting the State.
BRINGING UP CHILDREN

THE S.A.S. WAY

"And it's ALL done in the WORST possible taste..."

Despite an assurance from the (imaginary) manager that this obvious lie would be removed from public sale, the shop called "Etc" in Howard Street, Belfast, continue to display on their shelves this revolting item, "Bringing Up Children the S.A.S.Way".

It is disgusting that a commercial concern seems content to make money from tales of this kind, particularly in the centre of a city that has suffered many times from the ravages of this monstrous Regiment. "Teddy" appears to have had the left ear blown away by the hand-gun shown on the right: the heavy bullet appears ready to finish the work, a list of child care 'techniques' on the reverse includes such typically mindless examples as "Rubber Sheets or Rubber Bullets" (sic) to make children laugh or "Don't Show" - in a country where at least 149 cases of torture and brutality by the "security forces" were brought to public notice in 1976.

We must to the imaginings of our readers to devise ways to ensure that this particularly putrid piece of propaganda is removed from public sale once and for all.

ROUGH JUSTICE

The Lord Chief Justice was supposed to be giving a secret lecture at the Queen's University Staff Common Room......(the same building that inspired the 10 year run of the Infamous James McQuillan).....but someone had got a go at him from a nearby house. As the stars ranged out, he dashed into the lobby, and asked the first woman he met, who they were shooting at. "The man who came in that big car" she replied, pointing to Loy's own Rover. Understandably, this brave man went on to give his talk on "THE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES CONCERNING THE STATE OF MIND OF THE MURDERER".

RIGHT AT LAST

Commenting on the 60 rail guards in South-East London, who have formed a Committee to protest against the NRC acceptance of new working rules and to unite the General Secretary Bill Waghorn, Terry MP Neil-Thorne said: "I think it's disgraceful that they should be attacking their own union leaders. They are very fortunate to have the leaders they have got. This merely shows that security can parody..."

A.I.D.

ALTERNATIVE IRELAND DIRECTORY

c/o 211 Sackville, DUBLIN, 45.

The people who publish this are putting together their Second Directory of Alternatives. Send everything (not to address above).

"NO MORE, NO MORE, NO MORE..." is now available at 300p a copy to order in quantities of 10 from the A.I.D. Office. Special offer: 3 for £1.00, 10 for £3.00, 100 for £30.00.

"NO MORE...NO MORE...NO MORE..." is now a complete documentary of the struggle of the people to save themselves.

THE CENTRE OF NEWRY was covered with a series of posters, draped by the550 worker employed by Hartley in breaking the strike.

"JOIN A.I.D. NO MORE...NO MORE...NO MORE..."
continued from front page
shattering candidates. The anti-imperialists (especially PD) argued that there was a need to present people with an alternative to Haughey and Fitz. Seems contradiction over the choice of candidates when we see Berni could shake Charlie in hand and offer him support in the Dáil if he was elected.

As an anarchist I rejected the argument for their sake and put the onus on the others rather than on me. The argument for the other candidates. They all offered change with a capital C and change things for themselves. There is nothing new in exchanging one set of leaders for another. I would suggest PD, and others that there is an alternative to Haughey to create a new set of leaders who are different.

1932-82

In 1932, there was not even 90,000 out of work, but there was a dole, that is true, there was an unemployment benefit which provided the only form of welfare there was at that time. People built their own relief and were still supported. They protested at the system of outdoor relief and demanded basic changes in the form of welfare benefits, and the front page of the Belfast Telegraph (who was responsible) to give them money instead of food in kind. That was in 1933.

Things have changed so vastly in the intervening 50 years that we should not be talking here about the comparison between conditions of life then and now. We are entitled to a bell that is more than what was ever granted to our ancestors in 1932. The standards have not always been met, and never fully, or, if we are discussing progress AND A better life. We are comparing how much better off we are in comparison to people who never existed, in a time that is gone, and here and now. When we are comparing the standards to, are the high standards of living for people who live in the lives of those who drive the big cars, we must demand our rights, which are a standard of living in tune with the expectations of a person who is entitled to a comfortable luxurious lifestyle, and not the poverty of life in 1932, or, for that matter, 1982.

We cannot accept any longer terms of how much better off we are, of the benefits that are much better off than before.

This is not the only state of the people's lives in this age of austerity. They struggle, but not violently, and they are at the stage of having to do without things, to make do, and not to despair. The immediate recognition of a state of emergency has to be made in our countries now, and in no foreign country.

