

NONVIOLENT ACTION, CIVIL LIBERTIES, MOVEMENTS FOR CHANGE

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DAWN

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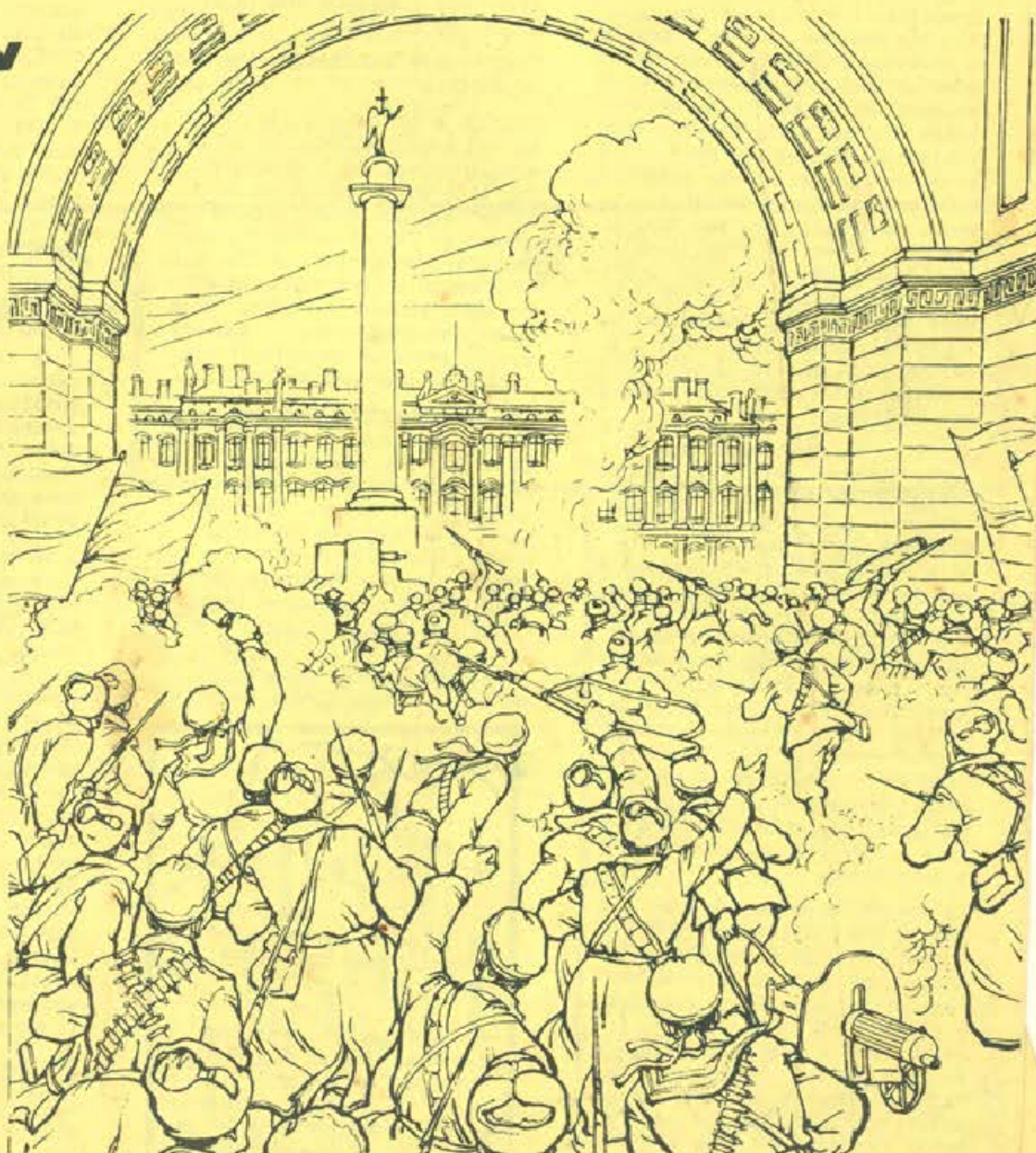
Number
62

**The
DAWN
interview**

WITH
PAT RICE

**WOMEN
AGAINST
MILITARISM;**
report by
mary kay
mullan

**DEATH SHALL
HAVE NO
DOMINION IN
IRELAND;**
rob mitchell



Carnsore

IS THE FESTIVAL USEFUL?

and death shall have no dominion

BY ROB MITCHELL

It may have been a wet and cold summer as opposed to a long hot summer, but people have continued to be killed North and South - politicians and pressure groups leaders, police, army, housewives, teenagers. In this article I aim to look at the issue of death by violent means and what it signifies to me and other people.

