

outta control

BELFAST ANARCHIST MONTHLY

Sold with **GAINING GROUND**

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"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 five agencies, IRSP, PIRA, CID, SB and the ARMY, and who is at present serving 18 years for many of the offences Mc Cormick was charged with.

Mc Cormick was sentenced to 20 years. All the evidence given by O'Doherty was unaccepted by the judge, who saw him as nothing more than a rouge... 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 tells his own story..... "It was at Murlough Bay, Bally-

castle, I was selling the United Irishman. He came over to me to buy a newspaper, passed a remark and we got into a general conversation". The next meeting of the two was in January '72 when Mc Cormick arrested O' Doherty and brought him to Magilligan (holding centre) about a robbery in Portlengone. He was then interned on the prison ship Maidstone for 4-5 months and then for two months at Long Kesh.

"Mc Cormick met me when I was released. The talk was about me getting in on the Provie scene. Nobody suggested I join the Provies.... I think there was about 8 to 10 land mines I told about which the army diffused." The first gun he had was a .38 black powder gun. O'Doherty said he told Mc Cormick that this 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 conned into going down to Monaghan. I walked into a hotel and bought a drink and noticed everything wasn't all right". O'Doherty tried to leave when he was tackled by the doorman, "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 ran up the street.

It was at this time O'Doherty was re-armed by Mc Cormick with a .45 revolver, a .303 rifle and a stengun, "picked up from a Provie dump outside Swatragh".

"The PIRA sent a team after me.... they stuck 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 drivers ear 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 to the scene". The first was to be an attack on the UDR. "We discussed it and I wanted to know how many UDR would be coming down the road. I was under the impression there was only going to be one jeep. 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 so much firing". The next attack was to be on the RUC "the police jeep came down the road

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UNITED STATES TERROR

The statistics of death in Central America are so enormous as to be numbing. In El Salvador, 30,000 people have been killed by government forces (army and 'death-squads') over the last 2 years. That's over 1,000 every month.

In neighbouring Guatemala, 9,000 people have been killed by the government in

the last 18 months, and, since 1978, 13,000 have 'disappeared'.

These are the governments which the US and her allies prop up in economic and military aid. The repression has increased, & the aid, as the resistance to the governments has turned to war.

El Salvador: This country of almost 5 million people has had continuous military dictatorship for 50 years, and has the greatest US involvement. The State Department describes the war there as 'part of the global problem between the USA & USSR'.

The Assistant Secretary of State for Inter American Affairs, Thomas Enders, put it

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A rocket being carried at the picket held outside the U.S. Consulate in Belfast on the 24th March to protest against U.S. involvement in El Salvador.

THE BRITISH are off to war -officially this is time; 8000 miles away, with the full backing of the hysterical media and a blood-thirsty parliament. They plan to re-take a few islands (rather than hold on to part of one as is the "unofficial" case here)...the Falklands which they 'captured' from the Argentinians 150 years ago! It's a strange war... fighting the nasty fascist foreigner with everything at their disposal, including nuclear weapons and a prince. Ironically enough, the navy they are fighting was re-equipped, armed and the sailors trained by the Brits themselves!! Such is the bizarre logic of British arms deals that even the most sophisticated missiles the Argentinians possess, were bought with US dollars from Shorts in Belfast (in a recently-made hush-hush secret deal!).

War-talk certainly suits the fascist junta in Argentina - economic collapse can be forgotten amidst national war pride... it also helps hide the Argentinian practice of torture and murder of their poor. Not a chirp from our politicians over that... it might interrupt arms sales! But walking on a



British island, insulting the governor...that's a different matter - for that the whole population of Buenos Aires could be blown asunder!! British hypocrisy knows no bounds - all this for the defence of the 'British rights' of 1800 islanders? Only the Daily Mail believes that! The islanders are feudal peasants, working for one British company who own the island. The 'Falklanders' live in tied cottages and are shipped out one they are too old to work or if they get 'injured'. The company, 'Coalite Chemicals' make the world's most dangerous poison, 245T; the multi-purpose killer used in Viet

nam by the Americans, and sold by Boots in Donegal Place.

Hardly the "British rights" that dispatches the navy on a \$50million voyage, before a shot gets fired. More like the nonsense logic of imperialism and so-called national pride which comes from bank statements and electioneering rather than the heart. And nothing can be more sickening than a British Labour party trying to be more British, more imperialist, more bloodthirsty than the opposition. And when your greatest ally - America - supplies the money to Argentina (for the great anti-communist crusade) and claims both sides "as their friends"..... surely, surely, something has gone wrong.