Staggers, Thursday

Dear All,

Well, I've been here for 10 months now. I had expected to suffer from culture shock, but instead I've discovered a lot. "LONG CULTURE!" A land of strange observations, the main one being LAWS ORDER.

I was recently surprised with this one. I didn't expect to be, but none the less it is an interesting experience. Of contacts or community spirit is in evidence, people being observed with their own desires to be social citizens, their cars and changing the parent outside their "wonderful" houses. About 90,000 people live in the city area, but this is the visual appearance of a large city, buildings, monuments in Mercedes Benz, over stuffed roads and the S-Bahn. The S-Bahn is something similar to the tube in London, on the whole of the Greater Stuttgart region, it is run by this thing, including the small town surrounding it. On a typical day in the city, people are going about their business, heading to work, others to school, others to visit friends, and others to visit family.

Last night was like Christmas Eve. Once
RAPE CRISIS CENTRE
OPENING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

INTERVIEW WITH
GAINING GROUND

Why a Rape Crisis Centre?
There are no services or doctors offering
specific rape help, there's very little
sex education in schools and the subject is
virtually taboo. It is also very difficult
for women to report to the police
even in certain Catholic areas where
there is a traditional suspicion of the
police. There is also a paramilitary
summary justice in some communities like in
the recent UDA case.
It would appear that in the groups
we talked to — youth groups, community
groups, family groups that women
were willing to talk at the smallest opportunity
and we were surprised at the numbers
who had been sexually attacked. These
women had never spoken to anyone
else, some had never come to terms with their
experience, they had never spoken
to their mothers or sisters, because
they would not stay, you must have asked for
it or have you worn and so on. There
is a lot of myths and feelings of guilt
around. Now they find it difficult
to speak about any kind of sexual matter
with their own children, the ignorance
is being perpetuated.

Will you be a campaigning body?
As a charity we can't campaign for
reforms but we would certainly support
other groups and we are affiliated to
the English group Women against Violence
against Women who have just produced
a very good book on rape in marriage
—the Rapist who pays the Rent—people
sometimes forget about married women
who are raped or cohabitees or a woman
living in a house where there is another
man living there too. These women think
there is no point taking it to court, they
feel they could never prove it. We support
all Women against Violence against
Women's proposed reforms to the law,
for instance that women should have the
legal right to be examined by a woman
police doctor and to be interviewed by a
detective.
International Women's Day

Picket on Armagh

As many people gather outside Armagh prison on International Women's Day, to show their solidarity with women inside, and in a symbolic gesture to emphasize the need for continuing solidarity within the women's movement generally, they will undoubtedly underline the fact that over 20 women in Armagh remain on the no-work protest. Whilst these prisoners remain on protest (in continuing opposition to the British policy of criminalisation) they lose remission, the number of visits they can receive is reduced, and their weekly parcels are also affected. We should all be aware that a yearly symbolic picket should be only a part of the work of women.

As many people gather outside Armagh prison on International Women's Day, to show their solidarity with women inside, and in a symbolic gesture to emphasize the need for continuing solidarity within the women's movement generally, they will undoubtedly underline the fact that over 20 women in Armagh remain on the no-work protest. Whilst these prisoners remain on protest (in continuing opposition to the British policy of criminalisation) they lose remission, the number of visits they can receive is reduced, and their weekly parcels are also affected. We should all be aware that a yearly symbolic picket should be only a part of the work of women.

What about advertising for the centre?

We are advertising the phone number. We are not advertising the address for safety reasons — if a raped woman is going in she might not want people to know she is going into the centre. We have got a lot of leaflets printed, posters, press statements and we will be on radio programmes. I imagine it won't be long before it is known as it is the sort of thing people will talk about. We have made a big banner for the Reclaim the Night March on Monday. It is blue and yellow, which are the colours of the centre.

We will publicize the newspaper coverage of rape, for example, there was the recent case of a woman who was raped and then recognized from the town by the people who printed it. There were only four houses in the street anyway. We will also publicize the innumerable implications in the courts about, for example, the women's past or present or sexual life. It is nobody's business but ours.

Rally and Demonstration

At Cornmarket

Saturday 6th March

1:00pm Women against Violence against women.

