"GUilty!"

During the past month an unusual trial took place in Belfast. A Special Branch Officer was charged with murdering a fellow Officer as well as with 26 other offences, including armed robbery, hijacking, shootings and possession of explosives. Most of the evidence against Charles Mc Cormick SB man from Ballymena was given by Anthony O'Doherty, an agent who worked for the GPO CID, SB and the RUC and who is at present serving 18 years for many of the offences. Mc Cormick was sentenced to 20 years. All the evidence given by O'Doherty was unacceptable by the judge who saw him as nothing more than a rouger... Not very often do we get the opportunity to see a member of the Special Branch on trial, or for that matter, learn about the relationship between the SB and their agents. Anthony O'Doherty told his own story... it was as an agent's daily...

CASTLE, IRA selling the Union Irishman. He came over to me to buy a newspaper, pass a remark and we got into a general conversation. The next morning the two were in January '72 when Mc Cormick arrived O'Doherty and brought him to Mc Gilligan's (police station) about a robbery in Portglenone. He was then arrested on the prison ship Malachy for 4-5 months and then for two months at Long Kesh. "Mc Cormick met me when I was released. The talk was about getting in on the Portglenone. Nobody suggested I join the Provisionals... I think there was about 8-10 band mates I told about which the band dispersed. The first gun he had was a 32 black powder gun. O'Doherty told me Mc Cormick told him that the weapon was no use to him and he received a 32 revolver instead. It was around this time that another member of the Special Branch had been kidnapped and O'Doherty's name came up in the subsequent interrogation." "In the winter of '73 I was combed into going down to Monaghan. I walked into a bar and carried a drink and went after everything wasn't all right" O'Doherty told us when he was tackled by the decomman me and him had a fight and I got out across the car park and two more men grabbed me." He fought them off and me up the street. It was at this time O'Doherty was re-arrested by Mc Cormick with a 45 revolver, a 303 rifle and a shotgun, "picked up from a Provisional dump outside Swatragh."

"The RUC sent a team after me... they took a gun in me and they were for taking me away interrogating me and I would say, probably to shoot me." O'Doherty said he was driven off in a car but the IRA men did not know that he had a gun down his boot. "I put the gun in the steering and told them to turn round." At this time O'Doherty started to do jobs organised by Mc Cormick in an attempt to get back in with the Provisionals to the scene. "The first was to be an attack on the UDR. We discussed it and I went to know how many UDR would be coming down the road. I was under the impression there was only going to be one at a time. I saw one jeep coming very slowly, but there was two more jeeps coming behind with their lights off. I just fired into the air as I was one hundred yards short. But there was maybe 100 to 200 rounds fired back at me. I didn't expect us to break up." The next attack was to be on the RUC "the police jeep came down the road..."

UNITED STATES TERROR

The statistics of death in Central America are so enormous as to be numbing. In El Salvador, 50,000 people have been killed by government forces, 70,000 by death squads over the last 2 years. That's over 1,000 every month. In neighbouring Guatemala, 6,000 people have been killed by the security forces in the last 10 months, and, since 1978, 13,000 have disappeared. These are the governments which the US and its allies prop up in economic and military aid. The repression has increased. The facts as to the resistance to the governments have been turned to war.

El Salvador: This country of almost 8 million people has had continuous military dictatorships for 50 years, and has the greatest US involvement. The State Department describes the war there as an "essential part of the global problem between the USA & USSR."

The Assistant Secretary of State for Inter American Affairs, Thomas Enders, put it on back page...

WARP by Royal appointment!

British island, insulating the governor that is a different matter. So that the whole population of Europe's Area's could be blown inside. British by polite knowing to be sure and all this for the defence of the British right of 1800 islanders? Only the Daily Mail believes that! The islanders are deadly against the policies of the Home Office, in power of the British territory who own the island. The British island's lives in tiny cottages and are shipped out one they are too old to work or they get ill. The company, Coaltis Chemicals make the world's most dangerous poison. The multimillion dollar KHHV, the multipurpose killer used in Vie
LETTERS

"Dear Editor, your anonymous interviewee discribes his staunch gay liberation with inaccuracies and a mindless commitment to what can only be described as national socialism. The enormus judge I asked him to remove was not, as stated, but in the form of a giant trinket with 'Brits Out' in big letters and a tiny slogan about gays round the edge."