Sometimes the scale of the killing escapes us. So, firstly, a listing of some of those who died or were sentenced or charged with murder. At the start of June, John Turnly, Protestant republican and prominent member of the Irish Independence Party was shot dead, most likely by the UDA. A few days later the Provisionals shot dead a member of the UDR. Then two members of the RUC were sentenced for the murder of a Catholic three years ago. Miriam Daly, anti-H Block activist and former IRSP member, was shot dead.

In July, two members of the Garda Síochána were shot dead in Roscommon chasing after bank robbers. A 20-year old soldier visiting Derry (because of his wife's difficult pregnancy which had ended in a stillbirth) was shot dead. A 17-year old youth was seriously wounded by soldiers while joyriding in a stolen car. Hunger striker Martin Meehan came very close to death, calling off his hunger and thirst strike at a time when he could have lost consciousness straight away. Michael McCartin, 16-year old graffiti writer, was shot dead by the RUC while carrying a paintbrush.

In August, four people died around the anniversary of the introduction of internment; these included 2 British soldiers killed by a Provo bomb and a 21-year old worker for Neighbourhood Open Workshops in Belfast, Michael Donnelly, who was shot dead by a plastic bullet as he was on his way home. An RUC detective was charged with the murder of an RUC sergeant (a Catholic) in Cusheadall in 1977. A 24-year old man was shot dead by an army patrol in Cookstown. An

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87-year old man and his 51-year old daughter were brutally killed in a possible sectarian attack in Belfast. A mother of five was shot dead by the Provos accidentally when they were firing at a police patrol. A 22-year old Catholic man was shot dead in Larne. An Armagh man died when he accidentally triggered an INLA booby trap bomb. RUC reservist Wallace Allen was kidnapped and later killed by the IRA.

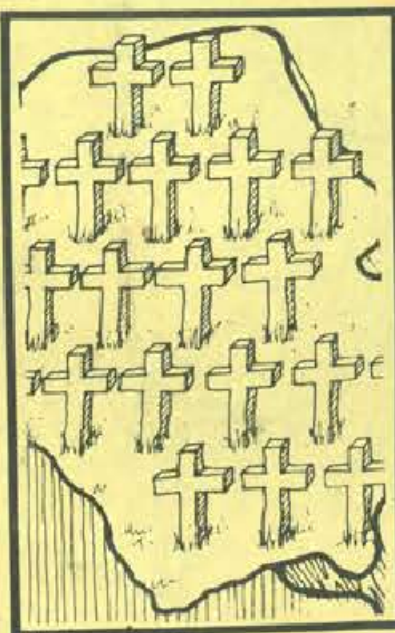
That's just the list to the end of August.

This is a terrifying list which is not even complete. It shows a callousness and a disregard for life which should shock us if we have not grown totally numb or disinterested by the whole tragic business. The pain of a death is not the pain of the dead person so much as whom their death affects. And the consequences of each death are further bitterness and strife.

And yet these killings are almost universally not the work of anyone who could be called 'mad' or even 'sick' by conventional norms. They were done by people who put their cause before lives, and by people who were happy to shoot first and ask questions later.

RESPONSIBILITY

I believe in nonviolence. I believe in nonviolence because I



feel it works, that it is a way of working for a new person and a new society which can try to take people with me.

The ultimate stand of nonviolence is a refusal to kill. But this is only the ultimate stand of nonviolence; tut-tutting at each death serves no purpose but to vent one's anger and present one's own self-righteousness.

We are a part of a society which regards it right to kill. It has an acceptance of death. It accepts the normal rates of death in a technological capitalist civilisation (road accidents, cancer, industrial accidents) but it also has an acceptance of political death. It is sad that some of the deaths - different deaths for different people - will be regarded as 'acceptable'. Protestant and Catholic paramilitaries, RUC and army are all represented as killers on the above list.

For a nonviolent paper we do very little pontificating about death and the narrow points of pacifism. Our ultimate stand is against death; our stand is also for a life that is worth living, that is fulfilling - that people have the chances in life to fulfill themselves.

I am part of society and even if I am vehemently opposed to any kind of death I bear a responsibility to work for life against death, a responsibility as a member of the society that has produced people who kill. One's work will take many forms, and many different methods of pressure must be used. One's own life may even be built on structures which assume the right to inflict death. Our taxes go to finance death. Our jobs - those of us fortunate enough to have them - may be part of our own military-industrial complex of local and multinational firms. Let those who are without sin cast the first stones.