Concert

Crescent Centre, Lower Crescent

Belfast 7

Convent - Kate Kelly

Artists: Geraldine and Bernadette Bradley, Mary Wall, Dugan's, Mary Andrews, Mirtti Titterton, Anne Nolan, Franciestet, Catherine Bov, and Barbara McIlroy.

Carrie Mountains - one act play

Carlton Montague and Olive Rodgers readings from work of women in Liverpool 8 Writers Workshop.

Admission: £2 waged 75p unwaged

Bar

Sunday 7th March

Picket at Armagh - buses leave Dervorgilla Park at 12:30

Womens Festival at the Crescent Centre from 3pm to 6pm

Information stalls, bookstall, cafe, children's games and activities and creche.

Discussions:

1.00pm to 2.30 pm

Childcare Forum

Speakers: Liz McShane, Eileen Brennan, and Margaret Morrow

2.30pm to 3.30pm

Irish Suffragettes

Margaret Ward

3.30pm to 4.30pm

Women Artists

Illustrated talk by Eileen Black

4.30pm to 6.00pm

Womens Writers Workshop

Women from Liverpool 8 Writers Workshop.

How will the Rape Crisis Centre operate?

There is a 24 hour answering service and the centre will be open from 9 am to 9 pm. Someone will go in every day to check the answering machine. We know that an answering machine may put people off but until we get more people trained we can't be there every day. We would hope to extend the service particularly over the weekend and to have another telephone number to ring. All we can say is that it is going to be better than this time last year and we will go on from there.
HOUSING:
a right not a privilege

FROM 10 o'clock at night until 8.30 in the morning of February 19th, a large crowd of people occupied space outside the City Hall in Belfast, in a protest at the recently-announced exorbitant rent rises.

Equipped with cars, vans, and a large tent for sleeping (not that many got much sleep - the crack was too good), people both young and old gathered to show the Housing Executive exactly what they thought of the plans to squeeze even more money out of rapidly-empting pockets.

Rent rises originally announced at 30% caused intense anger and disbelief. A statement came later to say that they would, in fact, be "only" 22%. The Housing Executive seem happy about increasing the wages of their workers by "only" 22%? The answer is, of course, no. Wages are due to increase by 33%, and we can be sure that no set of instructions will be handed out at the same time, to advise us how to pay for increases of 22% out of an income that remains, in effect, static, or which becomes less and less, and which bears little comparison with rising prices of clothes, fuel, food, transport & rent and rates!

It will have been noticed that the greater proportion of people who took part in the protest were women. May be some of them reflected bitterly on the fact that Betty Sinclair died in conditions against which she had fought all her life. It is, perhaps, women who will suffer most from increases such as these - for women still bear the greater responsibility for the efficient running of the home, and it is women who spend long hours work in, week in, week out, trying desperately to create warmth and comfort in housing executive houses and flats that lack of neglect and decay, which are no protection against the worst weather, and where walls often drip with damp and mould, and which people cannot afford to heat adequately.

In those circumstances, which worsen daily, it is, perhaps, a massive rent strike, linked to other militant action (occupation of offices, leaflets, posters, marches, etc), that would be likely to be most effective in showing local bureaucrats that people had had enough and are prepared to suffer no longer. The peaceable City Hall rally will have gained Housing Executive tenants some sympathy, but sympathy is not enough.

For adequate housing is a right, not a privilege - a right which Belfast, disgracefully, chooses to ignore. Over 15% of houses in Belfast have been declared unfit to live in, compared to 5% nationally. 22% of the inner-city homes lack 4 basic amenities of hot water, a bath, internal toilet and sink and wash hand basin. The inner-city, and the public sector in particular, are areas which suffer the most. Crowding is also a massive problem, and at least 40% of houses need either replacement, renewal or repair.

Through a policy which includes rent increase and the selling of public sector housing, the Tories attempt to depress the living standards of working people throughout the country. The government is deaf to the problems of the housing crisis, so, either people will have to take matters into their own hands to improve conditions, or they will have to think up stronger, and louder, ways of getting the message through.

ANIMAL LIBERATION

SIXTY-FOUR animal rights activists face court proceedings, following a rally at Life Science Research Laboratories, Chelmsford, Essex. On April 4th, 30 activists must report to Chelmsford police station on suspicion of criminal damage. There will be a support demo at 2.45pm outside. On April 22nd, 24 activists charged with conspiracy are due to appear in court. A fund has been started to help all those charged. Address: Send what you can (cheques, please) send what you can (cheques, now) to: Operation Valentine Defence Fund, c/o ALF, Box 199, 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham.