My sole concern was the safety of myself and the other voluntary workers at the Carpenter Club. We have to be at the front of the fight; the violence it would have inevitably provoked. As it was, the sectarian leaflets created enough aggro, with people setting fires to them etc., in the absence of our brave quarters. In discussions afterwards, the co-workers felt the leaflets were dangerously inflammatory. NIGSTRA's policy is clear and single - to work the system in the state we are in. The United Kingdom. My own integrationist views are well known. I hope, I am not an extremist, I resent the democratic majority's wish to do in the UK. As a gay, I recognize no frontiers. My only wish is that other well-meaning progressives could see that this sterile and hopeless war has only shattered the working class, blighted thousands of lives and produced an increased readiness for cynicism."

There have been enough accidental gay casualties of the war so we normally want to avoid any in the Carpenter Club."

While we stubbornly retain the capacity to oppress animal life, as we lose that part of our humanity which characterizes notions of tenderness. While we torture and slaughter animal life, so we can transfer these acts should the need arise to human life.

Calling all bookshops

OC/GG have been going on for over two years and, at the moment, are subsidized by other activities of the BAC. Our aim is to make them self-financing, while keeping the price as low as possible.

According to our British distributor - A distribution - We have substantial every copy sold in Britain. A strange state of affairs.

We would like to work out the business of distributing direct to bookshops... and would ask shops to let us know how many copies of OC/GG they now receive, and when they re-require them.

A.K.D., most important of all... We need more subscriptions.

It costs only £4 - the price of a round of drinks!

This venue, as it is from the commercial competition of the Midland Hotel (owned by Unipram businessman and fruitmail, the Hastings Group, who could resist gays tomorrow, is sadly given no credit by your interviewee, when nonetheless relates how many of his gay comrades dug out, emigrating to the cosmopolitan capitals of these islands.

Objectively, who is the real puritan/misogynist?

Love, Jeff Douglas

Letter from London...

"I'm enjoying reading your magazine and find it generally well-informed. I particularly enjoyed the article on the educational system. It was very useful as a reminder, especially given the background I have heard often heard of the 'brainwash' of the 'political correctness' of the times. Your definition is obviously quite different.

Outta Control, March '82'. Whereas, in my view, it means 'unsophisticated' or 'stupid', you use it in the sense of 'reactionary' to describe the political movements. I hope you can appreciate my confusion."

William Whitefield admitted recently that this consists of CS gas and supplies of plastic bullets have been delivered to police forces in England, Scotland and Wales. It appears that these batons of force are being used to control the New IRA and British army in Northern Ireland. How many raids, on other such, in such a surge activity, will take place before the forces start maiming and killing on the whole scale experienced here, and how will they attempt to justify their political expediency?
The fact of the matter is that we've finished with Europe.

Before your pious politicians (I was once one and I bet I was more pious and more politically than any of you) start moaning about Responsibility At Home, and Britain Needs You, and Coopt-Ops, and all that, may I mention that I'll be forty by the time this article comes out, have been sitting and marching on pavements and doing an international internal study of jails-walls and generally been putting my feet where my mouth was since I was a child. My parents were Commies, and although that is, of course, a bad trip, it was still a fairly brave thing to be in the atmosphere of post-war Cold War England, and not to be kept in with complaints of 'Cop-out arias'! I'm not, and nor are the people I live with. Right, so from age 17 to 27 I worked in CND and associated movements against Nuclear Weapons. And in here, England, these last days of our, we're being CND in many unoppressively ways, such as sitting up late and writing banners for them, and in Donegal as you know, we have much to do with starting the successful anti-nuclear campaign.

But the question is this: Do we want to live here even if we understandably disarm tomorrow? And the answer is a resounding NO THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

I have noticed that all shades of left-wingers who complain about all sorts of things wrong with society only really do it when they feel that something left is less than exciting. Wanting 'better education', 'more freedom in the schools', and so on, when I think the whole idea of education per se, means nothing to me. Nor does the concept of 'one and better hospitals' help - I mean, no bloody thanks. The Welfare State I'm afraid I can't abide, it is deadening, it does crush initiative, just like the glib words say. More and better housing? Oh god, what does that mean? Cheap modern buildings? Extended houses? I can't bear it. All the wilds of Ireland and Scotland and the islands surrounding our island are EMPTY! There are fields to be sown, trees to be grown. I don't believe it is people's troubles that are in part of the world. It's like sticking your nose in a doorknob and running away. Yes, it smells, so I don't want to live in a drab house.