The thought of two navies blowing each other apart stirs little emotion here - but always, always, it's the poor, the oppressed who'll pay and who will suffer in the end. In Argentina, in Britain, in Ireland.

Business as Usual! the Northern Ireland Electricity Service, who blundered into building unwanted generating equipment at Kilroot, are to sell off the surplus..... to Argentina!!

AN INTRODUCTION TO

ANIMAL

In the demand that we make of ourselves to achieve self-management and liberation from the oppressions of everyday life, it is clear that many of us, as human beings, steadily ignore (or are ignorant of) the fact that, in the process, we continue to oppress animal life. In ways that are not always obvious, humanity assumes that its species alone has the superior right to survival and to the spaces and resources of the earth. In our struggle to 'progress' and 'develop' we oppress not only other members of our own species, but take part in a systematic destruction of animal life and freedom and natural habitat.

Life on earth does not exist in isolation from different forms or species. It exists in complex chains of inter-dependency. Remove one link in the chain and all other forms of life suffer as a result. Successful life depends on a delicate harmony between the many factors in the chain, or cycle. If we continue to rear animal life as nothing more than a commodity to be exploited and ruled as we dictate, then we are in danger of destroying that harmony (in ecological and human terms) and bringing about an imbalance that we may never be able to correct. At the moment, animal life is used to support and amuse human life, to pander to its vanities, to prop up status and prestige. Little consideration is given to the question of restoring the right of animal life to its own freedom and expression of its needs. We trap, breed and slaughter animals for food, hunt them to the point of extinction, use them with impunity in 'scientific' experiments for chemical warfare, medicinal 'advance', cosmetics, household products, and a vast range of other commodities, we enslave them as 'pets' for our own amusement, torture them in circuses in degrading 'tricks', we pursue them for 'sport', we cull them when numbers get economically threatening, we imprison them in zoos to remind us what they look like.

Whilst this domination continues, we confirm the notion of superiority itself. As with species, it goes with race, colour, creed, sex, intelligence etc., against members of our own species.

Whilst we stubbornly retain the capacity to oppress animal life, so we lose that part of our humanity which cherishes notions of freedom. Whilst we torture and slaughter animal life, so we can transfer these acts (should the need arise) to humanity itself.

LIBERATION



It is with those practices that manifestly involve systematic cruelty and exploitation with which the animal liberation movements concern themselves. This concern, and related action, is seen as an important stage in personal, and wider, revolutionary re-discovery. The radical theory of animal liberation is fundamental to the everyday lives of a growing number of anarchists and others.

In the near future, OUTTA CONTROL plans to publish a Supplement devoted to the subject of animal liberation in the North of Ireland. If you wish to contribute in any way (and we hope you will) then please write to ALF, Box 287, 7 Winterton Street, Belfast 1. Hope to hear from you.

LETTERS

"Dear Editors, your anonymous interviewee discredits his staunch gay liberation with inaccuracies and a mindless commitment to what can only be described as national socialism. The enormous badge I asked him to remove was not, as stated, but in the form of a giant tricolour 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 would have to be on the brunt of stopping the violence it would have inevitably provoked. As it was, the sectarian leaflets created enough aggro, with people setting fire to them etc., in the absence of our brave quartet. In discussions afterwards, the co-workers felt the leaflets were dangerously inflammatory.

NIGRA's policy is clear and simple - 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 a unionist. I assent to the democratic majority's wish to be 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 investment free economy.

There have been enough accidental gay casualties of the war for us earnestly wanting to avoid any in the Carpenter Club.

This venue, tottering as it is from the commercial competition of the Midland Hotel (owned by Unionist business-men/the Hastings Group), who could evict gays tomorrow, is sadly given no credit by your interviewee, who nonetheless relates how so many of his gay comrades clear out, emigrating to the cosmopolitan capitals of these islands.

Objectively, who is the real partitionist/imperialist?