000 0000

THE ANIMALS FILM may be shown on national release EMI, depending on the success of its showing at the Gate 2 Cinema in London. If you can gather support for this film, then ring Phil Windass and Victor Schoenfield of Silk Pig, on 01-251-3885 or 01-278-8783, they will advise and give lots of information.

In November last year, a journalist said of this film: "It is a polemical onslaught stuffed with footage never before shown, and a wealth of newly shot material often taken undercover, which documents almost beyond endurance, mankind's degradation, exploitation and often pointless torture of the creatures who share our planet. (II) proves, beyond contradiction, that this behaviour is not random or personal, but part of our organised society, with drug companies, government departments, scientists, military authorities, factory farmers, university research laboratories, for their own selfish ends, for profit in money or prestige. I do not know when I have come out of a press show so moved by the power of the cinema as a medium to transform the sensibility of an audience." All I can say to this is: "hear, hear..."

RECLAIM THE NIGHT MARCH
AGAINST RAPE & SEXUAL VIOLENCE
(children welcome)

STARTING AT 7.00pm SHAFTESBURY SQUARE (beside dolce office) March down GL, Victoria Street to help at City Hall at 8.00pm, then march down Chichestor Street, Oxford Street, High Street, Bridge Street and Lower Donegall Street (finish at the Art College, Briggait) march, parades, sparklers and ballrooms.

BELFAST RAPE CRISIS CENTRE TEL: 49699

SCRAM B2, the Northern Irish Polytechnic Students' Rag magazine was littered with sexist, racist and anti-Irish, non-humorous jokes inserted in a sinister looking form.

It also had an interesting list of 'charities' it intended contributing towards. It included LIFE: the catholic inspired/run and women's anti-abortion group.

Any reader coming into Just Books should take a good look at our castration on demand poster and stay well away next year as we will be generously giving them a sledge hammer through the head!
NICE PLAY, SHAME ABOUT THE THEATRE

Although Gaining Ground and Ornts Control are sold together we are not always in agreement about particular issues. We feel that sometimes this can be a positive thing as it may lead to a deeper discussion about political actions and meanings generally, and so hopefully to a deeper understanding of the social forces that shape our lives.

One recent issue on which we have been is the nature of political theory and in particular Martin Llyn’s ‘The Interpretation of Ambrose Fergot’. This has just finished its run at the Lyric Theatre. We are therefore printing an alternative review but we feel complimentary analysis of the play.

I grew up just a few streets away from the Springfield Road barracks, the baracks in which Martin Llyn’s play is set. As a child I remember the darkness and forbidding dominion of the tower Springfield Road, and in the late 60’s someone must have decided it wasn’t in keeping with the image of the modern RUC, and so it was knocked down and replaced with a bland brick and block building. It was a marked improvement, and very soon it was replaced, boarded up completely, and several years later it was cut into two rows and then finally divided into several stories. The building itself disappeared behind corrugated iron and look-out posts, until the front gates looked like the entrance into some sort of hell. Although Castlereagh and Springfield barracks may go down in the annals of history for their treatment of prisoners, the Springfield barracks also has the reputation for its treatment of non-voluntary ‘guests’. Disappearing behind the gates for three days, generally guaranteed a beating, for if the soldiers didn’t bother you first on the way, then you could be certain the Special Branch would

Llyn’s play takes place over a three-day investigation of Ambrose Fergot, picked up on a vague and totally unsubstantiated suspicion. It follows his treatment over those days, his feelings about the events, the attitudes of those harassing him, and the others who are in the barracks at the same time. Although I’ve never been subjected to interrogations, I felt I’d been out on the end of the play as I watched Fergot’s humiliation, and his attempts to keep himself together, a little of what it must be like, to be beaten, insulted, thrown about, and to be totally impotent unable to react, or hit back. In that sense the play seemed very real and frightening. At the same time as Fergot is being questioned Willy Lagan is brought in, on a spur of the moment charge of rioting. Lagan represents a Falls Road character and gives the play a lot of laughter, as often his lines seem to break the tension. Although I felt that at times he went a bit too far and that his presence in places spoilt the play (in particular I found his jokes about the hunger strike in very poor taste), at others he provided light relief in a play that was otherwise utterly depressing, and I don’t think that in the end he took the sting from the play.