LOTS AND LOTS AND MILLIONS OF PEOPLE DO. Good bloody luck to them. Just because I was born here, doesn't mean I'm going to stay here.

People go bananas when they hear of our plans. It's like in a house jail where people had been incarcerated for years. A group of prisoners noticed there was a wide gap in the fence - a bit wild and where cut, there, but a gap nonetheless, and they say 'come on chaps, we're off', and all the other prisoners were so appalled at the possibility that all the other prisoners were suffering was not necessary, that they put all their energy into trying to tell the escapees it was impossible or immoral to escape. Well, guess what, we're going to attempt the impossible, even if others consider it

impossible.

You wouldn't believe the amazing set of reasons we've accumulated on paper from people having a brainwave because we're sailing away, everything from the classics: 'The Atlantic isn't a piddle you know' (??) to 'the Aedes are a decent you know' and the natives will be frightened by you screaming in the night' (?!?!) We don't like cigarettes, car, disease, newspapers, drogs, pockets of anything, doctors, hospitals, aeroplanes, concrete, dirty clothes, books, 'education', TV or anything else the 20th century has so kindly donated.

We like wood, stone, wind, rocks, sea, sky, grass, animals don't chop up, manual labour from morn till night, babies born at home, dying it our own time and way, walking barefoot, fighting, making our own rules, fun, fearless, theatre and music of our own making, simple food and sun and wind-burnt bodies.

To have these things (they're called 'life') we're willing to face heights, depths, storm, cold, possible hunger, fear, fear, unusual illnesses, some babies stillborn (but no babies being surrounded by machines and marked men), maybe shorter fuller lives, certainly more fulfilling death.

2. You ask: Where did you achieve your education in Donegal?

I have every reason to remember of Ireland from the moment I first crossed the border at Strabane, till the day I'll have to return to Boston from our boat 'Atlantic'.

I have loved the moody intensity of the Irish. I love everything about the Irish that is totally Un-English. I have loved the old lady laughing at the top of her voice 'Scrambles'! I have loved the moody protestant Catholic men of the daytime metamorphosis into hunting creatures creeping round our doors at night.

I have loved having, with my daughter, who has mended so well, the last taken off the Catholic Village Front to slip geese the utterly human outline of outdoor and companionship and camaraderie and wolfing and all of the other leisurely releases from the impossible human satchel-jacket of the Nuclear Family. (No wonder they project so magnificently onto a CO-MONURE).

I have loved the haystacks and the potato piles and the doorknobs and the old men and the bumpy roads and the crazy gales.

What the dead do to themselves in the pubs and in their cars, I have not loved.

Most of all, of course, I have loved the pristine beauty of our island Ireland. It is particularly because I have loved nature in the raw on that island so much, that I am now paying. I remember years ago looking out from Inishfree and noticing that I could climb over the mountain and of course see masses of Ireland. I lifted that to my companion: 'we might move over here one day, if it's not far enough out, I imagine then an island further out in the Atlantic. I didn't know much geography. I looked at a map and saw the next "Island" was America......

So that's where we're going.

Any questions?

Love,

Jenny.
Charles's house. We dumped everything in the garage, went into the house and he made me a fry and brought me a change of clothes. I stayed in his house that night.

SECOND ROOM

"Charles heard that the following Tuesday was a good day to kill the back again. Both Don and I went out to see the latest thing I was doing and the item I was putting in the drawer. They filled it with money.

O'Doherty said that he had no idea how much damage could be done by a person who had been arrested.

THIRD RAID

O'Doherty said that a colleague of his had become suspicious. "Charlie got me a (wag out of the Special Branch office in Ballymena and a pair of new glasses of the type they used to get from the police station, but I didn't really say very much to them.

FOURTH ATTEMPT

O'Doherty said that on the day of the robbery he had been in the mail, and it was clear that a car was parked outside O'Doherty's house. O'Doherty thought it was the same fellow, or maybe the same car. But when he got into a stolen car and drove to the Northern Bank in Antrim, he was stopped when he produced a gun in the bank's name. The police then went in and arrested him.

