

OUTTA CONTROL

BELFAST ANARCHIST MONTHLY

Sold with **GAINING GROUND**

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The DeLorean car plant in Dunmurry has now ended its three day week, which it had blamed on the Sealink strike. That parts were delayed because of the strike and lead to short time is now questionable, as 400 of the 2000 remain on part-time, working week about. The crisis lies deeper.

Basically, the British Government has said that the £70 million they have given De Lorean is ALL that they are going to get. De Lorean needs another £40 million 'just to survive'. According to De Lorean, to 'survive' he needs to develop the saloon model of the car as well, which requires a further £80 m. in investment.

After trying to raise the money in the US, with the Stock Market, who chased him, it seems that he will have to go to the Government for it - IF they cough up, it will, in fact, be against their own policy. If NOT, his only alternative is to take on a

new partner, but then the British stake in the profit falls - after them bearing the risk. The most probable solution is that the state will give the £40 million, De Lorean will get the money, then close down (as the market he is aiming at fell by 11% and is still falling), thus making a tidy heap. The 2,000 workers are then tossed on to the dole. Don't believe me ??

- Six months ago (as mentioned in OUTTA CONTROL), a smaller firm called Euro-weld received a grant of £1.5 million, and the aspiring US multi-national *cleared out in a matter of days*. The workers occupied and attempted to set up a workers' co-op, the union promptly sold them down the drain, did NOTHING to support, and even went out of their way to block the occupation!

- SO, the De Lorean workers better watch out, for there are a lot of people willing to sell them out!



Her Majesty's Pleasure

Crumlin Road on a cold, icy January morning. Crumlin Road Prison is strategically situated - next door a hospital for birth, a court directly opposite for sentencing, and a graveyard fifty yards away for death.

Most of the inmates of the prison are either Loyalists or Republicans on remand. A prisoner can be kept there for anything from a few months to a couple of years on very scant 'evidence'. This remaining process is a mere formality of the new internment. *contd. next page*

BROADCASTING TO DIVIDE THE COMMUNITY

You will never have seen this man appear on TV, but yet James Hawthorne is the Northern Ireland BBC Controller who decides what we will see and hear daily.



WAINING CREDIBILITY.

Dick Francis, the overall Current Affairs Controller in the BBC will occasionally let Republican attitudes slip through to give the illusion of "balance", such as the Panorama film of the IRA roadblock in Carrickmore (only to be threatened ominously that it was time the BBC put it's "house in order" by both Thatcher and Callaghan).

NO CHINKS.

Not so our own homegrown Controller. When James Hawthorne arrived back in Belfast from Britain to work for the BBC he refused to live in the Malone Road. This was too near to Andersonstown and the possibility of being kidnapped. Instead, he and his family were put up in a four star hotel at a cost of £500 per week for a year until he eventually found a house in the Golden Mile ghetto of Co. Down where the real wealth can be found (a garage for the car and one for the yacht!).

Ulster born James Hawthorne, in a recent lecture in the Polytechnic, states he was brought up into "...one particular tribe, the majority tribe", as he delicately puts it. He views his Loyalist position as one simply of wanting to remain part of Britain and a problem of identity in feeling that the mainland, although repeatedly stating that Ulster is British, does not give it the priority it should if events here were happening in the nation as a whole.

However, in that Loyalist philosophy he conveniently ignores what the connection leads to. The long loyalist tradition which, through corruption, exploitation, discrimination and violence (with Britains backing) retains the position of privilege and power over Catholics and Protestants who realise the anti-working class nature of loyalism.

WHOSE NEWS ?

Hawthorne declares that, "journalism depends on what people tell us is happening." But how many times have you seen a BBC reporter on the scene, asking local people what happened and giving their version the same weight as the Army, Police or State story?

A BBC Television News Sub-Editor is quoted as saying, "I have always assumed the official line is we put the Army's version first and then any other."

Hawthorne complains that during "the Bobby Sands affair," "One of the real difficulties was the lack of willingness of what I am going to call the Government side to take part in broadcasts. They were broadcasting to America - under pressure. They were briefing American and foreign journalists. They were *not* briefing home journalists. And yet there was a welter of views and opinions and statements representing the other side of the argument."

Obviously the State feels the BBC could be sufficiently relied on to adequately present their views (although Hawthorne regrettably feels the Republicans won the day) but the foreign press who were not easily controlled needed special effort

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The prison itself differs greatly from the more recent confines of Long Kesh, a hasty yet highly secure construction of corrugated iron fences and barbed wire. The 'Crum' is hundreds of years old, with medieval stone walls, portcullis, spy-posts, long grey corridors, courtyards and all it's filth.

The waiting room is packed. Most of the visitors are women waiting to see husbands, sons or boyfriends. Many are visibly under a high degree of stress, shaking hands, short nervous glances, shouting at the kids who don't fully understand what's going on, or that the ritual of prison visits has only just begun for them.

A thorough search and into the second waiting room.

This is an under heated, grotty dungeon-like affair — thick stone walls, barred windows and a barred door, which gives you the very real impression of being caged in. No-one talks. Kids run around. No-one enjoys the experience of visiting, the interminable waiting, being constantly under surveillance and lock and key, heavy searches and jibes from the screws turn the whole affair sour, as this process has been designed to do.

Another way in which the prison authorities attempt to break the individuals morale is through the policy of shifting prisoners from Belfast to Derry (magilligan camp) and from Derry to Belfast — this means that people have to spend the whole day travelling in order to visit a friend or relative, hence visits can become less frequent.



Across a small grey courtyard under guard, and into a large Portacabin, which contains about twenty small cubicles. People speak in hushed tones, screws wander around at whim, watching and listening in on 'private' conversations, no privacy whatsoever — the intimacy of a close relationship being impossible to retain.

Conversation on the two different worlds — inside/out. Inside: Loyalist "supergrass" has been given a portable television for his cell/ Loyalist prisoners received six hours of association on Christmas day, Republicans half of that/ freezing cold in the cells/ tales of endless remand court appearances/ a particularly vindictive screw is pointed out.

The visit ends, and as you pass the army patrols swarming around the outer perimeters of the prison, you realise that you haven't been able to say half of what you wanted to, and that under these conditions it will, inevitably, be impossible — such is Her Majesties Pleasure.



There are quite a few 'alternative' singles in Belfast at the moment, though most of them have been out for some time. Originally encouraged by the efforts of Good Vibrations (who have dozens of demo-tapes, but no money!) and a few other enterprising, sympathetic souls. But it's difficult - fortunes are not to be made on the alternative record market, and recording studio prices / cost of pressing singles is prohibitive. The days of the Virgin-hype are gone and if your songs are 'political' (i.e. real), they never existed! So, a new single just out from the DEFECTS is more than welcome on so many levels.

3 songs... 'Dance til you Drop' (about glue-sniffing in the subways), 'Guilty Conscience' (about all the unemployed people), 'Brutality' (about the RUC).

The DEFECTS brought the single out with their own money. They have a bill of

Their single is available at JUST BOOKS.

£1000 for 2000 copies. It was recorded at the local commercial radio recording studio and pressed in England. They had to book the studio, and all they could scrape together on the day was £100 which 'bought' them 4½ hours of studio time and a load of hassles. They don't expect too much Air-Play, particularly of 'Brutality'..... the only way people will get to hear the single is at Punk discos and places like Just Books. (Will John Peel play SS-RUC on the BBC?) Not surprisingly, the DEFECTS have no gigs lined up... until a permanent alternative venue exists, no-one wants to know.

'Dance Til You Drop' :-

'Way on down in screaming hell
A place that I see every night
The same familiar faces
Always looking for a fight
They appear at unchanged places
Creating Anarchy
Frustration from the other faces
Wasting such insanity
Dance, dance, til they drop.'

'Brutality'

'They take you down to Castlereagh
You didn't think you were here to stay
They put you up against the wall
Kicked you stupid til you fall
What the hell did I do wrong
I must have stood on the corner too long
Get in the back, they said to me
You're just the bastards from RUC.
Brutality - what do you say
Brutality - is here to stay
Brutality - what a threat
Brutality - it'll get you yet
SS-RUC SS-RUC SS-RUC.'