Love

Jeff Dudgeon

Letter from London

"I enjoy reading your magazine and find it generally well-informed, especially Gaining Ground, but feel a bit pissed-off with a piece in the last issue. Having come from a farming/peasant background, I have often heard the term 'redneck' levelled with ridicule and abuse at me, as often, say, as 'culchie'. Your definition is obviously (hopefully?) quite different. (Outta Control, March '82). Whereas, in my own case, it means 'unsophisticated' or 'stupid'. You used it in the sense of 'reactionary' to describe the wilful ignorance of the state concerning marijuana. I hope you can appreciate my confusion. 'Nil aor cat chomh brodach le cat siopa.' le gra, Gerry O'Maille

OC replies: "Point taken. The wording was more of a gut reaction to sitting through a court case & seeing someone sent to prison & 2 others humiliated by the 'law' & 'laws'. It was trying to convey the vindictiveness of all concerned. 'The Drug Squad are vindictive bastards' is a better way of saying it.

Calling all bookshops

OC/GG have been going for over two years, and, at the moment, are subsidised 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 to subsidise every copy sold in Britain. A strange state of affairs.

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

AND, most important of all....WE NEED MORE SUBSCRIPTIONS. It costs only £4 - the price of a round of drinks!



Here are two reactions from a 15 and a 13 year old at St. Peter's Secondary School, on the use of the strap:

"In St. Peter's School they use a thick leather strap. It is about 1/2 inch thick, 2 inches wide and 18 inches long. This strap, made in England, is stiff. You are made to put one hand on top of the other and (CRACK) right across the fingers. It is painful; the masters enjoy it; they threaten you with it, throw it at you; laugh when you cry. The first years', who are only 11, get six of these for beaking."

"In St. Peter's Sec. School they use a strap to cane people. Some masters have put lead in them. They are dangerous; they threaten you with them. They are very sore, too. That's why we must put a stop to it."



William Whitelaw admitted recently that canisters of CS gas and supplies of plastic bullets have been delivered to police forces in England, Scotland and Wales. It appears that these bastions of law n' order are preparing to learn from the experience of the RUC and British army in Northern Ireland - how many riots, or other such in surgent activity, will it take before those forces start maiming and killing there on the scale experienced here, and how will they attempt to justify their political expediency?

ATLANTIS DISAPPEARING

ATLANTIS is a commune in Donegal,.... a large house and a little bit of land on the mainland, six cottages and more land on an island. Effectively run and organised by a triumvirate of English women, they delight in energy and activity, radical therapy and self sufficiency and helped to initiate the end of uranium exploration in Donegal.

The media delighted in sensationalising their every move, even their latest move to an unknown destination in South America. Outta Control asked them why they were leaving and what they had gained from five years in the West of Ireland.....

THANK YOU for your letter and request to do an article for Outta Control about our move to South America.

It's much easier to answer questions about our decision sitting here in Shit City than it would be if I were on Inishfree Island in Donegal with our baby goats, chickens, rocks, grass, wild sea and sky around me. There I often wonder why? So it's good to be asked the questions again and again, as we are. Finding the answers inside us is therapy and clarifying for ourselves.

Ok, first to the Qs you have already asked in your letter - and then I'll ask all the others that your political audience will naturally come up with in their minds, like 'Aha but what about...?'

1. You ask: *Why is Atlantis leaving?*

I answer: Originally it was a PLOT amongst the three main women - myself, my sister and my daughter, to LEAVE THE MEN BEHIND! We hated all the men we knew or ever had known in Europe, and thought 'bugger them', we'll go and marry Indian chiefs who will appreciate us, and they can rot.

Well, shortly after that, because I was in a gleeful, jubilant, free-flowing frame of mind, I met and had a baby with an (awful) Irishman, plus we started realizing that what we women at Atlantis were experiencing with men was happening *everywhere*, i.e. as the more sensitive side of life becomes more appreciated, men feel out of their depth and proceed to SULK, and abandon *everything* including their traditional on-top-ness in bed. They say, 'Well, if you bitches are going to get stropky in other areas, we'll withdraw from you the One Thing you can't possibly do yourselves. Ha! Ha! i.e. a Lysistrata in reverse. Also we read about Andean Indians and other remnants of previous civilizations, and met a few South Americans and realized that EVERYTHING IS AWFUL EVERYWHERE. Of course there is no golden continent over there where men are men and appreciate women who are women. NONETHELESS, Notwithstanding, and regardless:

The fact of the matter is that we've finished with Europe.