But because I bear some measure of guilt for what happens in my society does not mean that I should not speak out for what I believe. However, it is more important for me to work for what I believe and to provide channels of communication and fulfillment which will divert people from the path of death. This is building alternatives.

There will also be direct pressure against those who kill - the IRA, the UDA, the British army, the RUC. I do not see any of these as ogres but as people who have chosen that they will kill in certain circumstances for their cause. I believe that killing of any kind sullies their cause or what they represent.

Everyone is susceptible to public pressure, if it comes in the right form. Unfortunately because of the sectarian nature of society in the North, 'public opinion' is often divided. But so far as official forces are concerned pressure can work.

EYE FOR AN EYE

There are other aspects of death worth mentioning here. The example of Martin Meehan sticking courageously to his hunger strike against a seemingly framed charge had repercussions. The hunger strike can be a strong non-violent

weapon. He was using it against the injustice of his sentence due to identification by a young and probably unreliable army informer; in this regard a hunger strike was positive. Its negative aspect was when he came within inches of death and rioting was already beginning to mark his death; undoubtedly people would have died in the subsequent trouble - this was a negative aspect of his hunger strike. Some repercussions have to be taken into account.

But there was no more callous example of an 'eye for an eye' thinking than after the killing of the two guards in the Roscommon bank raid. In the Republic, there is still the capital sentence for certain killings, including the murder of guards. It is ironic, North and South, that a 'Christian' country should still go by the negative Old Testament slogan of 'an eye for an eye' rather

than the message which Jesus Christ brought to the people of the world.

Let us hope that we are not afraid of death. I cannot be sure myself how I will stand up to the threat of death until it comes close to me. But it is true that there are worse things than death, at least for those who may be tortured or handicapped or subjected to cruel or inhuman treatment.

Death is something which comes to us all. The opposite of death, however, is life, and I believe in a life of joy and sorrow, a life of living rather than existing. Many do not have an opportunity to do more than exist, at home or abroad.

And so I say, hopefully, and aware of some of the transformation which it will require of myself and other people; death shall have no dominion in our society.

PAMPHLETS & MAGAZINES

URANIUM PAMPHLET WAR

Two new pamphlets on uranium have recently been circulated. The one is entitled Uranium Exploration: The Facts and is a an 8-page nicely printed job which seeks to allay fears among people in Donegal about the hazards of prospecting and mining. The pamphlet is being circulated in county Donegal by being left in shops, handed to people coming from church services, door to door delivery etc. Copies have an inserted leaflet saying which mining company distributed it.

The other pamphlet is entitled Uranium: The Threat to Leinster and is a 24-page effort by the Contaminated Crow, c/o 60 Marlborough Road, Dublin 4 (10p + postage). Done by means of electro-stencil, which unfortunately doesn't always come out neatly, the pamphlet lists various grants made to prospecting companies in the Republic, discusses health hazards, provides an interesting geological map of Leinster indicating where prospecting is taking place, and ends with a useful bibliography of groups and literature concerned with the subject.

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DAWN FUNDRAISING SOCIAL

In an effort to raise extra money for our running expenses we are having a friendly and informal benefit event. So we would like to see our readers in the Dublin area on Saturday 8 November from 6-9 p.m. at our editorial address, 168 Rathgar Road. Take a 15A or 15B bus from D'Olier Street.

REVIEW

THE H-BLOCK ISSUE - AN INTERIM STUDY. The Advisory Forum on Human Rights, Irish Council of Churches Board of Community Affairs, 48 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast 9. 20pp. 50p + post.

Just recently published, this is the report of a study completed in January with a post-script to June. It is a welcome attempt by a church group to get to grips with the situation in the H Blocks, and provides a useful, short introduction to the situation. Some bits of emphasis can be disputed, e.g. p.6 'The protest and its intensification are self imposed'; while this is in a sense true, there are more important questions like - why were they driven to it? Does this absolve the authorities of responsibility? Perhaps the solution might be to give all prisoners the rights which are being demanded for 'political' prisoners?

- Ciaran Leanair -

Live entertainment will be provided by folk singers Larry Bond (who composes his own songs) and Damien Cahill. Sandwiches, cookies, salads, wine and nonalcoholic beverages will be served. Admission is only £1. There will also be a literature stall. Please come and support us.

DAWN 62, October 1980 was put together by Rob Mitchell, Larry Bond, Eoin Dinan, Garreth Byrne, Dawn Ruth Nelson, Brendan Ward, Dominic Scott and Richard Harrison.

The next issue will appear in November. AIRMAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS have been increased to £4.50 worldwide due to extra postal expenses. Surface subscriptions are still £2.50 for ten issues in Ireland, Britain and Europe.