'UPSTAIRS VIDEO' - VIDEO PROGRAMMES, FILMS ETC. ARE SHOWN EVERY MONDAY IN THE HIDEOUT CAFE AT 3.00PM. NEXT MON. 18TH JAN. - "LONG GOODBYE" CENTRE VIDEO.

HIDEOUT CAFE - NOW OPEN 5 DAYS A WEEK, 12 - 4 pm. ABOVE JUST BOOKS.

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Nuclear Threat and...

Omagh District Council have just decided to declare their area a 'nuclear-free zone', after they learned that the USSR had taken note of it as a uranium site.

During '75/'76, a Canadian-based Uranium prospecting company spent time taking soil samples in the Fintona area, in an attempt to monitor the uranium content of the soil; and, if you talk to any local, you will learn that they seem to have found what they were looking for.

Not too far away from Fintona, at San Angelo, a little used commercial airfield, there are plans of siting a Radar Dispersal point - part of NATO's Nuclear Strategy. The Post Office Trunk cable, containing the civil defences communications system, passes through also.

Uranium, wanted by the EEC, Radar Stations, wanted by the British Government and US military machines, means only disadvantages for the people of Omagh. Poisonous waste from mining, and an immediate launch into a dangerous world nuclear game (of which, incidentally, Derry has also opted out recently) - this is what is involved. Surprisingly, or maybe not so, it has been the Unionist family in both districts who have been opposed to nuclear-free districts. Maybe they just feel more British than the British.

... Chemical

The industrial plague in the form of asbestos has already killed many Belfast workers. A series of studies of 252 asbestos insulation workers in Belfast (1940-1975) found that by the end of 1975 there were 40 survivors instead of an expected 108. Until 1965 there was an excess of deaths due to asbestos with or without tuberculosis, is, alimentary cancer, bronchial carcinoma & mesothelioma. The death rate among survivors from 1965 on is lower, but there is still a marked excess of deaths from bronchial cancer and mesothelioma. Ireland has had more than it's share of exported noxious industries. Policy amongst the large noxious industries is that when they are told to cease production of a substance in one country because of the dangers involved, they will shift production to another country where the restrictions aren't so great.

DUMETCO, a Dutch lead processing firm has recently set up in Tallaght after opposition to plans for expansion in Holland: Raybestos Manhattan, an asbestos plant moved to Co. Cork after law suits and public investigations into their affairs in the USA; BF Goodrich set up a vinyl chloride plant in Ardee, Co. Louth in 1978. Asahi, a Japanese company using acrylonitrile set up in Co. Mayo; as a final example, Eli Lilly set up in Co. Cork, are dumping all sorts of chemicals into the Atlantic Ocean and air around Kinsale.

NIGRA REPLY

In issue No.21 of OUTTA CONTROL.. you carried an article by Padraig O'Flaithimh and Robin Gibson called 'Gays for Self-Determination'. NIGRA and the Strassbourg case are mentioned in the article. Robin and Padraig state that the Strassbourg case was a failure, because O'Flaithimh and Paisley have 'saved Ulster from Sodomy'. As the judgement is only just about a month old, they do seem to be a bit premature. By the way, Padraig and Robin would still like everybody else to assume O'Flaithimh was neutral if NIGRA hadn't blown his cover.

The writers go on to say that we recognise Westminster's 'alleged' right to legislate for the province. There is nothing fictional about Westminster's right to make laws for Northern Ireland. It is based on its monopoly of the means of coercion. It is also based on the fact that the majority of the inhabitants connive in Westminster's rule. If you don't oppose the state 24 hours a day, you are, to a greater or lesser extent, collaborating with the forces of law and order. This is true of every state, not just the United Kingdom.

O'Flaithimh and Gibson say NIGRA has 'alienated' nationalist homosexuals. If they are using nationalist as a code-word for R.C., this statement can be demonstrated to be not true. If they mean people who aspire to a Dublin-run all-island state, this, again, is untrue. NIGRA never said that the British Army should remain on the streets of Northern Ireland, it simply pointed out the alternatives: the Irish Army could not control N.I., neither could the Republican underground armies. The only real alternative is some sort of Loyalist armed force under the Ayatollah, who will have been proved a prophet. Is this what the authors want?

They go on to mention 'Unionist misuse', as Stormont (old style) was kicked into touch in 1972 and NIGRA wasn't formed until 1974 - this does seem like a pointless exercise. Should we discuss the past just because it is there; like a mountaineer confronted with Everest?

The writers' exposition of the exploitative nature of the 'holy family' is fairly standard radical socio-political stuff, except that it fits the Republic of Ireland rather than any part of the U.K.. (N.I. has had liberal divorce laws since 1978, probably traded against Homosexual Law Reform). Also, we would argue that capitalism does not need patriarchy, and may find it a bind, but that is rather arcane.

What is likely to happen in the case of gay (male) law reform is that it will be traded off against Abortion on Demand, or just Abortion. The O'Flaithimh/Paisley alliance will then be seen in all its unsavoury dimensions. NIGRA unambiguously supports the demand for abortion on demand, and for the right of all women and men to dispose of their bodies how they will.

Sean McGouran
Secretary, NIGRA.

What Did You Do When the Centre Was Going, Dear?

So the A Centre is shut - for now at least. Two months of non-stop Saturday energy-multi-media/multi-coloured entertainment in Belfast City Centre that no-one could turn down or slow up.

It was an experiment in a way, and one that showed the possibilities and potentialities for young people in our priest-ridden, ministered, policed, occupied, over-priced, no-work society. Entertainment by ourselves for ourselves.

What was it? Nothing much really, just a few local bands, a few films, slides but perhaps the most imaginative public venture in Belfast City Centre ever! And the reason was simple - it was outside and beyond the control of every sort of authority it showed that people can get something together outside of state control and the clever men of rock and roll....without being exploitative in any way.

Punks mainly, came along notorious amongst police and managers for all imagin-
contd.next column

able anti-social behaviour ... and gave as well as took. In two months there was never a hint of trouble, of violence....real hassles were confined to increasingly frequent uniformed visits who found it difficult to understand why *NO-ONE* there welcomed their presence. SS RUC is a local punk anthem and punks should know. Every week there was something different but always a good vegetarian cafe, a mixture of local bands, films, decorations, humour, free literature, local on-the-spot improvisation-at-the-microphone-etc. It was 'high energy' ... it showed just what underground music exists in Belfast ... a host of bands played ... direct from the dole queue as often as not, often with only makeshift and borrowed equipment. But a determination and level of excitement never ever to be seen on 'Top of the Pops'. And variety... from 'improvised electronic musik' to Belfast Punk. And without the cliches and false hypes of the written music industry - there *IS* something there. No-one left dis-



appointed.

Two other events took place during the 2 months. A Womens Benefit and JB Party... each memorable in their own way. And of course there were problems (but the Sunday Spews - naturally - got it ALL wrong) ... the premises weren't ours, we had to decorate them, enjoy it, then clear it all up to pretend it hadn't happened; we had to

scrounge, beg, borrow the P.A. and other technical and video equipment... all time-consuming, nitty-gritty work... which inevitably meant less time putting our ideas and energies into the event. In the end it was too much work for too few people. We need our own premises, our own space... and for that we need a lot of money. So this is no obituary.



A very special thanks to Good Vibrations for lending us the P.A.

LEADERS' LOGIC!

Lord Gowrie says, Direct rule is imperial and un-British, and absolute power is embarrassing!

Conor Cruise O'Brien, ex Labour minister in the South, chief keeper of Ireland's colonialist conscience, and our leading liberal light, has one main New Year Resolution - 'An end to political violence, with, if necessary, the simultaneous introduction of Internment, North and South' !!

ANTHONY WAS MURDERED.

Anthony McCleave died in June '79 in Oxford Street. On 5th January this year, at the County Court, his sister was awarded £3500 criminal injuries compensation, but Judge Higgins knocked off 10% for 'contributory negligence' as McCleave May have been out 'costing' and may have propositioned someone who objected. NIO Barrister agreed with Judge that gays must be protected on the streets and would be awarded criminal injuries if assaulted. The NIO tried to maintain that McCleave's death was the result of an accidental 'fall', but the Judge stated that the injuries were obviously the consequence of an assault.

DRAWING THE DOLE?