Fact of the play was performed in the Lyric and you had to put up with the intrusive reactions of an unpolite middle-class audience, who through tension and fear laughed hysterically in some of the minstrel scenes. In my opinion the real problem with the play, and although I personally was able to ignore them I became so absorbed with the stage, I thought it did put some people off. Perhaps Llyn would think of transferring it to Turf Lodge.

As to the portrayal of the police - I think he was right on the ball, on one hand we had the special branch, and on the other the good boys - the uniformed branch, but by the end of the play you just see them for what they are - just a violent as bad as those who do the actual beating, because they bury their heads in the sand, and pretend it isn’t happening. And the relationships between the areas in this case between a male and female police constable, again showed a higher, authoritarian relationships, which mirrored everything that Margaret D’Arcy saw about the observation of the security forces behaviour when she was in Armagh. I also think that his use of one word - cunt - illustrated the position of women in Northern Irish society.

By the end of the last beating Fergot lying on the floor, sick, totally dehumanised by the process, is approached by a special branch man - there is only one final humiliation he can think of and that is to strip seven times in his cunt CUNT..... that is the lowest of the low, to be a woman is to be nobody. As a woman I felt my own oppression linked with Fergot’s. In summary then I think the play is the best thing that Llyn has done so far. He has resisted the temptation nearly of having his characters make long political speeches as in ‘Druid’, I hope that he does take the play back to West Belfast!
10/9/84

TOXIC DUMPS in Carrickfergus, thousands unemployed, community upheaval and workers who have only a few years to live.

In fact, 50 of the 52 closures were by multi-national or international companies who have interests in more profitable countries.

They ripped us off, said the workers, worked our land, sold us their shit.

Then fucked off.

British Inflation is another example.

They are a subsidiary of the multi-national giant AKZO, employing 100,000 clerical staff and a manual work-force of 100,000 and a profit of 2 Billion dollars last year. Yet they had large lay-offs at their plant in Andover in 81 and in Jan 82 announced a possible cut of 1,800 in the remaining work-force due to the recession. We hear only yesterday that they are to shut down completely. Akzo also owned Parapika in Limerick, and also have in toxic chemical business. Multinationals such as ICI, Akzo, and Du Pont in Derry are part of a chemical industry that has vital fingers in just about everything. They dictate to the corrupt British & Irish and world governments, local authorities, world banking and finance organizations and just about every other industry and UN.

The kind of manipulation that goes on at top level board meetings and the Golf Club, or Rotary club, is unbelievable. Last year, the British government stepped up its Overseas investment programme to $15 billion, due to multinational persuasion. While small industry was crying out for government investment, in order to survive ....... that $15 billion Overseas investment caused high interest rates at home, which stops home investment into Industry, i.e. "bigger profits with your money in the bank". This, combined with a suffering Industry anyway, caused that big 50% jump in unemployment. Then, while the 3 million mark is reached, the multinationals and government tell us that this high unemployment (fear) can only mean a recession. Then, the multinationals, here, as elsewhere across the water, cry "wolf", and pull out, blaming the recession: leaving more unemployment, and go creating shit in 3rd World countries, where they haven't yet heard of the ways of multinationals.

What's happening next is too far-fetched to believe.

Recently set up is the Industrial Development Board, a northern IDA, whose concern is to attract new foreign business to Northern Ireland. Will they repeat what has happened in the last 20 years? will they attract firms who will take advantage of big tax cuts, government grants, and a trained workforce screaming out for jobs?

Many of which will be subsidiaries of the multinationals that just left us.

Then, when they have used up all of the attractions, they flocked off in the guise of the next world-wide economic recession.

A spokesperson for the IDB said, "We do not aim to do as well as the IDA, down south. We will do much better."

Doing this, I wonder, mean creating industries such as the NET factories in Worksop and Cork, where they spent one billion pounds, caused massive government stress over borrowing, and high inflation? Then used up two thirds of all essential natural gas and created a product, Nitrogen, using ammonia, a highly toxic chemical, which we don't need at all. Now doing does a far better job on the farm.

Now, the NET plants might have to close down, leaving economic budgets like the last one, to pay for that overspillage and wide-spread POLLUTION.

BUT THESE ARE ONLY SMALL PROBLEMS, WHEN WE LOOK AT THE REAL DANGER OF THE TOXIC CHEMICAL INDUSTRY.............