COLLEGE STUDENTS in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Galway etc. are required to help sell the magazine. We will deliver 6 or more copies of each issue to anybody who is interested in helping to boost our sales in this way.

THANKS to a generous reader in Cumbria, England, who sent us a donation of £15.

ALTERNATIVE IRELAND DIRECTORY: Dominic Scott is trying to get together a booklet listing all kinds of alternatives including co-ops, bookshops, wholefood concerns, energy, political, religious and feminist groups and communes. Send possible entries to Dominic c/o DAWN, 168 Rathgar Road, Dublin 6.

DAWN, 168 RATHGAR ROAD, DUBLIN 6.
BY TELEPHONE BELFAST 6972106.

Roots of Violence

A SEMINAR REPORT BY DAWN RUTH NELSON

The Glencree Reconciliation Centre was the organiser and host (hostess?) of a weekend seminar, September 13 and 14, on "The Roots of Violence". In the introductory brochure, Glencree stated that, "There is a tendency in the Republic for people to think despairingly of the North when 'violence' is mentioned and to think only of the North, and only of paramilitary violence...physical violence is only the visible manifestation of deeper, more subtle layers of violence in Irish society...People in the Republic need to analyse the 'roots' of violence so that co-operation with the North can have real thrust."

DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

The seminar drew participants from many different backgrounds: single mothers from the Gingerbread group, teachers from traditional schools and less traditional schools, farmers, theologians, and students.

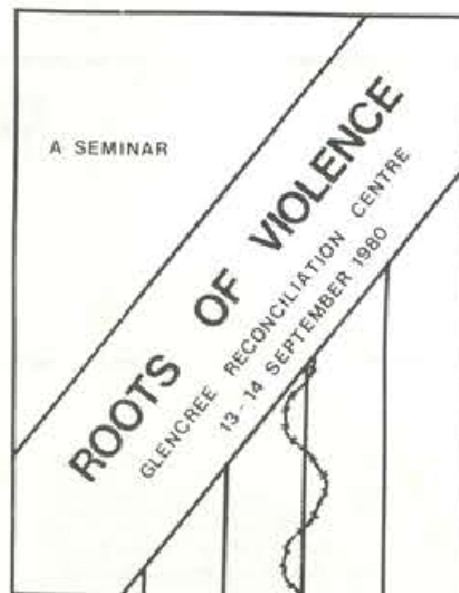
We were addressed by a child psychiatrist, a leader of the Prisoners Rights Organisation, a woman from the Council on the Status of Women in Ireland, the chairman of the Dalkey School Project, a project manager from Combat Poverty, a Fine Gael T.D. and a representative of the Irish Mennonite Movement.

I feel the main point of the weekend (although we never really had the opportunity or time to draw conclusions) was that violence is a response to structures of society that are evil - almost a direct quote from John Keane of Combat Poverty. Violence is a response to economic inequality, discrimination, and the feeling of not having power. It can't be understood as an isolated phenomenon.

Joe Costello made an important distinction in his talk, for instance, between justice and the law in Ireland (and this would apply in most countries). Justice is not meted out by the law courts in this country, he said,

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implying that in fact, law and injustice are more synonymous. "Law is used to protect position and property," he claimed. "It is a weapon in the armour of the people in power." We must make structures that are being misused, such as law, into structures that serve people (and not just the people with position and property). Joe Costello suggested that law should become a service profession.



One of the problems of the weekend, I felt, was that while we were supposed to be concentrating on subtle layers of violence, we could have made the connection more often between violence in Southern society and the North. Only Mike Garde, of the Irish Mennonite Movement, in his paper on religion in Ireland, examined the political questions at all, although John Keane, of Combat Poverty, did make an attempt to relate what he said to the IRA.

There was a tendency to get fuzzy about the use of the term "violence". If competition in school work is violence (this was mentioned at least twice), then soon everything becomes violence, and it is hard to be very specific. We can then throw up our hands hopelessly

and say, "It's everywhere!" or as the papers next day reported, "It's a way of life". We don't need to call misuse of power and economic inequality, violence (institutional violence, as some people called it) in order to signify that it's wrong. There are other words that are more accurate in this regard, such as evil and unjust.

This is not to say that competition in schools isn't a problem or that Michael Keating, TD, didn't give a very good example of "institutional violence" in the fact that Irish wealth and property are concentrated in the hands of 15% of the population.