SHOOTING

O'Doherty explained how Mr. Cook, his brother-in-law, was shot, and how he had to open fire with the police. The police then went in and arrested him.

If O'Doherty had decided to do it himself, he left.

As the people from Ballymena arrived, a group of men from the IRA arrived, and I was taken to the police station.

"I then asked O'Doherty to shoot him but he refused. O'Doherty decided to do it himself. He left.

In Ballymena, a group of men from the IRA arrived, and I was taken to the police station. The IRA then took over and arrested me.

More recently, when he said that the sea lanes, trade routes, and oil supplies were at risk. The US is more concerned with the stability of the region, and its geopolitical interests. In response to the US's actions, the IRA and other republican groups increased their activities. The IRA and other groups carried out a series of bombings and attacks on both sides.

Guatemala

More important, US involvement in this country had led to a revolutionary movement. The US economic aid to the country and its stability have been affected. The US is concerned about the increased strength of the guerrilla movement, UNRUL, which operates in 60% of the country, and which has strong backing from both the US and guerrillas, whose lands are being stolen by the USA.

Equally worrying for the US is the division of the army and the rising of new rebellions. Despite the coup, which replaced the old leaders, the rightist wing of the army is now stronger, and as they become more aggressive, so too do the guerrillas.

The US administration cannot tolerate "independence" (even in the guise of a socialist or democratic state), for it sees the situation as an opportunity to impose its will on the country. The US military and political establishment sees this as a threat to its global interests.

What France and Mexico want is a solution to bring the middle-class and intellectuals to power, to create economic and political stability, and for the US to reduce its oversupply of power and profit to a more acceptable level.
The right to vote or equal civil rights may be good demands, but true consciousness about nothing in the puller in the courts. It helps to understand the issues, but every oppressed woman gains this liberation from her memories through her own efforts. It is necessary that women learn that lessons, that she realize that her freedom will reach as far as her power to attain freedom inside.

**NEW SOLUTION, NO SOLUTION**

Some months ago Gaining Ground looked at the Youth Opportunities Programmes currently being provided for the 16-18 year old young unemployed. We now turn and look at the new idea the government has come up with to keep young people off the street - the Youth Training Programmes.

As with the YOP courses the priority remains the same - cutting the unemployment figures at all costs. The stated object of the new batch of courses is that there will be a guaranteed place for all unemployed young people between the ages of 16 and 18. Already though, many are entering this guaranteed place as a compulsory course, and those young people who are not already on a YOP course or in employment, will find themselves heavily pressured to go on a YTP course.

The schemes are to be piloted in Northern Ireland in September, they will not be introduced into Britain until Sept 83. As our figures are higher than those in Britain we are in more need of the scheme, or at least that is the government rationale for their introduction here first. In actual fact though N.I is being used as a testing ground for the scheme in the hope that all the wrongs can be ironed out here in the first year.

What will these schemes provide that is different from what already exists? In short the answer is not a great deal. One difference though is that the new courses will run for one year instead of the 16 weeks on most of the YOP courses.

A YTP course to get government approval must contain the following 3 elements:

1. A work placement
2. An educational section (very loosely defined)
3. Basic social and life skills

Each will roughly take one third of the total time spent on the course. That is the basic requirement, it has been left up to the colleges of Further Education in N.1. to come up with the details, for it will be the colleges who will have the main responsibility for the running of YTP. At the present time there is much going on all over N.I in college, classrooms and boardrooms designing courses, trying to come up with the magic formula that will get Department of Manpower Services approval, and therefore a new course, possibly new staff, and more money for the college.

The incentives thin in a time when the government has been cutting education and redundancy loans large in the bottom of every teacher, and college administrator, are more than enough to ensure that there is plenty when it comes to recruiting between the colleges in an effort to get some of the team, in a growing atmosphere of no more new mind busters!

While these schemes then may provide a few more jobs in the educational sector, what do they do for the young people who are being taken. In short next to nothing except the burden of tripping to the desk office once every two weeks. Of course it will also remove large numbers from the register and so ease the pressure on the governments, by the time they have finished the course most of them will be too old to go back on the youth register and so will be absorbed into the adult figures - how to solve youth unemployment in one easy stroke? So far the government has promised each person on the YTP £26 per week, but already the signs are that once it becomes established this will be reduced to £15 and as young people are likely to be pressured to go on the courses, then we have an extra year compulsory schooling with a little extra pay thrown in. As well as those young people who choose to stay on at school or go to F.E. college to take exams will be penalized because they won't receive any money at all. (Until recently people could sign on and then do up to 22 hours per week in education - now the date is claiming that the 22 hours must include homework, travel to and from the college and meal breaks, which is effectively limiting any person still trying to sign on and take exams at the same time.)