Food additives, agricultural fertilizers and pesticides, lead from petrol, a host of other things and everyday exposure to toxic chemicals at WORK and in the GENERAL ENVIRONMENT, have caused mental stress and strain, tension, a general subduing of the intellect, throughout the Western world. Drugged up to the eyeballs, we become apathetic to the multinationals' going-on, and expect it as 'part of society'.

Down south, after the budget, what REALLY should have happened was a REVOLUTION, not a change of party politics!

FOR THE SUBVERSIVE

Any real resistance to their policy of destruction is quashed by myths, such as the restriction of information availability about toxic chemicals to the workers and to the public, because, if other companies know what is in the product or how it is made, they will sell it, too.

This is shit. Any company in the chemical industry will have its own laboratory where tests could be carried out to find out how products are made and of what they are constituted. The myth is solely to prevent industry from USE!
COURTAULDS

COURTAULDS is the 60th largest company in the world, with 300 plants in Great Britain and 70 abroad. They employ 140,000 people. Their profits were £2.9 million in 1981, a staggering fall from £114 million in 1980. They blamed the recession.

Yet, their fixed and current assets rose by £400 million to a total of £1,080 million in 1981. At Courtaulds in Cumbernauld, only after they shut down in '79 did their legacy become clear.

The workforce, mainly from estates such as the nearby Windmill estate, kept quiet about the nasty affect, in fear of losing their jobs. Jobs that had been promised, for life. Courtaulds planned these workers down by the constant threat of job losses. Yet, Northern Ireland gave its last to Courtaulds only to be repaid with a legacy of total oppression.

Courtaulds opened in '49, after being refused permission for such a plant in England. They quickly bought off the Council to build cheap houses where their workers would live, sleep and breed. Houses which never have been up to European standard. Houses which are now owned and used by the workers' children. Courtaulds soon took over, shaping the land, the workers, and the social life, to their 'ideals'. They paid lower wages than in any other of their British plants. Women, especially were low paid. Working classes were their priority: total control the children then suffered. Working conditions were appalling: never up to safety standards.

"THE TRENCH"

Nearly all Courtaulds' workers came into contact with 'the trench': a 2 foot wide, 6 foot deep trench, flowing through the main workshop. The trench was filled with sulphuric acid. While doing their work, some during their tea-breaks (which they didn't get paid for) the workers were exposed to deadly gases rising from the trench. It slowly killed them.

The Windmill Estate suffered badly.

MR. CLAWSON died from exposure to sulphuric acid, in his 30s. He worked at Courtaulds for 10 years. He died of a heart attack.

MR. MONTGOMERY died from lung cancer in his early 40s.

Sulphuric acid causes heart attacks and lung cancer. There have been many deaths on the estate amongst Courtaulds' workers. Both men and women. In particular, were given the worst pay and the worst jobs.

Some women went home regularly to collect samples of pollution. They came into contact with 'noxious', given off from the burning of certain materials. They were unprotected. Courtaulds' attitude to women in particular is outrageous. Not only did low pay and the worst jobs apply to women, but women workers received only two weeks off (UNPAID) for pregnancy.

Courtaulds cared, as carbon disulphate is known to cause birth defects and still-born babies. Women also have a very high asthma rate on the estate, so do children. But, lack of statistics about previous asthma cases, before Courtaulds moved in, hampered any local protest in that direction.

Female workers were also prone to dermatitis - this resulted from work in the yarn spinning process. Some claimed, and got, compensation. It was very little. All workers were in constant contact with sulphuric acid, oils, bleach and a host of other toxic chemicals. They worked in extreme conditions of heat, noise and a strain. The air supply was also inadequate. But workers grew used to these things.

Some didn't.

BOB CHAPMAN died from a heart attack after living through hell. Courtaulds drains became blocked regularly with toxic waste. Regularly, deadly CS gas was pumped down by Bob to clear the drains. It didn't work. The drains were never cleaned up completely and CS gas built up in small pockets where the sludge never cleared. During a spell of hot weather one summer, the drain heated up and the CS gas ignited. The explosion was lethal. Bob Chapman never recovered from the shock - neither did many of the people living on the nearby Windmill Estate. Bob's death was due directly to that incident.

There have been other deaths amongst workers.

ALDREDON JIM CRAIG died from a heart attack in his late 40s after 10 years of heart disease.

MR. NEIL died from a heart attack in his 40s.