ART WORK by unemployed people ... a short exhibition is showing at the Crescent Resources Centre in January. More offerings are needed... get in touch with Ken via the centre, Lower Crescent, University Road, Belfast. Some of the work will be on the walls of the Just Books Cafe in February.

contd. from front page

He complains, "Is it not the job of the Authorities to generate much more material?" despite the sophisticated Army information and 'psy-ops' unit which in 1976 numbered 40 Press Officers and 100 "other staff" providing the fodder.

Hawthorne says, "As late as 1947, it was BBC policy 'not to admit any attack on the constitutional position of Northern Ireland' " which shows that the BBC from its beginning acts on behalf of the state and isn't the impartial, unbiased news reporter that it likes to project.

REWRITING HISTORY.

A recent schools broadcast on the fall of Stormont was more or less illustrated by pompous and righteous speeches from Loyalist politicians in Parliament during the last days of Stormont. It gave no indication as to the real reasons for it's fall as expressed through the people who helped bring it down.

WHOSE CULTURE?

Hawthorne further states:

"...it fell to the BBC to discover, define and develop a whole cultural character for Northern Ireland, a culture which was to become a norm for broadcasting."

The BBC censored and ignored the long, long tradition of working class and cultural resistance and instead imposed

a British/world culture based on perpetuating and reinforcing the authority, power and privilege of a few.

ANTI WORKING CLASS.

Given the innocuous folk programme, "As I roved out", produced by Tony McAuley, who was called to task when he presented an old working class well respected traditional singer, George Hanna (complete with cloth cap), Hawthorne wanted to know at the annual BBC inquisition of employees, from Róisín McAuley, why her husband had put on this toothless old bore and regards traditional music as fiddle-de-de stuff, and not what the BBC should be broadcasting to reflect Irish culture.

David Hammond, employed by the BBC for many years, because of his interest in promoting the romanticisation of working class life, has been refused promotion to head of the department, the job given to a polytech lecturer who had no previous experience in television.

Here's Jimmy's idea of a good cultural programme;

"The opening of the extension of Belfast Cathedral was the sort of good news that people were looking for, and, using that event, we mounted no fewer than four BBC Television outside broadcasts, three of them for the network."

Great stuff!

HACK OF THE YEAR

The Sunday News must rate as the worst local newspaper around for 6 days a week the Newsletter spews out its traditional sectarian bigotry masquerading as 'news' ... then, on a Sunday, changes its name and its 'direction' to produce the Sunday Spews. Being the only local Sunday newspaper, its owners (the Henderson family) were quick to see the money to be had by appealing to 'both sides' on the Sabbath. So, they dish up their weekly offering of mild pornography, invented lead stories, and page after page of advertising. It makes money for Henderson, and employs a handful of hack journalists who'd otherwise be on the dole.

(Two years ago, for unexplained reasons, all the journalists with even a degree of integrity, told Henderson to 'fuck off' and left the paper.)

Story, and headline, of the year so far goes to Neil Mulholland.....'Anarchist Centre Closes in Glue-Sniffing Scandal : Utter Chaos at City Punk Club'. Just a stream of vindictive inaccuracies and lies, for which Mr. Mulholland will no doubt, some day soon receive his karma. For the record, the Centre was NOT closed because of the glue; there were NO babies on mothers' knees sniffing glue; bands did NOT describe the scene as utter chaos; NO unconscious kids were carried out feet first; NO vomit was all over the floor; NOTHING could make the Pound look like a Palace!; the temporary arrangement with the building-owners was NOT withdrawn; the place was NOT wrecked; pogo-ing did NOT wear out the floorboards (!), and, lastly, the Technical Services Department were NOT launching an investigation. An investigation IS being launched, though, to discover how Mulholland got his NUJ card, and as to how he can afford to spend so much time and money in Kelly's Bar.



Pennies from Heaven

We're getting an extra £90 million !!

Mr. Prior has pleaded our 'special case', & we've been given special status. Don't be sarcastic, now! £90 million is £90 million isn't it?

Let's take the £50 million increase for the Housing Executive. The largest share of this, £30 million, is not going to Executive housing, but as grants for private home improvements.

But, as Shelter point out, most of the £50 million will, in fact, be raised from the new year rent increases, from the EEC, and from funds presently in the Executive kitty. Shelter reckons the Executive will be handing back to the Treasury, at the end of the financial year, at least £30 million, accumulated from sales to sitting tenants.

They also point out that, on the Executive's own estimate, 5000 new homes need to be built this year, and for the next ten. The 'Prior Package' provides for only 4,500 new starts - and for only one year. Shelter's own estimate is 10,000 each year.

MUSIC REVIEW

- POISON GIRLS
- HUMAN LEAGUE
- ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES...

POISON GIRLS, an anarchist band based in London, really wanted to play in the A Centre in Belfast. It took a great deal of effort on their part especially to play only 3 gigs, one in Dublin, and 2 in Belfast.

People paid £2 a go to see the film and slides as well and on Saturday the DEFECTS and JUST DESTINY, and on Sunday, STALAG 17 and DOGMATIC ELEMENT, both supporting Poison Girls. In the Centre you had a chance to sit and relax, talk, drink coffee and dance.

The admission charge covered the high transportation costs, hire of the P.A., a mere £30 for Poison Girls' appearance, with £10 for each of the local bands.

Unlike the Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark & the Human League, where for £5 you were treated like shit and made to stand like fucking sardines, passively watching 'the stars' do their thing (under the watchful eye of the cops), Poison Girls made a point of getting the feel of Belfast for a few days during their stay and to talk to as many people as they could. Not so the H.L. or O.M.D., who flew in to do the gig and fucked off with money in their wallets. And we're made to feel grateful that they came to play in this war-torn city!

OK, a lot of people think that their music is great, but was their live performance that much better than listening to your stereo? Basically, their live performances didn't add much to the music (except the screams of adulation when they played their hits).

The A Centre, local groups and Poison Girls' energies in creating simple stage props and agit-prop conveyed more meaning and impact to the performers.

Despite thousands of pounds spent on installing huge arrays of lights, 16 slide projectors showing meaningless images (perfectly synched to Human League's music which ruled out any spontaneity) and two '50's-type go-go dancers (complete with mini skirts), it did little to compensate for boring static musicians. Poison Girls' stage presence was based on their driving, abrupt, explosive music, biting lyrics, and the belief that here were people who lived and played anarchically.

The days events turned into a party for most people, and, if you knew the words to 'Anarchy in the UK', you could become one of the dozen chorus people on stage, backed by the Supergroup '17 DEFECTS' (an amalgam of Stalag 17 and the Defects).

Sold with Outta Control

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PRODUCED INDEPENDENTLY BY ANARCHA-FEMINISTS



....found in NIO dustbins..

The whole saga of Kincora Boys Home has now been dragging on in the public eye for the last two months, though it appears to have been in the less public eye of the police, and the Northern Ireland Office, and various government departments for a great deal longer as much as 15 years in some cases. Despite the fact that many of the young men who had been in Kincora, over the last ten years had complained to various groups of sexual abuse and mistreatment while in Kincora, and also in other homes in the area, the authorities consistently ignored and hushed up complaints, while more boys were subjected to the same treatment. In fact it took the suicide of one former inmate before anything was done. Why did it go on so long?

When finally the police took action and charged three of the wardens with several sexual offences, they all pleaded guilty and so none was cross examined in court - this meant that very little information was available. What became clear though was that the systematic sexual abuse of minors had taken place at Kincora and other boys homes in Belfast for a long time, and that the three wardens couldn't possibly have been the only ones involved, and that infant young boys were being used for financial gains, sold to a whole wide circle of individuals without their consent, for the purposes of sexual abuse. In 1975 the police had been quick to terrorise the local gay community, on the flimsiest of charges, bringing misery to many innocent individuals, causing trouble in their work and with their families. In this situation of persistent child abuse they were very reticent to do anything, when the evidence was colossal and irrefutable. The answer lay in the composition of the individuals who availed of the 'services' provided by Kincora, for they included members of the security forces,

the senior civil service, and the business community. One of the victims has said, "it was pointless going to the police, as Mains (the chief warden in Kincora) was known to have friends there..." Social workers who complained also finally came to the conclusion that a coverup was going on, for their repeated efforts to have the homes scrutinised came to nothing.