The government has also stipulated that the YTP courses cannot have a formal exam element, so all those young people go in the way they come out the same. As to the job placement element, well already the YOP schemes find it difficult to get placements except in the most boring and uninteresting areas, and the situation will not improve as more and more go after less and less jobs, not to mention the fact that workers already in employment may find themselves out of a job, as there employers finds it cheaper to use free YTP labour. The ultimate value of these courses then lies as always with the government.
THE FACTS OF LIFE

On March 13th 1982, the Northern Irish branch of the anti-abortion organisation 'Life', had its first Annual Conference, in Newcastle, County Down. Since it was advertised on television, and no mention was made that it was only for Life members, or for those who supported Life, then I attended. This is what I encountered.

It was soon evident that if you did not come with a closed mind, an all-embracing belief in Life's aims, activities, and a total acceptance of their caring rhetoric, despite evidence to the contrary, then you certainly were not welcome.

Questions were probed by enthusiastic assurances of the wonderful 'Life' and its members, were treated with rigid suspicion and an unwillingness to allow discussion even from their own members.

The conference which was attended by about 150 people mostly women, was opened by E.K. McGrady, the Mayor of Newcastle. He took it upon himself to tell Life how wonderful they were, and to set the tone for the rest of the day. He also boasted that the Newcastle City Council had passed a vote which rejected Newcastle the introduction of any form of abortion law reform.

I wondered what these women who have left Newcastle to seek abortion in England are aware of this? After McGrady one of the specially invited guests rose to speak to the faithful, Professor Scarrabrook, lecturer in history at Warwick University, gave what purported to be a history of the 1967 Abortion Act. Detailed scrutiny of his remarks left me wondering what was history and what was propaganda, distortion, highly emotive rhetoric, slander, and misrepresentation of other political viewpoints, the passing off of objective facts, things which by their very nature were totally subjective comments.

Throughout his speech he kept stressing that one must be calm, rational, and objective when discussing this most emotional of issues - abortion. It is a pity that he didn't take his own advice.

Words like holocaust, slaughter, and bloodshed, phrases like tearing from the womb, forces of darkness and evil, innocent unborn, peppered his speech. Feminists, language and arguments were constantly referred to and indeed misrepresented to an audience which when I looked at them didn't quite seem to be following.

When asked to clarify Life's attitude to issues like sex education, contraception, and family planning, he replied:

"Life is concerned with Life, we are not involved in other issues. We don't want to extend our concern. We've made a decision not to be concerned about other issues. These other issues are irrelevant." One speaker reminded him about levels of poverty in Northern Ireland. He chose to ignore her point, and neither did he refer to children, education, poor housing, child poverty, the numbers of children murdered with plastic bullets, or indeed the massive increase in defence spending, paid for by cuts in the Welfare State which have deprived children and their parents of basic amenities. And while state benefits for a single mother living with her parents is only £18.60, plus £7.90 for the child, but £2.55 child benefit, plus £2.55 rent contribution, no mention was made of the plight of single parents living on state benefit. It seems to me that basically Life is all sex - if you don't want children, then you just don't have sex. Life is all sex - it involves only a chemical or biological event, it has no social, emotional, political, or qualitative existence. Once out of the womb - just forget about it.

It was difficult throughout the speech to unravel the distortions from the truth, the apparent rejection of violence, (for them that equates abortion), yet no mention of other forms of violence such as war, rape, plastic bullets, child abuse, and battering. Other speakers were to follow Scarrabrook, most of whom were a bit more sensitive to the prevailing social situation in Northern Ireland. Their speeches tended to full of rhetoric, how they looked after 'young girls' - as if they were the only women with unwanted pregnancies. The loving and supportive networks that they had set up which according to Mrs Jean Gielert, Care Officer provided "positive, loving care from people who cared about them."