Before your pious politicos (I was one once and I bet I was more pious and more politico than any of you) start mooing about Responsibility At Home, and Britain Needs You, and Cop-Out, 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 jail-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 Bum Trip, it was still a fairly brave thing to be in the atmosphere of post-war Cold War England, i.e. don't bore me with complaints of 'Cop-out artist' 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 here in England, these last days of ours, we're helping CND in many unspectacular ways, such as sitting up late sewing banners for them; and there in Donegal, as you know, we had much to do with starting the successful anti-Uranium campaign.

But the Question for us is: *Do we want to live here even if we unilaterally 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 mean* frilly twiddle bits on top, even when they talk about 'the need to change society at root'. The more conventional the left-wing, the fewer bits they want to change of course: fighting for 'the right to work' is an absolute *mystery* to me for example. Wanting higher wages - to buy what? and live where? - is something that has always left me less than excited. Wanting 'better education', 'more freedom in the schools' and so on, when I abhor the whole idea of *education per se*, means nothing to me. Nor does the concept of 'ore and better hospitals' - help! No bloody thanks. The Welfare State I'm afraid I can't abide, it is deadening, it *does* crush initiative, just like the awful Tories say. More and better housing? Oh god, what does that mean? Cheap modern buildings? Extended cities? I can't bear it. All the wilds of Ireland and Scotland and the islands surrounding us are EMPTY. There are fields to be sown there's food to be grown. I don't *believe* in people's troubles in this part of the world. It's like sticking your nose in a dustbin and complaining it smells. Yes, it smells, so I don't want to live in a dustbin.

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 if in a huge 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 windy out there, but a gap nonetheless, and they said 'come on chaps, we're off'; and all the other prisoners were so appalled at the possibility that all they were suffering was not really 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

immoral.

You wouldn't believe the amazing set of reasons we've accumulated on paper from people having a brainstorm because we're sailing away. Everything from the classic, 'The Atlantic isn't a puddle you know' (??) to 'the Andes are a desert you know' and 'the natives will be frightened by you screaming in the night' (???).

We don't like cigarettes, cars, cinemas, newspapers, shops, packets of anything, doctors, hospitals, aeroplanes, concrete, silly clothes, books, 'education', TV or anything else the 20th century has so kindly donated.

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

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

2. You ask: *What did you achieve/get out of your stay in Ireland?*

I love every minute of my memory of Ireland, from the moment I first crossed the frontier at Strabane, till the day I'll wave goodbye to Burtonport from our boat 'Atlantis'.

I have loved the moody irrationality of the Irish. I love everything about the Irish that is totally UN-English: I have loved our old lady neighbour screaming at the top of her voice 'Screamers!!' I have loved all the snooty puritanical Catholic men of the daytime metamorphosing into hunting creatures creeping round our doors at night-time. I have loved having, via my daughter who has mingled so well, the lid taken off the Catholic Village Front so I could glimpse the utterly human outlets of adulteries and fornications and contraception and wife-swapping and all the other tension-releases from the impossible human strait-jacket of the Nuclear Family. (No wonder they project so magnificently on to a COMMUNE.)

I have loved the haystacks and the peatstacks and the potato-piles and the donkeys and the old men and the bumpy roads and the crazy gales.

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

Most of all, of course, I have loved the primitive beauty of our island Inishfree. It is *prime* because I have loved nature in the

raw on that island so much, that I am moving:

I remember years ago looking out from Inishfree and noticing that I could hear cars on the mainland, and of course see masses of lights - Dungleigh. I hated that. I said to my companion: we must move from here one day, it is not far enough out. I imagined then an island farther 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.

Cont. from Front Page...

around 8.30 or 9 pm and the roof light was given a couple of flicks so I would know....."

Mc Cormick and O'Doherty had five to six fixed places to meet in counties Antrim and Derry, "he picked me up in an undercover van or in his own car.....He was decent to me, very decent" said O'Doherty, he would give me money, feed me, give me clothes and was generally good to me. We were like brothers at that stage because I was depending on him and up to a point he was depending on me. He didn't seem to have any other agents working for him".

"I had no money and Charlie had no money, and we were just touring around and he asked me out of the blue could I do a robbery."

PLANNING THE FIRST ROBBERY

"He guaranteed me 100% that there would be no army or police. He said he could look after the police and he could find out what the UDR were in relation to patrols".