We must do more analysis of the type Mike Garde did in his talk. He didn't merely accuse the churches in Ireland of encouraging violence; he gave many specific examples of things that must change (Mass at Dundalk barracks, chaplains in the army to give a spiritual dimension to war). He showed how things which are now acceptable must become unacceptable. He challenged the very basis of our religious institutions - that is, infant baptism. This is not only the basis of religious institutions, but the basis of all of society, because there is no one in Ireland who is not baptised before he or she is conscious, into one or the other of the churches. He implied that this may be one of the roots of Ireland's political problems.

Monica Barnes made the best plug for nonviolence in her talk on women. She simply pointed out that the women's movement in Ireland has been the single most influential movement in the past decade, and that it has taken place without killing anyone.

Mike Garde also made the observation that one of the reasons Christianity has always had such a strong hold on the Irish people is that it wasn't forced on them in battle, as it was on many peoples on the continent.

The papers that were read at the seminar will be published in a booklet by Glencree.



Archivo Nacional de la Memoria



"Dawn is no longer a temptation" THE STRUGGLE IN LATIN AMERICA

On a recent visit to Belfast during August to learn about the situation in Northern Ireland, Pat Rice spoke to Rob Mitchell of Dawn. This interview has been shortened in places to fit the available space.

Pat Rice, originally from Cork, is a member of the Community of the Brothers of Charles de Foucauld, which is a worker-priest group. He is working in Venezuela, and concerned with solidarity work in Latin America, particularly with Argentina, and work with political exiles. In late 1976 he was detained, tortured and subsequently deported from Argentina (the Organisation of American States has since investigated his case and found clear evidence of torture and condemned the Argentine regime).

CONSCIOUSNESS

Dawn - Could you say there is a non-violent movement in some of the countries in Latin America? Or is it a case of those who consciously believe in nonviolent forms of action being small and perhaps elitist groups, while nonviolent action is done spontaneously by other people?

Pat Rice - I think the latter is most true. I think what exists in all of Latin America, and this is something that has grown up in the last ten or fifteen years, is a very strong movement on the part of all the people for change. Perhaps it began more with the middle class, or sectors of the working class, or students, who became more aware of the inequalities, the injustices, and began to struggle for change.

Certainly in the last few years this consciousness, this awareness, has spread to everybody, particularly to the peasants, to the workers, to the rural workers, to the people living in the cities. Out of this situation of oppression has grown a movement towards a new society, a consciousness that Latin America has to be different. Also, internationally, there are a whole lot of differences whereby Latin America is much more important than it was previously, because of its resources, and internally the countries have expanded. So there is a very clear consciousness that a new form of society is needed and that they can go and do it. We can call this a movement for liberation, and I think the word liberation describes it pretty exactly.

With respect to the methods used to achieve this, this first movement grew up at first a lot associated with Cuba in '61, '62, and the struggle in Cuba from '59 onwards, which was certainly a violent one, and which was successful. In Latin America at the time there was a great expectation about Cuba, and later Che Guevara's work in Bolivia, then he was later killed, spread the idea that this process was going to come about through violent revolution. There was a deepening

of what it was about, the new type of society that was to come, that there was a new man, a new woman - in the words of Che Guevara, to be brought about, and that the struggle was one of love. So there were a lot of truly Christian ideals at the bottom of that revolution.

What has happened since that time, beginning perhaps with Chile in '73 with Pinochet, even before Pinochet we had in Bolivia and Argentina a whole series of military coups, of right dictatorships coming in in the name of national security, of stamping out all opposition. Faced with that, people have begun to go deeper into the types of changes and the necessity of changes even stronger than ever before.

One particular aspect which is really important is that there is a feeling that everybody has to participate, particularly the poorer people, and the type of measures to get people to participate are education, popular organisation, of people organising, of people carrying on strikes; this type of activity is nonviolent activity or popular, ordinary organising - a message which before might have been forgotten about, such as organising a strike, plus the introduction of women into the struggle.

One could say now there is in lots of Latin American countries a growing knowledge of the importance of a dedication to truth, to justice, to the values of nonviolence, in the struggle.

NONVIOLENT MOVEMENT

Dawn - Would you feel that people who were consciously nonviolent were now relating themselves to popular struggles?

Pat - Yes, certainly. For example, the Fellowship of Reconciliation groups, they are called Service for Justice and Peace, which is led by Adolfo Perez Esquivel, who recently visited Belfast from Argentina. He himself was in prison; he now, and his group, relate to a lot of these issues, to the issues of human rights, of prisoners, relate to the possibility of war between Argentina and Chile; they have in a sense kept alive the idea of nonviolent struggle but have perhaps in the past not entered into the struggle in the sense of working with trade unionists, working with ordinary local groups - I think they are moving in that direction. I think it's also true to say that the nonviolent movement in Latin America, if you can call it that, is a unique movement. It's not following Gandhian lines, it's not following any other lines, it's something which is growing out of a history of struggle in a particular situation.