This took the form of pregnancy testing, and it did not include any form of counselling which indicated that they didn't have to have a child, they then spoke about their hospital for single parents. They seemed unaware that this hospital has come in for severe criticism in the last few weeks. (See box)

In an organisation as well headed as Life is a thousand members who pay a membership fee of £5.00 each and $100 of rage workers raising hundreds of pounds with local fund raising activities (I learned a thing or two about fund raising) it would seem not unreasonable to expect Life to subsidise the rent and running and board of the mothers to be. Once a woman has produced the child, has it adopted, she is amongst the many single homeless in Northern Ireland. Or if she decides to keep her child she is not given a penny by the Housing Executive as an emergency homeless person because Life hosted is not recognised as having emergency status. They also have an ACE worker in their office - a fact of public subsidies!

There were several seminars held during the day but it was at the Education seminar that I felt the most serious advances had been made by the Life organisation. The man who ran the seminar opened by rhymed with "hard sell" to schools. He said that "get your feet in the door - get your feet in the door - get your feet in the door."

A talk to talk about to schools, talk to talk about to schools. Talk to talk about to schools. Tell children in school to form a Life Executive in their school!

He went on to make wild claims with the aid of "impressive" statistics. When challenged on his statistics (36,000 young women in England and Wales had abortions under the age of 19, no time scale given) and the highly-piggy maths he had done to come up with 500 abortions for the same age group in Northern Ireland, he had the inability to explain they, politically with everyone listening and not even noticing the nonsense don't quote the figures publicly!

Still I left that seminar very worried about what exactly was going on in schools, especially Catholic ones. St. Louise's Belfast and St. Malachy's Catholic schools have their own Justice Life groups.

Jancie Mill of Hollywood, Co. Down, accused the Life organisation of "throwing her out of their hospital for unmarried mothers in East Belfast. Justise showed the Sunday World newspaper a letter offering her to leave the hospital, just a fortnight before her baby was due. Stunned that she had broken their rules and must leave at once although Justice maintained that she had received no written warnings about breaking rules was the one who knew of any serious breach of rules apart from leaving her and her boyfriend on the premises when she shouldn't have been there.

"I was worried about my health and the effect it would have on my unborn child. I was farming in a state of shock. I didn't fully realise what had happened. I knew I was free. Where did I break that was so outrageous that I was put on the street by an organisation which professes care and compassion for unmarried mothers? I know there must be rules and I know at times that girls with problem pregnancies can go into hospital. But no matter what they thought of the LIFE's concern should have been for my unborn child."

Questions in the Caring Seminar about conditions in the Life Hostel and inquiries about the above story were not answered by the organisers of the conference. Indeed, the one spokesperson for the hostel, the one spokesperson who didn't want to extend their concern, who made a decision not to be concerned about other issues, who equated abortion with the "hard sell" to schools, who asked "your feet in the door - get your feet in the door - get your feet in the door."

Talk to talk about to schools, talk to talk about to schools. Talk to talk about to schools. Tell children in school to form a Life Executive in their school!
NEWS SHORTS

The Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Association recently released figures for the number of women coming to them for help and advice on abortion. In the month of January this year, 197 women sought help through the UPA and 190 went to England for a private abortion. In an article in the Belfast Telegraph last week, the UPA said that they would refer women who did not want to end their pregnancy to organizations like Life and CARE. However, with the recent public unease about the quality of LIFE’s hotel after 2 women were killed and a housemother resigned the claims of LIFE in Northern Ireland to be a caring organization should be publicly examined.

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In the autumn of last year you may remember sending off one of the few hundred postcards from Northern Ireland to the Spanish Minister for Justice demanding an amnesty for all those Spanish women on trial for having been involved in performing abortions and calling for safe abortion to be legalised in Spain. Well, the Spanish women won their case although it will be a long struggle before abortion is made legal in Spain.

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The Horizon programme on Depo Provera, long overdue attention to this subject at last, was clever with its mixture of fact, truth and reassurance. Hundreds of thousands of Thai women used this contraceptive injection because they couldn’t be relied on to take their pills regularly and were generally not keen on ‘western’ style medication. One unmistakable example of western style contraceptive rejection was the dangerous diaphragm shown being fitted in the programme... hardly a choice for women in third world countries.