The local press have had a field day with the case it has given them more column inches than they have had in a long time.

All have been at pains to point out the homosexual nature of the sexual abuse at Kincora, and the whole issue is clearly going to be used as an excuse not to extend the Homosexual Reform Bill to Northern Ireland. In most reports that we have read you simply could substitute the word sickening pervert for homosexual, and there is the clear implication in - most that homosexuals are people not in control of themselves, ready to prey on children given the opportunity, people we need protection from. What all this anti-gay hysteria though is doing is simply hiding the real facts of the case, that it doesn't matter what the sexual preference of the people involved were, what they did was to use children, to exploit children, who they had power over, children who had no comeback.

Rape is rape no matter who does it - in all cases it is the subjugation of the powerless, an act of contempt, and of control. What Kincora should clearly show is that children have few rights in particular those who find themselves in care, placed in institutions often in cramped conditions, they are vulnerable to the control of those in charge, and as Kincora illustrates, it is the child's testimony that holds the least weight. In would have served the papers better to have made that point that children need protection not from gays, but from those who seek to abuse them, and they cannot be identified by their sexual preferences. In point-of fact heterosexual child abuse is far more widespread as cases like the Noreen Winchester affair show.

FARE RISE?

Sometime soon the bus fares in Belfast are going to rise again by 15%! This is after two previous rises in 1980. At the rate they are going it will soon be cheaper to hire a private taxi than to go by bus. At present it costs 35p minimum for a bus journey, soon it will be 40p. This will make Belfast the most expensive public transport system in Britain or Ireland. (Manchester the most expensive in Britain is 30p.) This is on top of the fact that we already earn less and pay more generally for all our living requirements.

Of course as well as the fares rise there will also be a cutback in services particularly in the evening as Weiner Heubeck is planning to layoff 142 busworkers in the coming year. Basically what it boils to is that very soon Belfast will no longer have a public transport system because the service will be so bad and so expensive that people will be forced to stay at home, or find their own means. Forced by the constant withdrawal of services and one that ended early in the evening, the Falls Rd started its own people's taxi service which rapidly became the main means of travelling up and down the Falls, and in West Belfast generally as the Shankill Rd taxi service followed the example of the Falls Rd Taxi Association, providing a good, cheap, and frequent system for the people. And although there have been numerous complaints about being crushed to death in the backseat - without doubt the taxis have run, in all conditions for many years now. People in other areas have not been so fortunate, lacking either the resources to provide taxis, or being too small to provide such a service, they have to use the bus service or walk - not a pleasant prospect in Belfast at night.

Those who have cars are now using them more frequently, and so these days Belfast is beginning to look like one continuous carpark - turn any corner, any waste ground, and here presto National Carparks have moved in with cheap tarmac and a kiosk, and astronomical prices. Consequently the

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RAPE SUPPLEMENT INSIDE



efficiently nor can the kidney's excrete them readily.

Studies of healthy full term babies who came from risk free pregnancies and whose deliveries were normal and uneventful have shown that drugs affect behaviour adversely, and that these effects do not go away as the baby gets older (there are no consistent sex or class differences).

None of the studies have shown that drugs used during childbirth improved normal functioning. Behavioural changes are related to the dose and potency of the drug. Narcotics like pethidine, for example, are commonly used and may be given in doses 2 to 4 times higher than recommended. All narcotics have a serious depressant effect on foetal breathing and response. Drugs can affect change in feeding, sucking, resting, emotional behaviour, stimulation, tolerance, language heart rate, responsiveness, co-ordination, reflexes, ability to shut down and to be comforted.

Most drugs used during childbirth have never been approved for the purpose of childbirth on any grounds. They have not been assessed in relation to the effects on the central nervous system and future behaviour. Mothers and babies are being experimented on: they are not given the information on the drugs that they are taking nor are they told of alternative methods that are available—natural childbirth, hypnosis, acupuncture or no

treatment. There is no information given on the compensation and medical treatment a woman may expect if such experiments go wrong. Witness the case of a Belfast woman who was paralysed after an epidural which was not administered properly, or the many women who were unaware that they were guinea pigs for experiments on induction at the Royal.

Academics and scientists doing these experiments must support their theories with hard facts and statistics on a publish or perish make a name for yourself basis, regardless of the damage they may be causing women and their babies.



Over the last ten years in particular, there has been an increase in the number, availability and amount of drugs given to women during their pregnancy and childbirth. The effects of induction both in the Royal during their experiments in the middle seventies and in the Erne hospital have been made known. Less attention, however, has been paid to how drugs work and what effect they have on the baby and the mother.

Before, during and after the birth, a baby is vulnerable to drugs and chemicals. Drugs, usually toxic, taken by the mother, cross the placenta easily and lodge in the foetus' brain and central nervous system. All functions of the foetus are immature. The liver cannot transform these drugs and chemicals into non toxic compounds

What's your Poison?

POISON GIRLS came over to play two performances in the A Centre in Belfast the weekend of 19th-20th December in what proved to be a weekend to remember! The amazing and vital lead singer, Vi Subversa, is also the one who writes all the songs, on nuclear power, abortion, sex, war, mental illness, housework, just about every subject and the other woman in Poison Girls, is Gwyn, who does the slide shows and visual presentation.

"Bombing cities, washing dishes, we won't do your dirty work, Mind control for leisure living, madness rules your dirty world, Bombing cities, pulling switches, we don't want your dirty dream Clever Dick atomic splitting—screw your dirty dream.
(Dirty Work, Poison Girls).





The Art of Starvation

Recently, I heard someone commenting favourably on the cover of Sheila MacLeod's "The Art of Starvation". It could be argued that they were looking at the most stimulating part of the book, the imaginative picture "Reaching", which says more to me about the subject than the one hundred and eighty three pages in the book. The author is allegedly writing about the controversial disease "Anorexia Nervosa", but I often got the impression I was intruding on the inner meanderings of an Oxford graduate.

She begins by attempting a history of the disease, putting forward some interesting if far fetched notions that female hysterics and witches down the ages may have been anorexic but lends credibility to her arguments by viewing the disease as 'a protest against the narrowness of social roles'.

As her own story unfolds however, it becomes less clear just which arguments ARE hers as she draws heavily on established psychological theories. The pages are, I am tempted to say "besmirched" with quotations ranging from the verbose Freud to Sylvia Plath who in fact inspired the title of the book with her words "Dying is an Art"

Sheila MacLeod's account of her own life and illness, based on diaries, is told honestly and does give an insight into the mind and feelings of a sensitive, perhaps hypersensitive young woman growing up on an oppressive Scottish island, who then has the misfortune to attend both a convent school and a girls' public boarding school. She describes how she felt painfully inferior and inadequate beside her school mates in both these institutions.

The isolation and loneliness that engulf an anorexic come across strongly and perhaps the most moving part is the description of the author's first tentative bite in the presence of her mother. All this however is marred by the constant insistence on psychological interpretations to comment on each phase of the author's life.

Alongside this, Sheila MacLeod also looks at anorexia from the social and environmental points of view which make more interesting reading. She believes that the traditionally assigned role of women plays a large part in the genesis of anorexia and indeed of many of the problems women, especially at adolescence, experience today. She writes scathingly of a society where women "are granted more or less equal opportunities in theory, but in practice and through series of pressures, denied the right to fulfill them".

The chapter entitled "Depression" is a perceptive account of the bleak view of life which a despairing woman has. This is to me the most positive contribution which Sheila MacLeod makes towards an understanding of women's emotions. She uses the image of viewing life "through a sheet of glass" and I am sure that many readers, regardless of their sex, age or weight could identify with the feelings described here.

After an account of her recovery which deals with the various types of therapy used for anorexia, from individual and family "psychotherapy" to the frightening electro-convulsive therapy (electroshock) the writer devotes a whole chapter to Peter Dully's criteria for establishing whether or not an anorexic is/can be cured. This again would perhaps be gripping enough for a psychology student, but I often found it obscure and irrelevant.

Some revealing statistics about anorexia do emerge from the text, among them that at present one in every two hundred young women in Britain is suffering from the illness and that it is no longer confined to the middle classes, nor to women in their teens—there is a case of a 52 year old woman suddenly becoming anorexic; however, out of one hundred patients treated by Hilde Bruch, who has also written on the subject, only fourteen were male.