A few years ago, I remember when I went out to Argentina first in 1970, a lot of pressure was on people to become involved in armed activity, and if a person didn't become involved in armed activity they were seen as limiting, of not taking a consequential option, as they called it,

PAT RICE talks to Dawn about human rights, nonviolence, and the political situation in Latin America.

for the poor, not being really on the side of the people in struggle. But since that time with the growth of repression there's an importance recognised of the struggle for human rights, so many people have been repressed, because of their dedication to truth, such as journalists, or lawyers, priests, sisters, or ordinary folk doing organising. In terms of what the system is about, people who are engaging in non-violent forms of activity are just suffering repression the same as those. But before a lot of the nonviolent activity didn't relate to many of those issues.

LUIS ESPINAL

Dawn - Do you want to say anything about Luis Espinal and about Archbishop Romero?

Pat - Yes. In Bolivia there was the very tragic assassination of Luis Espinal, who for me personally embodied this new movement in Latin America best; he was a Spanish Jesuit who went to Bolivia some twenty years ago and very strongly involved in the movement in Bolivia. In 1977 there was a movement, particularly of women, wives of miners who were in prison, together with their children they went on a hunger strike, calling for a total amnesty from the Banzer dictatorship. Nobody gave it any hope. The hunger strike began around Christmas, it seemed there was no hope of them succeeding, the bishop tried to persuade them, but they said they didn't come to negotiate with the bishop but rather to say that they were going to go on hunger strike.

Luis Espinal joined the hunger strike the following day, in order to replace some of the children, as did other people. This strike lasted about 30 days; by the time the strike had got to the 30th day there were about 1500 people in different parts of Bolivia on hunger strike. Amazingly no one really expected it, but they won; the Banzer dictatorship gave in an amnesty and everything else. So it was concrete proof in the Bolivian situation that a hunger strike had achieved something. It brought in what later became known as 'The Bolivian spring' - which tragically was cut short particularly by the last military coup which has cut down so many people in Bolivia.

Luis Espinal pushed the movement forward. He didn't speak much about nonviolence but through his actions he gave leadership to a lot of people becoming involved. Above all he started a newspaper and a type of journalism which was denouncing hypocrisy, corruption and everything else. Unfortunately, tragically, Luis Espinal was assassinated last March; he was kidnapped by a military group - it was called a right wing group

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but everybody knows it was working with the military, because he had denounced the military so often for their atrocities.

I met Luis Espinal during the coup in October last. It was in a situation where about 400 people had been shot in about two days, and I met him the following day. There was a big meeting of Christians to strategise what their response was to the coup. He was there, and very confident; I had been looking forward to meeting for a long time because I had heard a lot about him. He was giving a lot of clear direction; the bishops were doing some mediation role, at that time, and he felt unhappy about that. Like most of the other people, and began to say that the Bolivian people should hear what the church of the people is about as well — so there was another response came out, condemning in a sense the mediation role of the bishops, mediating between the new dictator and the opposition, and they felt that this was an acceptance of the dictatorship. I was really impressed by him, and I felt that his dedication to journalism expressed something of what this new movement is about.

ARCHBISHOP ROMERO

One of the most important people of this year in all of Latin America is of course Bishop Romero, who was so brutally assassinated in March. There are so many things remarkable about Bishop Romero that it would be impossible to sum up his personality, his message. A man who started as a very conservative church personality and then through seeing what had happened to some of his friends, concretely to a Jesuit friend of his, Fr Rutilio Grande in 1977, he became more to a progressive way of seeing things.

Two things I find remarkable about Bishop Romero. First, as a bishop he deliberately chose after 1977 to see his function accompanying his people, a very oppressed people as is the El Salvadorean people, in their struggle.

His essential task was a dialogue with the people. At the same time he was able to assert his character as bishop strongly. I only hope that soon much more material will be available of the sermons of Bishop Romero. His message can be summed up very simply in the preferential option for the poor, preaching the gospel to the poor, and living the gospel together with the poor. Not only did he help the poor of his country, and particularly the peasants, to become aware of the injustices and to struggle for their freedom and a freedom from injustice, and for their liberation, but he put the church at the service of their organisations.

The second aspect is some elements of his message, particularly of his death. It is quite clear his death came from the right in El Salvador, from the establishment, because Bishop Romero was taking a very strong line on two issues — he questioned President Carter in the United States for sending military aid to El Salvador and called on him not to send military aid.