"We decided the only way to get a car was to hijack one". O'Doherty wearing military style clothing and armed with a .303 rifle, waited at a roadside and stopped two cars. "I got in and tried to start the car and nothing happened. The woman was sort of distressed and I told her to get in and I went to the next car with a man in it. I told him to get out and keep walking". O'Doherty parked the car in a quarry outside Cushendall and waited all night. He then parked the car outside the bank and went in armed with the grenade (which Charlie's landlady had seen "lying around the place") and the pistol, plus the pillow case. After the pillow case had been filled with money he drove off and pulled up outside Knocknacarry Post Office outside Cushendall which he also robbed. He then left the car at the pre-arranged spot and hid the money and weapons under a tree root and hid in a wood until it was dark. "Charlie came along, he was driving the Special Branch van, we picked up everything and headed back to Ballymenato

Charlie'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 ROBBERY

"Charlie heard that the following Tuesday was a good day to hit the bank again." Both went this time. "I did the demanding and the threatening. I was carrying a pistol and the pillow case, I put it through the drawer and they filled it with money". O'Doherty said he did not know the exact amount stolen but he could safely say he got his share.

THIRD RAID

O'Doherty said a colleague of Mc Cormick's had become suspicious. "Charlie got me a wig out of the Special Branch office in Ballymena and a pair of sun glasses of his own". However when he got to the bank, they thought it was the same fellow back again, they were angry looking, you could see the look of contempt, disdain, on their faces. I came out and tried to start the car. The car wouldn't start, I gave it a couple of pushes with my shoulder and nothing happened. Some two or three boys were working near the bank, one of them said to me did I want a push, I didn't really say very much to them".

FOURTH ATTEMPT

O'Doherty said that on the day of the robbery he, "wasn't in the mood", and Mc Cormick bought him a bottle of brandy to "gee" him up a bit. O'Doherty said that he got into a stolen car and drove to the Northern Bank in Armooy. However when he produced a gun in the bank one of the staff set off the alarm and he fled empty handed. "I walked down the street, casually, to the car but it wouldn't start. I ran her down the hill and she started. The car ran out of petrol about a mile outside Armooy and I just dumped it and headed across the fields."

SHOOTING

O'Doherty explained how Mc Cormick was sure Sgt. Campbell was "on to them" and he would have to go. He then asked O'Doherty to shoot him but he refused. Mc Cormick decided to do it himself. He left

the car, disconnected the rear light over the rear registration saying to O'Doherty "would you be kind enough to stay in the car", he left fags and a lighter and went off down the lane carrying a revolver and a rifle. He arrived back ten minutes later, saying, "that's the end of it or the start of the trouble."

When he saw Mc Cormick a couple of days later, he mentioned the shooting to him. "Charly said to me, 'the subject is dead, that's it'."

BOMBS AWAY

Again there was some suspicion with O'Doherty and Mc Cormick, this time Mc Cormick suggested that there should be a couple more attacks on him and others to give the impression that the Proxies were operating in the area. O'Doherty's attitude was, "that if it kept Mc Cormick happy, he was happy." O'Doherty said they made a bomb in the shed at Mc Cormick's lodgings. "Charlie seemed to know more about it than me".

Mc Cormick then visited a policeman's house, O'Doherty planned the device and fired a shot at the house to lure the security forces. It was hoped, that some of them or the policeman would trip over the booby trap bomb when they were investigating the shooting.

O'Doherty also described, how he and Mc Cormick had earlier planned a gun attack on the home of another policeman. "It was to keep me generally in the swing of things republicanwise." O'Doherty said that a number of other possible victims were discussed, but this particular policeman was 'just handy'.

O'Doherty also told how he and Mc Cormick carried out two robberies at Cargin Post Office. He said that Charlie picked the village 'because its a catholic area and there would be more money from family allowances.'

Mc Cormick on reply to what his drinking habits were said he did 'take a drink, but never had to be lifted out of the gutter' and what he thought of O'Doherty. 'I am completely innocent, how could you take the word of that living bastard.'

Cont. from Front Page...

more succinctly than he said that the sea lanes, trade routes, and oil supplies were at risk. The US is more concerned with multi-national profit and its imperialist power than with 'those who suffer oppression', as Reagan proclaimed in his end-of-year message.

So far, the US has pumped \$22 million into El Salvador, in economic and military aid. It has equipped and trained the 14,000 strong army (which faces the 6,000 strong guerrilla grouping FMLF). Reagan recently agreed to train 1,600 of the junta's troops at US bases, West Point and Fort Bragg, Texas., and also provides on-the-ground 'advisors'.