Anorexia nervosa is then predominantly a woman's disease and a lot of what Sheila MacLeod writes helps to suggest how anorexia may come about, but I disagree with one critic who describes the book as "basic reading for anyone interested in anorexia"; the psychological slant makes it heavy going and I find the £2.95 which Virago Press are asking a bit steep.

Margaret's Story

"I am a married woman with six children; I am 30 years old. When I left school at 15, I worked in a flax mill until I was 20 when I contracted Flax Bysinosis / (shortness of breath). Since then I have been working as a market trader and it was all open air markets and I stood at my pitch all day summer and winter for 8 years trying to make a living as my husband was only earning £40 a week.

Two years ago I became badly run down and then suffered severe depression. I cannot go outside and I am afraid to stay in the house myself. My weight went from 9st to 7st 8lbs. Last November I took jaundice and as well as that I found out I was pregnant. I lost my baby in March this year."

Margaret applied for Housewives Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension but was told that a lot of enquiries would have to be made. Invalid Care Allowance and Non Contributory Pension are two benefits available to the chronically sick and to those who care for them. Married women are barred from the Care Allowance and have to undergo a special test to get the Invalidity Pension. Whereas a chronically sick or disabled man is automatically entitled to a Non Contributory Pension if he does not have enough stamps (and single women), a married woman must apply for something called "Housewives Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension". To get it she must not only prove herself incapable of paid employment but also incapable of "normal household duties". There is a test which involves a complicated and embarrassing questionnaire, a medical and the judgement of an Insurance Officer. Even then, married women are refused. The EOC is campaigning to have these discriminatory regulations changed. For further information, please contact Maeve Bell, Belfast 42752.

MEETINGS

ABORTION CAMPAIGN MEETING — Wednesday February 3rd at 7.30pm in the Women's Centre, 16-18 Donegal Street, Belfast.

UNITY MEETING— Saturday 6th February in the Women's Centre at 11.00am. Discussion on International Women's Day and events planned. Discussion on Rape as well and the recent events.

Betty Sinclair died recently. She was well known for her work in the Labour Movement and as one of the leaders of the Unemployed Movement when she was still a mill girl. A memorial library is to be set up for trade unionists in recognition of the work she had done for the working classes.

THE YEAR OF THE HATCHET

January

Peter Sutcliffe is arrested and charged with the murders of 13 women, known as the Yorkshire Ripper murders. Americans "embassy staff" in Iran released. A racist fire attack on a house in Deptford kills many young people attending a party.

February

President Reagan survives! A loyalist gang seriously injures Bernadette McAliskey and her husband in an assassination attempt.

March

Bobby Sands commences a hunger strike to the death to gain the five demands from the British Government: no prison uniform, no prison work, no loss of remission, educational facilities and free association. He is joined on hunger strike later by Francis Hughes, Raymond McCreesh and Patsy O'Hara. Mass

burnings of forms takes place in Northern Ireland as a protest against the 1981 census.

Attempted coup by Guardia Civil in Spain.

International Women's Day—with a rally in Cormanmarket and also a conference on the role of women in the H Block and Armagh Campaign. Picket on Armagh prison took place on Sunday 9th March with international support.

Big happy Concert with Peggy Seeger in the evening.

Paisley kicks off on the Carson Trail.

April

Bobby Sands is elected as the M.P. for Fermanagh/South Tyrone....the fifth largest vote received by M.P.s to Westminster during this government.

11th/12th The Brixton Uprising—youth in Britain take to the streets in a spontaneous reaction against oppressive police tactics

May

Bobby Sands died on May 6th after 66 days on hunger strike. One week later on the 12th, his comrade Francis Hughes died after 59 days. Both Raymond McCr. and Patsy O'Hara died on their 66th day of hunger strike on May 21st.

Tens of thousands attend the funerals to show support for the five demands. Heavy rioting breaks out. Indiscriminate use of plastic bullets by the security forces cause the deaths of Julie Livingstone, aged 14, Carol Ann Kelly aged 12 and Henry Duffy aged 45 years. (During 1981 seven people died as a result of attacks by the security forces, many others were maimed and wounded).

1 PLASTIC BULLET WAS FIRED EVERY THREE MINUTES IN THE MONTH OF MAY.

Billy Jean King is sued by her former lover Marilyn Barnett for half her 1973-79 earnings.

Elections in the Republic: Kieran Doherty on hunger strike and Paddy Agnew, former prisoner are elected T.D.s. Mairead Farrell, imprisoned in Armagh Jail received 3,514 votes in Cork. Liz

Noonan contested the election as a lesbian feminist.

June

The Toxteth riots—C.S.Gas used. Blank shots fired at the Queen of England and the young cadet promptly put in a mental institution.

RUC Constable McKeown stands trial accused of the murder of 16 year old Michael McCartan, the first time a policeman has been brought to court for a crime committed whilst on duty. He is found not guilty.

On 30th Malone Place hospital, the last small maternity unit in Belfast was closed.

On 8th, Thomas McIlwee commences Hunger Strike.

On 10th, eight Republican prisoners on remand escape from Crumlin Road jail. 22nd, Micky Devine joins Hunger Strike. 29th, Lawrence McKeown joins Hunger Strike.

July

2nd., Paisley organised a "show of strength" in Six-Mile-Cross.

8th., Joe McDonnell dies after a Hunger Strike of 61 days.

13th., Martin Hurson dies after 45 days on Hunger Strike.

18th., The British Embassy Riot - many people were injured when Gardai baton-charged H-Block marchers trying to reach the British Embassy in Dublin.

August

1st., Kevin Lynch died on the 71st day of Hunger Strike.

2nd., Kieran Docherty died on Hunger Strike.

3rd., an international tribunal calls for a ban on the use of plastic bullets.

Liam McCloskey joins Hunger Strike.

8th., Thomas McIlwee died after 62 days on Hunger Strike.

17th., Jackie McMullen joined the Hunger Strike.

20th., Micky Devine died on the 60th day of his Hunger Strike.

21st., Owen Carron was elected M.P. for Fermanagh/South Tyrone.

24th., Bernard Fox joined Hunger Strike.

31st., Gerry Carville joined the Hunger Strike.

September

5th., Carl Harp, an anarchist prisoner, is murdered in Walla Walla prison in Washington, USA.

7th., John Pickering joins Hunger Strike.

14th., James Prior takes up the post of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, replacing Humphrey Atkins.

Gerry Hodgins joined the Hunger Strike.

18th., The Littlejohn brothers are released from Mountjoy prison on "humanitarian grounds."

21st., Jim Devine joined the Hunger Strike

October

3rd., H-Block prisoners end their Hunger Strike, after relatives state their intention

to intervene and sanction medical treatment.

10th., Two women civilians were killed in an IRA bomb attack on a coachload of Irish Guards in London

26th., two IRA bombs go off in Oxford St., London, killing a police bomb expert in one of them.

29th., Women from N.I. Abortion Campaign went to London to present M.P. Jo Richardson with 6 coat-hangers with mock airline tickets, to highlight the plight of women seeking abortions in N.I. A coat-hanger and ticket was sent to each M.P.

November

14th., Roy Bradford, Official Unionist MP for South Belfast is shot dead by the IRA.

20th., A half-day strike was called by Loyalists as a protest against lack of action against the IRA. Paisley's "Third Force" marched in Newtownards.

December

1st., The inquest at Hillsborough court-house on the deaths of the Hunger Strikers returned verdicts of "self-imposed starvation".

11th., Loyalists in the Crumlin Road jail wrecked the wing and staged a roof-top protest against conditions in the prison.

conf. from front page streets and roads of Belfast become increasingly congested especially in the rush hour-raising accident rates, and the pollution of our air with car fumes.

The same thing was happening in London until the new Labour Greater London Council decides to massively subsidise the buses and tubes to bring fares down and encourage people to use public transport and to leave their cars at home. But as we

all heard the law finally decided that the GLC couldn't subsidise transport from the rates. The priorities are clear (even though the numbers using public transport rose by thousands!) those without money or cars would simply have to make do or walk. You simply couldn't ask people with property (and the rates are levied according to property values) to subsidise those with less because nine times out of ten those with most property are those with cars and also those who can most easily escape the fumes and pollution that they leave behind as they trip back to suburbia at the end of the day.