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The next publication from the Workers Research Unit is destined to become a best seller as soon as the printers stop reading it and get on with the job. 84 pages of information on the Law in Northern Ireland and a feature on the collapse of manufacturing here. A collector’s item and only 49p (£1.25 overseas). Order from the Workers Research Unit c/o 7 Wessex Street, Belfast 1 or in sets from Just Books.

"An excellent and illuminating study, compulsive reading at a competitive price." E. McBath

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Apologies—W.R. produced the pamphlet The Rapist who pays the rent and not Women against Violence against Women as reported in the Rape Crisis interview last month.

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TAPE & SLIDE SHOW

The Gaining Ground Tape and Slide Show will be shown in Scotland in the following places:

PAISLEY – Tuesday lunchtime
April 20th

GLASGOW – Tuesday evening
April 20th

GLASGOW University Wednesday lunchtime 21st April

DUNDEE – Thursday evening

22nd April

Aberdeen – Saturday evening

24th April

EDINBURGH – Tuesday evening
27th April with possible showing
University on Monday or Wednesday

(26th and 28th).

For further details look out for posters or contact us direct at 7 Wessex Street
Belfast 1 (0222 23426). Two other showings are in North Devon and one in North London have yet to be finalised for May, more details from Gaining Ground.

The tape and slide show is one and a half hours long and looks at everyday life in Northern Ireland with particular emphasis on the troubles—a look at the last ten to twelve years, civil rights, internment, H Block, Armagh, the Hunger Strikers etc—followed by sections on housing, unemployment, poverty, the recession, homosexuality, the women's movement both historically and in the seventies focusing on the question of abortion.

Originally, we were asked to do a speaking tour in Scotland but decided that slides would be a lot more interesting for ourselves as well as those watching! We can't pretend to know a lot about Scotland, but wherever we were able to, we related the commentary to similar circumstances in Scotland, particularly in the social sphere.

If you want us to consider further venues in the future please get in touch, especially venues in Ireland. This is primarily a tool for discussion so we would not be prepared to send it out without our selves or any London anarchist put it! Costs put up by Scottish groups have been 25p per show, obviously negotiable, to cover travel costs, so groups outside Ireland should bear this in mind. (Local showings free or donation).

Finally we would like to thank everyone in Scotland for being so well organised and thoughtful. It definitely does make all the difference!

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Dear Gaining Ground,

Thanks for writing the reply to my letter concerning rape—the possibility of a women's group in Bangor and sending me the March issue and poster for International Women's Day.

In fact, so inspired was I by the interest you had shown that I decided to go ahead with an experiment/project I had been mulling on for some time. The result is that you can see from the enclosed was a newsletter/conference/fanzine mix based loosely on the "instant" newspaper distributed at the A Centre. The idea behind it was something which would give opportunity for comment, discussion and not just or whatever and also give some basic coverage to the extremely healthy scene in Bangor. I called it an experiment as I haven't decided yet how permanent it will become but so far, reaction has been interesting and very definitely needed. The signs are hopeful though that it will continue, with support from others for another few issues—at least enough...

**************

MÁTÓ

Anyway, this is just a note to let you know what is happening in Bangor,
Yours A.M.H.

Good luck! I think it is so who are inspired by your determination.
The first issue of The Cattle Market free news sheets on International Women's Day and what didn't happen in Bangor. The SAS and Dogmatic Elements, Slightly 17 and more!
INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

The title of "International Womens Day" was thought up by Clara Zetkin, a German Socialist Feminist in 1910 and was adopted by feminists in the late sixties. Now traditionally celebrated on March 8th, the Women's Movement in Belfast organized events around the whole weekend.

On March 8th a one day conference was held at the Ulster Polytechnic to look at the provision for women here, and it was titled 'Women's Education - The Future'. There was a wide representation of groups and interests at the conference, which was kicked off by Jane Thompson from England who told us about the Second Chance course she runs in Southampton. She pulled no punches as she set about describing the authoritarian and patriarchal nature of the educational system, and many of the audience were visibly uneasy at the throw after throw out about the nature and the supposed needs of women students, and women in the community. Those who spoke later found her very difficult to follow. There included speakers from the WEA and the OJ.

After lunch Sandra Griffiths spoke about her own personal experiences of working with women in the community. It was a stimulating talk and got everyone ready for the workshops that followed. After the conference returned to the plenary session to report back and discuss future developments. The complaints were severe enough that this had been one of the best conferences many had ever been at and that how long it would be until the next one!