Faced with the repression going on in his own country and seeing the soldiers committing these acts of violence he began to call on the military themselves to disobey orders, not to carry out repression. I think he's one of the few bishops, the only bishop I know who has actively done that. In his last sermon, given the Sunday before he was assassinated, he made a very strong plea, and ordered, as bishop of El Salvador, that soldiers should disobey orders when they were called to shoot peasants, when called to repress innocent people they should not repress. Obviously this was too much for the military to take, and so he was assassinated.

Also his message of calling for unity among the popular organisations was a very strong one. Happily his message has been taken up in so many places. And in Ireland there is an Irish-El Salvador ad hoc committee, which is composed of the representatives of different organisations here, Trocaire, Amnesty, Irish Justice and Peace and some of the other groups, and individuals, in expressing solidarity with El Salvador. I think it is very important people in Ireland get to know a little about El Salvador, about Bishop Romero and about the church in El Salvador because it can show what is happening, and can be a model for us.

A lot of people in El Salvador were very impressed when Bishop Casey came for the funeral of Bishop Romero, and his presence was felt as very strong support for the people on that very tragic day when so many people were killed. One would hope that this interchange with El Salvador will grow and that Irish people and the Irish church could learn from the church in El Salvador which has had to sacrifice so many people. There have been about ten or twelve priests killed in the last two or three years, but thousands or certainly into hundreds of catechists, community leaders, at different levels of the Christian community in El Salvador have been assassinated, some with tremendous atrocities.

A lot of the time too people in Ireland have very strong sympathies for the US and are inclined to overlook a lot of the things they are doing wrong, and certainly they are doing some things very wrong. They should take the advice of Bishop Romero; instead we have Jimmy Carter sending in all types of military aid, and the ambassador in El Salvador taking a very active role, practically running the country. This is the source of an awful lot of the violence, the reactionary right wing in El Salvador, the military, that they feel supported by the US and have their backing.

Dawn - Personally, how much of a dilemma would you feel between violent and nonviolent methods of struggle in the Latin American situation?

Pat - As I say, at the beginning of the 'seventies there was a real dilemma there. If you said you were nonviolent they said you were petit bourgeois, you're not really for revolution, you're not really for change in society, you're with the status

quo. Since that time there has been a change and I think thanks to a lot of people who have said — Look, my option is this one, to work in a nonviolent way for change, totally identified with the process of liberation, the struggle for a new society, and will work in my own capacity. A lot of people have done that through the press, through journalism, lawyers have done it defending prisoners, of being prepared to work side by side with people who didn't see things the same way, and consider the whole movement of everybody. I think in concrete situations there is a dilemma for a number of people, but I think for a lot of people in Latin America the fact of the nonviolent movement growing up, historically, has been that all types of opposition have been curtailed.

It is almost suicidal for a lot of people to think of a violent option. In the southern cone countries, in Chile, Argentina and other countries, a violent option isn't a realistic one. Through that people began to act nonviolently, and discover the importance of that to what this whole process is about in Latin America.

NICARAGUA: VIOLENCE AND NONVIOLENCE

Dawn - Maybe we could look for a minute at the situation in Nicaragua, and the armed revolution that overthrew Somoza there, and how successful it has been in transcending violence and in trying to build a new society.

Pat - Nicaragua is a concrete situation where the dilemma was strongly presented for an awful lot of people who were strongly dedicated to nonviolence, for example the person who is now foreign minister, Fr Miguel de Escotto. He wrote in an issue of 'The Catholic Worker' his own views on the situation; he explained that in the Nicaraguan situation, unfortunately he said, the churches and everybody else had never shown the people what nonviolence is about. So he said it was very easy to come out now and condemn it because there is a struggle going on. His own position was still to continue, himself, in his own personal option of nonviolence but of working together with the Sandinista liberation movement, which was an armed struggle movement.

There was a great debate because Ernesto Cardenal, a Trappist monk, who set up a community in Solentiname in Nicaragua, and who had as his novice master Thomas Merton, and who a lot of people saw as one of the followers of Thomas Merton in the Americas, decided in the end of 1978 to join the Sandinista movement and become a member of it. In the United States there was a lot of division among pacifists generally, and the division was along the lines saying you can't work together with people using violence.

Actually in this situation the fact that a lot of people have been prepared to work together, or people working non-violently within the Sandinista movement, has meant that in the victory — it has been a very unique situation that in Nicaragua when Somoza was finally

ejected, well he got out of the country a few days before — when the Sandinistas finally triumphed on the 19th July last year, there were no reprisals taken against the soldiers. And I think that for me that is really remarkable. I have seen some of the testimonies, some of the atrocities that the national guard were committing there, which is amazing when you think of people calling for no reprisals.