In Belfast the situation is the same - no subsidies. But even without subsidies the bus service here could be much better - if the money they had was used a bit more efficiently, and where it is needed - on better service, and good wages for the workers. Instead though the Heubeck's of this world have got their priorities straight - while announcing the fares increase, they also slipped in a few days later their plans to spend a great deal of money on a new project - a 'facelift' for Glengall St station! Because after all you wouldn't want all the tourists arriving from the airport and going around to the Europa Hotel, to think that Belfast only had dingy bus stations. At the rate things are going it may end up the only service that Heubeck will be running - so he does have to make the best of it!

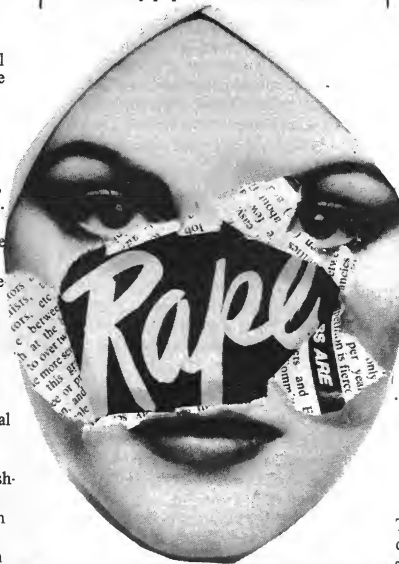
This month, four men appeared in a Belfast Crown Court charged with rape and other offences against two women. Discussion of the trial itself, observation of the proceedings of the court, and concern about the implications of wider issues, plus legal precedents already set, have led us to compile this supplement to GAINING GROUND

WHAT IS RAPE?

The Judge, in his remarks to the jury in the Belfast Trial, defined rape as having occurred if a man inserted his penis into the vagina of a woman without her consent, or if he was 'reckless' as to the question of her consent. Indeed, the legal definition is "unlawful sexual intercourse without a woman's consent". It is probably because of this definition, and the wording used, that rape is largely considered to be a lustful and sexual act, rather than a VIOLENT one. In fact, rape is almost entirely an act of violence, and is rarely used for sexual gratification. The Belfast Trial established that the male attackers knew something about the two women and knew where they lived. In short, the rape was planned in advance this is so in over 65% of reported cases. That the men were hostile towards the women was also clear. Questions were asked, prior to rape, about the religious faith of the victims, about their backgrounds and reasons for living in Belfast. This was NOT the gratification of "animal passions", but a deliberate act designed to humiliate and terrorise. What adds credence to this conclusion is the established fact that one woman was hit over the head with a pistol whilst halfway through a forced recital of 'The Lord's Prayer'. The Catholic version differs slightly from the Protestant one. This recital was to establish whether or not the woman was a Catholic. She was accused of being a Fenian (ie: Catholic or 'Taig') and her friend was accused of harbouring a 'taig' in her flat. That four men were involved, most of whom had paramilitary connections, also reminds us that 'gang rape' is used as a weapon of terror, is used to express contempt for women, to bolster the very 'maleness' of the military and the logic of command, is used by the impotent or sexually repressed male to establish a false virility in the eyes of his peers, and is used as a reclamation of property or territory and as a defilement and conquering of an enemy's status or morale.

There is, to some degree, a relationship between alcoholism and rape. In one American study of convicted rapists, 35% were alcoholic and 50% had been drinking before the attack. It was established that the Belfast rapists had been drinking quite heavily beforehand. The adverts tell men that a certain beer is "what your right arm's for": significantly enough, the figure holding the glass is not a woman. Until men begin to define their own needs until female needs and female sexuality are defined on their OWN terms and not in relation to men, or as passive objects of men's desires, then the myths surrounding rape, and the social acceptance of this violent act, will prevail. There is a myth that only the young and the beautiful women are potential rape victims. Children

as young as six months and women as old as ninety three years have been raped—victims have been of all ages, races, life styles, marital status or sexual orientation. Rapists are often portrayed as sex-maniacs in the grip of uncontrollable "animal" urges. In fact most rapes are planned in advance, most victims are known to the attacker, are sometimes within the same family, and rapists in prison are considered amongst the most 'normal' of the population, giving fire to the male imagination about sexual violence which is portrayed in so many popular films and books.



GAINING GROUND SUPPLEMENT

It was clear from the attitudes of women supporters of the four men on trial in Belfast, and from the Defence Counsel, that there was some social acceptance of the rapes that had taken place. Defence Counsel was heard to say at one point: "here were four men simply out to enjoy themselves, out for a good time."

Conveniently overlooking all aspects of female sexuality and, again, seeing women as mere objects for male gratification of power, dominance and lust. Defence Counsel tried to establish as relevant the fact that the two women had also been drinking that night, as if this was then meant that they were drunk and therefore inviting rape or 'fair game' for any man. In other cases, women have been accused of 'contributory negligence' by their dress and behaviour, and therefore in some sense responsible for what happens to them.

All in a society which pressurises women to make themselves attractive to men, which glorifies the "little woman" image, which uses images of women to sell goods, to titillate men's fantasies about women, to sell newspapers and to keep women

firmly in their place: ie: secondary to and in contrast to men.

It would seem that you cannot be defined as a 'victim' unless you are locked up at home, in male company, and 'decently' dressed. In Ireland, where the teachings of the churches influences much social thinking, it is difficult for women to be seen as other than two extremes: pure virgin or temptress, daughter of Eve.

Clearly women supporters of the Belfast rapists looked on their two victims as 'loose women', one an unmarried mother, living alone in a flat, drinking in their own company, walking home unaccompanied by men—"fair game" for anyone who wished to take advantage of their situation, isolation and social standing. They did not conform to the self censorship that women are expected to practice, whilst at the same time making themselves available for the expression of male dominance. It is also possible that feelings of possessive jealousy were aroused in women friends and relatives of the rapists, who saw their own relationships with the men threatened—some anger may have been generated by repressed feelings of guilt and confusion concerning their own roles. These same women were also hostile and threatening towards other members of the public who were seen as being supportive of the two women victims—members of women's groups were questioned as to their motives in attending the trial, and were jeered and verbally abused and threatened as a result of their cautious attitudes.

MEN RAPE—WOMEN ARE BLAMED

The comments by Judge Bertrand Richards, during the trial of rapist John Allen, demonstrate how society condones violence against women. The Judge told the court that the 17 year old woman was 'guilty of contributory negligence' because she was hitchhiking alone at night. Consequently, the rapist was fined £2,000 and did not receive the usual prison sentence of 2–4 years. This ruling implies that any woman hitchhiking alone is asking to be assaulted. The misogynist, patriarchal assumptions that women desire to be raped and that any woman alone is fair game for a rapist have been enforced in law.

A legal precedent has been set. Society's prejudicial attitude towards women is most clearly shown at rape trials. The victim is forced to recount the painful details of violent physical and mental assault under hostile cross-examination in an atmosphere of disbelief. Because of the assumption that women invite rape, it is always the character and credibility of the victim which is on trial, not the rapist.

Protests have been made to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, about Judge Richards' comments and the imposition of a fine instead of imprisonment. However, an examination of Hailsham's own comments on rape cases, and remarks by his 'brother' judges, indicate that Richards' attitude is more or less in line with most judicial thinking on the subject of rape.

In 1975, during a rape case appeal, Sir Harold Cassell, QC, came up with the dangerous notion that women might resist sexual violence or so the man might think in order to give him 'the additional thrill of the struggle'. Hailsham then took this

idea a stage further in a way which was supposedly out of context: "If he believes the woman is consenting to rough treatment because she likes it, I agree with it would not be rape". What a woman wants and what she consents to are two different things. Later, Hailsham decided: "It is possible for a man to be acquitted of rape, if he held the idea, no matter how unreasonably, that the woman he was raping was consenting".

These absurd, dangerous ideas are an intrinsic part of patriarchal society. It appears that the fact that we are women out alone, given the myriad false assumptions about our sexuality, is sufficient, in society's eyes, to justify violent assault. If a bank cashier is attacked and robbed no-one would put forward the ludicrous suggestion that the cashier was 'guilty of contributory negligence or was asking to be robbed, by being in that place at that time or by simply being a cashier! The press went to great lengths to dig up from retirement the reactionary Melford Stevenson. His comments on Richards decision: "It is the height of impudence for any girl to hitchhike at night. She is, in the true sense, asking for it".