Saturday afternoon saw the annual demonstration at Commericar. The rain was out in full force as well as the women who usual! But the demonstration and the rally was very colourful with banners and placards and the new International Women's Day banner which took four women to carry. There was a lighthearted piece of street theatre from the Poly students lifting the lid off women's struggles in general. As well as being extremely funny it made some very good and less funny points about domestic violence. After the speakers there was a march from Commericar to the City Hall which raised a few eyebrows in Royal Avenue as women shouted "Not the Church, not the State - Women must decide their fate!"

On Saturday evening there was a concert of women artists in the Crescent, the last night we have all had in some time. It was difficult to put into words the hallow'ed'ness that atmosphere which had been created out of the dark, gloomy, dimly lit room and the performance was electric, acting, literature and poetry reading were fantastic!

Less well attended was the exhibition in the Pelican Club in Andersonstown on Irish women, which was a shame as there were some unique photographs inside that were as much as the old linen factories show flours.

On the glorious Sunday day a couple of hundred people converged on Armagh, to picket the women's prison there. When 22 women remain on protest. Members of the RUC and Brit Army were in evidence, as usual. But the picketing took place without incident, and perhaps the only worthwhile part of the exercise was when the crowd formed the granite walls and shouted the name of each protesting prisoner in turn, followed by the message "You are not Alone!" Undoubtedly, our voices were heard by the women inside, and it will be heard by the reaction. Part of the purpose of the picket is to focus attention on the situation of the women political prisoners, and on this, perhaps, find more encouragement, if this come-aways event was linked to constant activity and regular news of the situation then Bernadette McAliskey made the point in broader terms when she said "we owe the prisoners an assurance that this struggle and the women's struggle will be further on when they walk out of Armagh", I, for one, had been hoping that that view would be expressed.

Meanwhile back in Belfast the gym in the Phoenix Club had been transformed into a Feminist Fair with stalls from women's groups and campaigns, books, badges, handcrafts, postcards, food, all sorts of things on sale. Throughout the afternoon there were workshops which included childcare, Irish Suffrage and Women Writers Groups etc. The beautiful weather, a day too late, or the after effects of Saturday night may have prevented a few people turning up but attendance was good and workshops well attended.

The Red Cross had a stall on the Monday evening. About 200 women gathered at Shaftesbury Square to give out with torches, banners, placards, balloons and speakers and to complete the picture a nine foot dummy judge (the real one expired at the last minute) was tied to the back of the car and supposedly travelled down with a banner pinned across his middle which read "You don't hitch a lift in my car". The whole march was very theatrical as it moved round the town to the Art College.

Most women then went over to the disco in the Carpenter Club via the pub to dance the night away with other women. A good ending to a weekend of enjoyment and much hard work which had been with the help and support of the women's groups in Belfast.

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Of we went for a wee rest and a three course lunch costing £3 of the £5 we had to pay to go to the conference. It was interesting to note how many, for costs were around, how many cars brought members comfortably to Newcastle. Finally I feel this group must be seen clearly for the political views which lie hidden in the caring rhetoric. They are Northern Ireland's Moral Majority. They basically do not want people to have control over their own lives, especially women. They are important to argue about the importance of a mother's health in relation to too many pregnancies, they offer adoption to a woman who may have been raped, inside or outside marriage, they oppose abortion, education as the means of responsible parenthood, they oppose family planning, they resist human rights in a very narrow way. It seems to me that what they are really against is life. They are fundamentally not pro-life but anti-life in that they see human sexuality in the very narrow context of human reproduction and not in part of the human need for closeness, loving and pleasure.

The pro-choice lobby, misrepresented as pro-abortion, is not against children, nor against life but is recognizing the realities of living, realizing that pregnancy does not always occur as we would like it to occur, in a loving, caring, accepting situation, with all the forms of necessary emotional, financial and community support. The pro choice lobby realizes that no one but the woman can make the decision whether or not to have an abortion. The pro choice lobby lobbies as part of its low profile campaign to make abortion unnecessary - not to see that every pregnancy is a wanted pregnancy - every child a wanted child, not by bashing rhetoric but by providing all the facilities like nurseries, creches, after school care, better educational opportunities, good housing etc.

Ultimately Life's view of women is that we are breeders to nurture and breed children with no say in any part of the process.