The training includes counter-insurgency methods of terrorising the population, which came to fruit between Dec 7th and 17th., 1981, when in Marazan Province, 1,000 peasants were killed - butchered, machine-gunned, or burned alive.

After last weeks elections the Duarte Coalition of Military and Christian Democrats has been replaced by a more right wing Coalition. The opposition groups refused to participate and continue their resistance. The U.S. are now in a dilemma, as they had presented the former regime as reformist, and now must justify what will inevitably be a more ruthless and reactionary government.

Guatemala:

More important, US investment in this country had led Haig, US Sec. of State, to say this month: 'In weeks or

months Guatemala will enter a crisis which could have more serious implications for the US than developments in El Salvador.' Last month's coup brought to power younger officers who saw dangers in the previous regime, first brought to power in 1945 by a CIA-backed coup. The older military had even alienated the business party UNQ because of its control over the state agencies and the General's personal enrichment.

These prompted the Carter administration in 1977, to cut off weapons transfers for breaches of human rights. But Israel and Argentina have happily filled the gap. An example of such 'breaches' occurred shortly before the recent elections, which brought General Garcia back to power. Plain clothes soldiers entered the village of Zacualpa in El Quiche and beheaded all 200 inhabitants with machetes.

The US has \$140 million invested in the country, in mainly nickel and oil. Some of the top multi-nationals involved are:

* *Good Year and Del Monte (US)* own the vast fruit and banana plantations.

* *Texaco-Amoco (US)* control the important oil industry.

* *Eximobal (Canada-US)* dominates the nickel mines.

* *Basic Resources (European, headed by J. Goldsmith of Britain)* run the copper, raw magnesite and nickel ore production.

The US is consequently worried about the increased strength of the guerrilla movement, URNG, which operates in 60% of the

country, and which has strong backing from the Indian peasantry, whose lands are being stolen by the generals.

Equally worrying for the US is the division of the army and the 'right'. Despite the coup, which replaced the older officers, the right still want power, as they now have in El Salvador, and as they would have had at the beginning of the year in Guatemala, had the army not rigged the elections.

Profit & Power:

Whether the US arms the military governments or itself intervenes, it intends to smash the resistance to oligarchic rule in Central America. By doing so, it pushes that resistance closer to the sphere of influence of the USSR and Cuba. But it might as well, as 'neutral' countries would still pose a threat to its hegemony of power in an area of profitable investment and strategic importance.

The present US administration cannot tolerate 'independence' (even in the guise of a social-democratic state), for its rate of exploitation is so intense that it requires a pliant and ruthless government to repress any moves to improve, or even control the conditions of life of the peasants and workers of Central America.

What France and Mexico want is a solution to bring the middle-classes and intelligentsia to power, to create economic and political stability, and for the US to reduce its appetite for power and profit to a more 'acceptable' level.

Gaining Ground



**Sold with
Outta Control**

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

EMMA GOLDMAN 1911

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 streets - the Youth Training Programme.

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 young unemployed people between the ages of 16 and 18. Already though many are interpreting this guaranteed place as a compulsory place, and those young people who are not already on a YOP course or in employment, will find themselves heavily pressurised 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 snags can be ironed out here in the first year.

What will these scheme 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 a whole 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 lifeskills.
- Each will roughly take up 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. I. to come up with the details, for it will be these colleges who will have the main responsibility for the running of YTP. At the present time then there is much going on all over N.I. in college backrooms 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 then in a time when the government has been cutting education and redundancy looms large in the bosom of every teacher, and college adminis-

trator, are more than enough to ensure that there is nearly open warfare between the colleges in an effort to get some of the jam, in a growing atmosphere of no bread never mind butter!

While these schemes then may provide a few more jobs in the educational sector, what will they do for the young people who will be taking them. In short - next to nothing except the bother of tripping to the dole office once every two weeks. Of course it will also remove large number numbers from the register and so ease the pressure on the government, 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 £25 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 years compulsory schooling with a little extra pay thrown in. As well as that those young people who choose to stay on at school or go to F.E. college to take exams will be penalised, 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 dole 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 these 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 unstimulating 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 employer finds it cheaper to use free YTP labour! The ultimate value of these courses then lies as always with the government.