Recently, two young women were raped in Sunderland and an elderly woman organist was raped and murdered in Bushmills. Presumably, in the eyes of the law, they were also 'asking for it' and guilty of 'contributory negligence' because they were women who had the temerity to be alone at night.

THE BELFAST TRIAL

Every court that I have attended has appeared to me to be a gruesome kind of theatre, with all the participants meekly accepting the roles apportioned to them, whilst also accepting, without question, the authority of a court to make powerful decisions regarding people's lives and to make statements which set precedents for the future wielding of that power and authority.

The recent Belfast trial contained all those elements, but also takes the 'gruesome theatre' analogy further on to more disturbing ground, in that in the present context and past context of sectarian and political conflict, it is clear that a theatre of terror also existed. The two women victims faced a male dominated jury (that had only two women members), were subject to question and cross examination by men and were subject to the intimidating presence of the four male attackers, flanked by male guards from the prison service and the RUC. In the public gallery, large groups of male friends of the accused sat in a kind of stoney glare, whilst women relatives, clearly hostile to the two women victims, further contributed to the intimidating atmosphere. Then, in a court held to test the innocence of the four men, the women themselves are put on trial by men whose attitudes to women were clearly ones of superiority and oppression.

Remarks were made concerning the drinking habits and lifestyles of the two women, and they were closely questioned about their resistance to the attacks. Although the women made it quite clear

that they were terrorised into submission, Defence Counsel persisted in asking why no more of a fight had been made—conveniently leaving aside the fact that the four men had entered the flat by force and had planned in advance the sexual abuse of the two women. Kevin Finnegan the Defence Counsel, is a member of the Socialist Lawyers Group. One wonders as to his motives in taking the case, and as to why there appears to be no policy regarding the nature of the cases that this Group will accept. As women, we find it insulting and abhorrent that Finnegan was prepared to defend UDA men who had made confessions as to some of their involvement in this case. Finnegan is known as a shrewd barrister, who has in the past defended people on dope charges with some effectiveness. His motives in this case puzzle and anger us.

Threatened at gunpoint, women are still expected to do the impossible, to make dangerous attempts at resistance and to establish that 'No' means 'No'. Here were two women, in a state of terror and shock outnumbered by men. Discrepancies are picked at, between written statements taken shortly after the attack, and what was then being said in court, sixteen months later. It is not surprising that two terrified women, threatened, abused and intimidated by men, subject to medical and judicial examinations, undoubtedly sedated by prescribed drugs, living through the trauma yet again, coming from a society of sexual, social and political domination, then thrust into a male dominated courtroom, did have difficulty of recall and theoretical justification for their attitudes—a difficulty and an impossibility that again was not raised on their behalf and which they were in no position to raise for themselves.

This case also contained certain factors which are unique to Northern Ireland, and which are surrounded by rumour, innuendo and threat. One of the rapists was a Commander in the Ulster Defence Association (the loyalist paramilitary organisation), a section of which had an alleged policy of raping Catholic women. Even if this were not true, such rumour only increases sectarianism, clouds the issue and increases the threat of sectarian violence.

The attacks coming as they did during a period of sectarian campaigns, could well have been an extension of the pattern of sectarian murders, or planned as such—all related to ritual killing. The four men had a gun—one does not carry a gun around Belfast unless one intends to use it. Did the men pick up the gun elsewhere, in preparation? There is a strong possibility that had not the police arrived when they did (having seen suspicious movements at a window) that both women would have been raped and murdered. In fact, one man was heard to say "why hurry, we've got all night". Some loyalist sectarian torture and violation of murder victims, the hacking to pieces of bodies, slitting of throats, are seen as an 'exorcising of the devil': an extension of religious beliefs, concepts of demonology and of the fear and hatred of 'popery'. Could the rapes have been planned as a prelude to this?

That the two women were terrorised is beyond doubt, and their behaviour in court indicated their continuing fear.

There was a considerable relief in the Shankill (a protestant area, where the two women lived) that the case had come to court. Violent crimes against working people and rape are not uncommon. Many cases go unreported, and the courage it took to bring this particular case to court cannot be over emphasised.

Both victims were questioned by the men as to their names, backgrounds and religious faith. Public support of the two victims was made difficult by this atmosphere of threat and physical violence. Women supporters of the rapists were heard to say that they "would get with crowbars" any picket that formed outside the court. All of which angered and frustrated feminists

who wished to declare their private and public support, but who found themselves defenceless and unprepared.

The whole trial seemed to reflect a game, deadly game, in the course of which neither the women's movement, nor the two women victims seem likely to achieve any understanding or a furtherance of their own interests. Observation and analysis of the proceedings need to be linked to vigorous political campaigns against all forms of the oppression of women (from porn films to books and sex education) both here in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. Our two sisters, isolated in a court under threat, have shown a courage and a solidarity of purpose that has touched an inspired all feminist observers. Their lives will be permanently affected by the even of one night sixteen months ago, and by the ordeal of their trial-within-a-trial in a



complex situation of conflict and rumour, where they stood entirely alone. Such isolation must never be allowed to prevail again.

WHY NOT, ARE YOU QUEER?

Female Sexuality.

During the Belfast trial, evidence was given that one man had asked his victim "why not, are you queer?" when she resisted his attempts at sexual intercourse. The number of massive assumptions and lack of understanding behind such behaviour is mind boggling and reflects the attitudes of society in general. Leaving aside for a moment the unique social and political context of this trial in Northern Ireland, we should examine some of these assumptions. Firstly, the assumption that a woman is necessarily heterosexual and that further, heterosexuality is the norm to which we should all aspire. Authority of all kinds, uses many labels in order to wield its power and to control people's behaviour, to make people conform to an alienating set of standards or principles. Such constraints are no seen to have no basis when dealing with the complex notions of sexuality or desires. Even concepts such as 'male' and 'female' are being challenged and re-defined by scientists and social observers. Victorians believed that women did not possess sexual feelings and indeed woman's role in sexual relations is generally seen as less important than a man's. A woman's sexuality is still often defined in contrast to that of a man, and in relation to it, rather than existing in its own right. Women are seen as passive rather than active; emotional rather than physical. Sex is seen largely as something that happens to a woman, rather than being a part of what a woman is or wants or can do. Traditional models of heterosexual intercourse still go unchallenged.

There is a second assumption that a woman is necessarily ready for, and inviting, heterosexual and submissive sex, or that she is always in the process of preparing herself for it. The question was "why not, are you queer?" and was NOT an attempt to understand the woman's physical or emotional state, to relate to her in anything more than an oppressive manner, or to understand her desires and needs, her willingness or otherwise, to accept a passive and traditional role. It is known that female arousal and orgasm are not necessary in the process of reproduction, and that women's sexuality is no longer interpreted simply in terms of being able to conceive and to give birth. Vaginal penetration is not a necessary ingredient of a woman's capacity to express or enjoy her sexuality, even though some women do find the vagina is an erogenous area. Frigid is another word applied to a woman who is not content to prepare herself for or to practice on demand, that which is pleasurable for a man, or who cannot reach orgasm in five minutes in the missionary position. Some people still believe that a woman is capable only of responding to male initiatives, and yet maintain she is responsible for arousing "irrepressible" sexual desire in the male! A recent rape trial in America, however, did consider the sexuality of the victim, and questions

were raised about the sensitivity (lack of) shown by the rapist and of his understanding of female sexuality. So, some progress has been made regarding the nature of legal proceedings.

Women are encouraged by various forms of authority and persuasion to develop their reproductive powers, to attend to their 'maternal' instincts, to perfect their



'femininity'. At the same time they are expected to repress their natural sexual feelings and to cultivate a submissive nature. In sex education, sex is supposed to be good, healthy and necessary for boys, to be enjoyed by boys, but not by girls—all traditional heterosexual sex, of course. What further makes difficulties for women and others who resist all traditional notions of sexuality, are those lack of opportunities for and the inhibitions about discussing sex and our sexual feelings about another person. Women's groups do much to resolve these difficulties, plus an honesty of approach with a partner.