JACKIE McCULLOUGH is the only woman known to have died directly as a result of working at Courtaulds. She died in her 30s.

OWEN O'TOOL died from cancer in his early 60s. All worked in Courtaulds. There were and will be many more mortUnmarshaller.

Courtaulds knew what their workers were being exposed to, and the risks involved. They never introduced the slightest safety standards.

On 1st working in the plant oppressive, but Courtaulds, and all its toxic shit spilled onto the Windmill Estate.

"SNOWSTORM!"

White fumes blow from the 200 foot eye-sore of a chimney over and on to the estate. At the worst times, it blew through open windows like a 'snowstorm'. It stuck to clothes and killed plants. The 'snow' was processed 'cellulose'. Cellulose is toxic in large doses such as the 'snowstorms'. People were also kept awake at night, suffering, choking on the fumes blowing over from Courtaulds. We can only guess at what fumes were present, Sulphuric acid and sulphur for certain. They were released at the railway-end of Courtaulds in the form of toxic black smoke. Courtaulds maintained in a public statement that the smells were healthy and killed germs!!! They never told us to the thousands of white butterflies in the area, which, after Courtaulds opened up turned jet black from those fumes.

In fact, all wild life in the area suffered. Foxes, hares and birds no longer exist near Windmill, and farmers took all livestock away. Only rats stayed. Rat-Watching is now a popular past-time.

Courtaulds have gone: made their millions, and while they, and many others, conquer the 3rd World, their legacy lives on. Behind Courtaulds, between it and the Windmill Estate lives a TOXIC DUMP, overflowing with bubbling sulphuric acid, cellulose, rubber, plastics and a host of other toxic chemicals.

THE DUMP was started in the early 60s, small and tidy. It is now 400 yards long, 100 feet wide and 30 feet deep and stretches the whole way behind the Windmill Estate. It is still getting bigger.

All grass, trees and plants in the area are now dead, or dying as the dump slides and slides slowly towards them and the houses. To decrease the size of the Dump, workers were ordered to set fire to it regularly. This has been happening on and off since the 60s. Only when the blazes reach large proportions does the Fire Brigade arrive. No sooner is the fire out that it's alight again - the fumes added to those from the factory, are slowly killing all life nearby, even TODA V.

Still, as always when the blast gets out of hand, black rats, dirty and disease-ridden, go on the rampage. Existed by the fumes, they find new dwellings among the Windmill houses. Rat-Watching is now a matter of great importance. TOXIC DUMPS pose the greatest health hazard to this community - I also have one down the road.

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (Love Canal, a disused canal filled with toxic waste, threatened the lives of thousands, etc.), it was, which was present also, slowly moved under the houses near Love Canal. It and other chemicals in the sludge, rooted foundations, caused gardens to sub-
side, and gave off toxic gases which rose in the living rooms and kitchens. Children were deformed and the lives of many adults were endangered.

Will this happen on the Courtenay's Windmill Estate?

THEIR LEGACY LIVES ON.

Living on the Windmill Estate is now hell - those who lost their jobs at Courtenay, 75% of all workers on the estate, are now facing the social consequences of Courtenay. Broken families are now the norm, due to alcoholism, especially amongst women. The date and the low level of existence that it brings with it, and subsequent children, neglected while their parents sold their lives to the company, and now seek others die. "The constant threat of a very early death. These are not isolated cases; all estates around Carrick are having similar problem, as a direct result from Courtenay's 3,000 families in all.

What happened here is happening in many places throughout Northern Ireland, Britain and the rest of the world, wherever the mindless exploitation of human nature occurs - they have become ouroposers, they must be stopped. They MUST STAY STOPPED.

Thousands of new chemicals have been unleashed into the working and community environment. Chemicals such as vinyl chloride and formaldehyde, used quite commonly in the industrial and domestic environment. Their exploits will not prevent the death of over 500,000 people a year. A policy of waiting to cure the bodies is totally unacceptable. The time has come of identifying further carcinogenic or any other toxic chemical for that matter.

There are hundreds of known carcinogens that affect fertility, yet instead of stopping their use, the British government approved them for use. The British government approves more research into test-tube babies and pesticides contact.

Cancer killed one person in every 500, its lethal force is still growing. Cancer is a disease caused by chemicals and physical agents in the environment. Occupational cancers account for between two and three of every five cancer deaths. Smoking is a social problem, MULTINATIONALS ARE.