JOB SEARCH SCHEME

Ask us for details of these schemes



LIFE-THE INSIDE STORY -AMAZING SCOOP

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's aims, 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 which weren't preceded by enthusiastic assurances of how wonderful 'Life' and its members were, were treated with rigid suspicion and an unwillingness to allow discussion even from their own members.

The conference which was attended by about 130 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 so set the tone for the rest of the day. He also boasted that the Newcastle District Council had passed a vote which rejected for Newcastle the introduction of any form of abortion law reform. I wonder if those 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 Scarisbrick, lecturer in history at Warwick University, gave what purported to be a history of the 1967 Abortion Act. Detailed scrutiny of his remarks left one wondering what was history and what was propaganda, distortion, highly emotive rhetoric, slandering and misrepresentation of other political viewpoints, the passing off as objective facts, things which by their very nature were totally subjective comments.

Throughout his speech he kept insisting that one must be calm, rational, and objective when discussing this most emotional of issues - abortion. Its 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 childcare, 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 benefit for a single mother living with her parents is only £18.60, plus £7.90 for the child, less £8.55 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 also that basically Life is anti-sex - if you don't want children, then you just don't have sex. Life in general is seen only as 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 truths, like the apparent rejection of violence, (for them that equals abortion), yet no mention of other forms of violence such as war, rape, plastic bullets, child abuse

Janice Mill of Holywood, Co. Down, accused the LIFE organisation of throwing her out of their hostel for unmarried mothers in East Belfast. Janice showed the Sunday World newspaper a letter ordering her to leave the hostel, just a fortnight before her baby was due. It stated that she had broken rules and must leave at once although Janice maintains that she had received no written warnings about breaking rules nor did she know of any serious breach of rules apart from having her boyfriend on the premises when he shouldn't have been there.

"I was worried about my health and the effect it would have on my unborn baby. I was distressed and in a state of shock. I didn't fully realise what had happened. I knew I was homeless. What rule 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 moods. But no matter what they thought of me 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 one got the impression that Life organisation or its members running the service knew little or nothing about all the other issues that would face a mother to be. Unease was expressed by some people about rumours of pressure put on women to continue their pregnancy, or have the baby adopted. One got the distinct impression that it was only the child that mattered and not the mother.

and battering. Other speakers were to follow Scarisbrick, most of whom were a bit more sensitive to the prevailing social situation in Northern Ireland. Their speeches tended to full of caring 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 Garland, Caring Officer provided 'positive, loving care from people who cared about them.' This care took the form of pregnancy testing, it did not include any form of counselling which indicated that they didn't have to have a child, then also they spoke about their hostel for single parents. They seemed unaware that this hostel has come in for severe criticism in the last few weeks. (See box)

In an organisation as well heeled as Life a thousand members who pay a membership fee of £3.00 each and lots of eager 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 living and board of the mother to be. Once a woman has produced the child, had it adopted, she is amongst the many single homeless in Northern Ireland. Or if she decides to keep her child she is not given points by the Housing Executive as an emergency homeless person because Life hostel is not recognised as having emergency status. They also have an ACE worker in their office - taking advantage 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 openly boasted of the 'hard sell' to schools. He said "get your foot in the door. Get the names of members of staff you think are sympathetic, give free books to the library, do anything they want to get in. Ask to talk not only to sixth formers, ask to give your talk to sixth formers. Get children in school to form a Life group 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 higgledy piggledy maths he had done to come up with 500 abortions for the same age group in Northern Ireland, he had the naivety to say, publicly 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 Castlewellan have their own junior Life groups.

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NEWS SHORTS

TAPE & SLIDE SHOW

The Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Association recently released record figures for the number of women coming to them for help and advice on abortion. In the month of January this year, 119 women sought help through the UPAA and 100 went to England for a private abortion. In an article in the Belfast Telegraph last week, the UPAA said that they would refer women who did not want to end their pregnancies to organisations like LIFE and CURA. However with the recent public unease about the quality of LIFE's hostel after 2 women were asked to leave and a housemother resigned the claims of LIFE in Northern Ireland to be a 'caring' organisation should be publicly examined.

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 or being 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.

The Horizon programme on Depo Provera, long overdue attention to this subject as usual, was clever with its mixture of half 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 with 'western' style medicine. One unmistakeable example of western style contraceptive rejects was the dangerous dalkon shield shown being fitted in the programme...hardly a choice for women in third world countries.

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 80p (£1.25 outside Ireland) from Workers Research Unit c/o 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1 or on sale in Just Books.