THE FIGHT AGAINST RAPE

*In Karachi, Pakistan, in 1978, when an 8 year old girl was raped, children went on the rampage through the city causing havoc.

*In Soweto, South Africa, in 1977, when a teacher was raped, the schoolgirls in her class stoned the rapist to death.

*In July, 1977, a rally organised by Women Against Rape in Trafalgar Square, London sentenced 3 High Court Judges and 5 Government Ministers to fines totalling £30billion after a 'trial' found them guilty of rape and trespass 'over our minds and bodies' by their treatment of women. One woman who testified was the victim of an attack by a Guardsman, whose release by 3 Appeal Court Judges caused a nationwide controversy.

*The first Reclaim the Night in London was in November 1977, the second in July 1978. Similar demonstrations were made in Dublin. They were demonstrations of women to reclaim the night, the streets, the outside world, space for women. the right to be out at any time, retrieving our bodies in areas of commercial sexism such as Soho.

*In Belfast again, women demonstrated through the streets after a woman was raped in the University area, and again after an attack in Turf Lodge.

*Throughout the world, women have organised demonstrations and direct action against repressive judgements in law, sex shops, sexism in advertising, against 'sex and violence' films, porn cinemas, to publicise violence against women and the institutions that perpetuate or encourage such violence and oppressive attitudes towards women.

*Rape Crisis Centres have opened in many areas to help rape victims by counselling and much practical support.

*Women are organising themselves and attending classes in self defence, and even though such classes may not offer enough to women who are too old or too young, or too small or who have a disability which could prevent them from fighting back physically, such classes are a vital part of campaigns against rape.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE A RAPE VICTIM.

Make immediate contact with someone you know or with some individual or group that you know will be sympathetic. Resist the desire to remain alone or to try to deal with the trauma alone. You will undoubtedly want to take a bath or shower, but resist this also—the law requires medical evidence of rape, and you could wash it away or be seen as attempting to falsify the evidence. Telephone a Rape Crisis Centre, Womens Centre or your nearest Womens Group (find out where they are now). There will be women there willing and able to be responsive to your needs, to be understanding and caring, and to give support and practical advice. Report the rape to the police as soon as possible. A friend or member of a women's group will stay with you for as long as necessary. Your behaviour and appearance soon after the rape will be vital—the police need to make observations about these in order to strengthen their case and to build up "corroborating evidence". Rapes are rarely witnessed, so all evidence such as your distress and shock, torn or disarranged clothing, stains, injuries, evidence of forced penetration, are all vitally important.

You will be questioned by the police. Even though they will admit that resisting rapists can be dangerous, you may be faced with questions that assume that you "fight for your virtue" to impossible degrees. Remember that the test of the evidence comes in court, not in the police station, but that your behaviour and statements will be noted in the police station and such evidence given in court. It is not your innocence which is in question, but the rapists.

You will be examined by a doctor, and this can be an humiliating experience. You will be asked questions about whether or not you are on the Pill, if you have ever had an abortion, and so forth. Remember that your morality is not in trial.

Rape is a traumatic experience and it is important to have contact with understanding and supportive friends and counsellors to talk to about your feelings. Don't try to handle it alone. Some of your feelings anger, guilt, disgust, humiliation, fear, isolation, horror, anxiety, will be difficult and will need expression and will need re-

solving. Rape Crisis Centres and Womens Groups are there for you to use - to share your experiences and to meet your needs.

PREVENTING RAPE—SELF DEFENCE

Get yourself fit and know how to fight. This will help to build up your confidence—frightened women are more likely to be attacked than confident ones. Secure your home, make contact with neighbours and work out a signal or alarm to bring help. Give out blood curdling yells. These will boost your confidence and scare the attacker. Remember that ALL women are potential victims—young, old, disabled, infirm; no matter of what appearance, race or lifestyle. We cannot rely on the courts for our ultimate protection; at every opportunity we must point out the ways in which women are exploited and degraded by a society which defines women in terms of men, which uses them as sex objects, as helpless victims or as people who must "be kept in their place". Whilst our streets, our space, our bodies remain unclaimed, then rape, and the threat of rape, terrorises women and keeps us imprisoned.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Whilst we, as anarcho-feminists, were pleased by the guilty verdicts returned in Belfast trial, and whilst we have supported and whilst we have supported such past judgements of rapists, we cannot ignore or fail to give adequate consideration of the question of what happens to, or what should happen to the convicted rapist.

There are, at present, a number of possibilities and suggestions, which include, a lengthy term of imprisonment, large fines, psychiatric treatment, castration, sterilisation, death penalty, financial compensation to victim or relations of victim. Others include the handing over of the rapist to the victim or relations/friends of the victim, for punishment, or to his immediate community/peers. We have, as anarcho-feminists, to express our dissatisfaction with most of these possibilities, and to acknowledge the fact that we cannot, as yet, offer a strong suggestion as to the question of punishment.

It is true that the law is a powerful political instrument. However, it is used not only as a means of oppression, but also, ideally, as a means of bringing rights to individuals and to support claims and to give protection to the poor, underprivileged, powerless and defenceless. The law can, at one and the same time, make us free and make us slaves. Present forms of punishment, cloaked in a token aura of "rehabilitation" often do no more than exercise crude revenge. Even present harsh penalties are no deterrent to acts of violence. As anarchists, we wish the concept and practice of law to be libertarian. Living in a society not of our design, nor under our control, where people look to the state for the outline of justice and to a third party for the settlement of disputes or for judgement, we find no way in which our own libertarian ideas can be "grafted on" to such institutions as now exist.

We have no desire to "cop out" of this

difficult issue by saying there needs to be revolution or a fundamental political change in society before such matters can be resolved. If we demand the judgement of rapists, we have also to be clear as to our demands concerning "punishment"—this is a subject which we hope that our group will continue to debate.

However.....

FEEDBACK, from you, the readers is essential. We need to know your thoughts and ideas concerning the WHOLE of this supplement, and to have more contact with you in future on all aspects of Gaining Ground. Send us your own experiences, thoughts, ideas, suggestions, information. If you would like a reply to anything you send, or if you want anything to be returned, then PLEASE try to enclose a stamped self addressed envelope. We do not have unlimited funds!

Write to us C/o Box 28, 7 Winetavern St., Belfast 1.

We also welcome photographs, drawings, letter, articles and need more information always about other contact groups and news of what is happening in your area.

REFERENCES: USEFUL READING

- "Our Bodies Ourselves" by Angela Phillips and Jill Rakusen. Penguin £3.50
"Against Our Will", by Susan Brownmiller (Men, Women and Rape) Penguin 95p
"Half the Sky" (An introduction to Womens Studies) Virago £3.95.
"Spare Rib" (A woman's liberation magazine) 50p from Just Books or by subscription to 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AT.
"Scarlet Woman". Newsletter of the Socialist Feminist Current of the Womens Liberation Movement, 5 Washington Tce., North Shields, Tyne and Wear.
Rape Crisis Centre, PO Box 1027, Dublin 6. Published reports. Phone 601470.
"No Turning Back". Writings from the Womens Liberation Movement 1975-80. The Womens Press £4.95.
"Women at WAR" Women against Rape, 60 Westbourne Park Villas, London W2. Tel: 01-221-5754. 150 Richmond Road, Montpelier, Bristol 6. Tel: 0272-422810. 19 City Road, Cambridge. Tel: 0223-5757142.
"Law in Anarchism". Ed. Thom Holterman & Hinc van Maarseveen. Erasmus University, Rotterdam. £5.20.

CONTACTS IN BELFAST

The Women's Centre, 16-18 Donegall Street, Belfast 1. Tel: 0232-43663.

Anarcha Feminist Group/Gaining Ground, C/o Box 28, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast.

OTHER CONTACTS TO BE CONSIDERED:-

Craigavon Women's Group, 502 Legahory Green, Craigavon.

Newry Women's Group, C/o Newry Resource Centre, Dublin Road, Newry.
Omagh Women's Group, C/o 34 High Street, Omagh.

Tullycarnet Women's Group, C/o Community Centre, Kinross Avenue, Tullycarnet, Tel: 7988.

DUBLIN RAPE CRISIS CENTRE:
Tel: Dublin 601470.