In NORTHERN IRELAND there are 42 known toxic dumps. Many are at the back of places such as Courtenay, De Poot in Derry, XCL, Northrock and ROC. We also have the flour factories, educational complexes, and government run buildings such as the Agriculture and Forestry buildings, up the Donegal Road.

3.5 million tons of toxic waste will have been produced in Northern Ireland in 1981, according to government figures. Of which 90% will end up in the landfills. 6.5% is being burnt, as a result.

Many of these waste have long lifespans during which they remain toxic. Carbon disulphide, for instance, needs 22 THOUSAND years, before becoming harmless. A lot of movement will happen between Courtenay and our estates.

Another long-term problem here in Northern Ireland, caused by uncontrolled radioactive fibres. The Belfast techs experiment with Strontium 90. Potentially "Low Cassis" will be set up to study the north and south for that matter. But they don't keep toxic waste out, either.

The chemicals from these DUMPS are never safe as they stand; they get washed into the waterways, get burned up and rise up our noses. They can change struktures from hard waste to gas, solid and pollute the air. There are many ways for toxic chemicals to move. Some have been carried hundreds of miles, as in the case of the Esso oil spill. Where ACID RAINS fell and killed trees and fish, they were a result of German industrial wastes. In Dublin, too, an incident happened that proved the point and which shows the danger. Do you remember the red sand dust-blown meat over Dublin in 1987 that everywhere was covered with it. It came from the Sahara desert. This link with meat is normal. Dublins would have been wiped out if it had been radiation instead of sand.

Love Canal, too, showed those problems up. Down, one of the deadliest known chemicals, was present in a sludge made up of 12% of 110 chemicals that it is its way through the foundations of houses and up in back gardens. People living there.

Love Canal became extremely worried, as gases rose from the sludge, some people fled from the effects of the biokes. Others, later, found birth defects in the newborn children.

AGRO-UNCULTURED

We can see that their attitude towards us in the food and medicine that they and their kind want us to consume.

Food is contaminated with toxic shit, all processed food, drugs, even water, and most vegetables and meat.

Northern Ireland used 2.5 million gallons of pesticides, herbicides and insecticides, all containing toxic chemicals. In 1980 alone. A further 37,000 tons of chemicals were used, and in next year, 70,000 gallons of hormones, proteins, vitamins and enzymes. We end up with toxic dumbs in our bodies. It is geared towards profit, Drugs of all sorts are given to us by those to whom we entrust our money. Many illnesses are caused by society tension, fear, depression, cancer and heart patients. We want prevention, not cure. This big, neat, synthetic approach to the land and to our bodies, is irresponsible of our health.

THE FACTS

2457, a weedkiller (Agent Orange of Vietnam fame) is banned by many countries. The US and most EEC countries most recently. Yet, in Britain, it is still used widely by British Rail, the Forestry Commission, and is sold by Boots. 2457 contains Dioxin. The RUAH have fought hard to get it banned. In 78 they won their case - today it is STILL in use. British Rail for example, use 2457 along their railway lines. Recently, they sprayed the Belfast/Navy line and the Belfast suburban line. Dioxin, when sprayed, does not settle. 75% blows away in the wind, the other 25% rests on stems, to be picked by animals or children, or washed into the soil.

Another used here in Northern Ireland is DBCP, a pesticide. It causes infertility. Farmers spray it once a year according to guidelines set down for its use by the government. We, as a result, are suffering.

Out of the 102 million tonnes of food that we eat, 1 million tonnes will contain DBCP.

The food and drug industry needs proper investigation here in Northern Ireland. "This is only the snow on the tip of the iceberg."

BE ALIVE :: STAY ALIVE!

To gather information about toxic industries and chemicals, check with the libraries. Talk to sympathetic workers in the factories and to those who have been left off by the companies. Contact ASTMS, as they produce some very good paper & policy documents.

If you have no way of publishing your facts, next, if not every, or alternatively "Dearly" paper will do.

Especially Dioxin Control.

TOXIC CHEMICAL storage poses a great problem. In Belfast there are 7 official toxic chemical storage tanks and warehouses, we can only guess as to how many unofficial ones there are.

23 people were murdered in Felsonough, when Sodium Chlorate exploded in a warehouse. The death toll would have been much higher but for the fact that it was a bank holiday.

BAC, 67 Winnemore Street, Belfast. Tel: Belfast 824 826.