"An exhaustive and illuminating study, compulsive reading at a competitive price" E. McNabb.

Apologies—W.A.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.

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

PAISLEY — Tuesday lunchtime April 20th

GLASGOW — Tuesday evening 20th April

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 Winetavern Street Belfast 1 (0232 25426). Two other showings one 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 though not exclusive reference to women. There are sections on the troubles — a look at the last ten to twelve years, civil

rights, internment, H Block, Armagh, the Hunger Strike etc— followed by sections on housing, unemployment, poverty, the recession, homosexuality the womens movement both historically and in the seventies focussing 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 for 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 over without ourselves' as one London anarchist put it! Costs put up by Scottish groups have been £25 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!



Dear Gaining Ground,

Thanks for writing the reply to my letter concerning rape/the possibility of a woman'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 musing on for some time. The result as you can see from the enclosed was a newsheet/comment/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 letting off steam or whatever and also give some basic coverage to the extremely healthy music 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 mixed. The signs are hopeful though that it will continue, with support from others for another few issues — at least enough

M CATTLE
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
WOMEN'S DAY IS IN BANGOR
THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE CATTLE
MARKET FREE, ARTICLES ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S
DAY AND WHAT DIDN'T HAPPEN IN BANGOR,
THE SAS AND DOGMATIC ELEMENT,
STALAG 17 AND MORE!

to expand more on women in Bangor.

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 us who are inspired by your determination. The first issue of The Cattle Market free, articles on International Women's Day and what didn't happen in Bangor, The SAS and Dogmatic Element, Stalag 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 revived by feminists in the late sixties. Now traditionally celebrated on March 8th, the Women's Movement in Belfast organised events around the whole weekend.

On March 5th 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 as she threw myth after myth 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. These included speakers from the WEA and the OU.

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 these the conference returned to the plenary session to report back and discuss future developments. The conclusions were simple enough that this had been one of the best conferences many had ever been at and that how long would it be until the next one!

Saturday afternoon saw the annual demonstration at Cornmarket. The rain was out in full force as well as the women as 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 lively piece of street theatre from the Poly students lifting the lid off one woman's struggle in her home. 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 Cornmarket to the City Hall which raised a few eyebrows in Royal Avenue as women chanted "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 best night we have all had in some time. It is difficult to put into words the hallowe'en like atmosphere which had been created out of the dark dismal gym and the performances of singing, acting, and poetry reading were fantastic!

Less well attended was the exhibition in the Felons Club in Andersonstown on Irish women, which was a shame as there were some unique photographs inside Armagh Gaol as well as ones of the old linen factories shop floors.

On a glorious summery day a couple of hundred people converged on Armagh, to picket the women's prison there, where 22 women remain on protest. Members of the RUC and British Army were in evidence, as usual, but the picket took place without incident, and perhaps the most worthwhile part of the exercise was when all the crowd faced 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 good to hear their reaction. Part of the purpose of the picket is to focus attention on the situation of the women political prisoners, and one would, perhaps, find more encouragement, if this once-a-year-event was linked to constant activity and regular news of the situation there. Bernadette McAlliskey

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 crescent had been transformed into a Feminist Fair with stalls from womens groups and campaigns, books, badges, handicrafts, posters 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 Reclaim the Night March was on the Monday evening. About 200 women gathered at Shaftesbury Square kitted out with torches, banners placards, balloons and sparklers and to complete the picture a nine foot dummy judge (the real one declined at the last minute!) was tied to the roofrack of the car and precariously travelled down with a banner pinned across his middle 'Don't hitch a lift in my car'. The whole march was very theatrical as it roved 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 strengthened the spirit of sisterhood between the womens groups in Belfast.



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Off 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 fur coats 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 impervious to arguments 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 sex education as a means of responsible parenthood, they oppose family planning, they see human life 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 as part of the human need for closeness, loving and pleasure.

The pro choice lobby, misrepresented as pro abortion, is not anti children, nor anti life but is recognising the realities of living, realising 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 realises that no one but the woman can make the decision whether or not to have an abortion. The pro choice lobby agitates as part of its law reform campaign to 'make abortion unnecessary...so that so that every pregnancy is a wanted pregnancy...every child a wanted child, not by spouting rhetoric but in providing

all the facilities like nurseries, creches, after school care, better educational opportunities, good housing etc 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.