There is a famous story of Tomas Borge, who is one of the leaders of the Sandinista movement; when he got into Managua he met a national guard officer who had tortured him and he said, something which was very reported in Nicaragua in order to give an example to the people — My vengeance on you will be that I will forgive you. And effectively he did. Now the death penalty has been ruled out, and a lot of people have criticised the Nicaraguans and saying that it is going to be their downfall that they have forgiven their enemies. But of course that doesn't mean that national guard officers who have been responsible for so many atrocities have gone free, they have been submitted to a justice-type process.

But I think Nicaragua is an important situation in itself. I remember some of the celebrations we had for the triumph in Nicaragua; everybody dancing, it was an experience that perhaps for the first time ever at least in our generation. There had been so many funerals, so many military coups, trying to get friends out of prison, and torture, that this was one case where our friends were coming out on top and beginning to organise society as they wished.

Dawn - So you feel hopeful then.

Pat - Yes. I think there's a very original mixture in Nicaragua, of gospel values together with solid type of economic analysis, and a search for a new way in Latin America. It represents the same type of hope which Cuba represented in 1960, but for a whole series of reasons this didn't come about but one hopes in Nicaragua it will. Someone has called it a revolution made by artists, poets and priests! I'm not sure how true that is, but some of the messages coming out of Nicaragua are very moving.

For example, one of the mottoes that they have which is being repeated and painted up on walls, which is perhaps appropriate to "Dawn" magazine as well, is "Dawn is no longer a temptation." It is a writing of Tomas Borge which he wrote several years ago; he felt that to struggle for a new society, a Nicaragua without 'somocismo', without exploitation, without oppression, without ignorance, was a temptation, was something which wasn't going to happen. Now, "Dawn is no longer a temptation"; we are working in a new society, there is a new form of relationship; part of that has been the literacy campaign in Nicaragua. So it does represent a real hope, and this has been taken up in El Salvador and all central America.

But the cost is very high, unfortunately, and if we could have a strong movement

on central America internationally, to support the struggle there I think the cost would be much less. People wouldn't be forced into the situation of taking armed struggle with all the costs that go with it.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Dawn - Just focussing in there on the human rights situation, do you feel international pressure can be effective if it is sufficiently well organised? You have intimated there that it can be.

Pat - Yes, it can; I think it needs to be done efficiently, in a pragmatic type of way, in association with a struggle. What one is supporting in the struggle for human rights is a people's struggle; one is extending solidarity, one is extending links with an oppressed people who are struggling. The Nicaraguan case is somewhere where that worked out very well; the Nicaraguans were saying — Look, leave us alone, no foreign intervention in Nicaragua, that the US should not send in troops even if they call them peace troops, that there should be no soldiers going to Nicaragua — let us get rid of Somoza, we can get rid of him.

Sometimes when people say we should solve the situation in that country, they are really putting forward an interventionist policy, which plays into the hands of the right wing nationalists within the country who point to these foreign interventionists. What really needs to be built up is that there should not be intervention in these countries. I think this is what the solidarity movement is about; it's very clear in El Salvador at the moment — people talking about no US intervention in El Salvador, no US arms to support the junta. Recently the British government has started selling arms again to Chile, and people are trying to stop the sale of arms to Chile. Then internally the people will be able to struggle, you can't decide from outside what form a liberation struggle is going to take in a country.

WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE

Dawn - So at what level is the struggle for human rights going on in different countries?

Pat - In the countries which I know most about there has been a growth of these groups which is really remarkable and didn't exist before. And they haven't been the invention of any Mr Jimmy Carter or anyone talking about human rights! They have grown out of a situation of oppression and which, in the concrete situation of Argentina, are very much linked with the growth of the women of Plaza de Mayo. Plaza de Mayo is the central square in Buenos Aires, and these are the mothers of the disappeared, of the vast number of people who have so-called 'disappeared', that is kidnapped by paramilitary groups working together with the official military. They have been, more than likely according to most investigations, killed.

Now these women who tend to be rather elderly women, many of them of middle class or even upper middle class background, have really taken on a role first of being concerned, of asking questions about what has happened to our children,

where have they gone to. This was a few years ago and now they've begun to ask what kind of society is this that kidnaps our children? It's a new movement in that it's not easy to say it's a political movement, it is political but it goes to ask deeper questions. The women say they want a society which will guarantee life and freedom to their children. So the politicians have a difficulty dealing with this women's movement in Argentina, and the churches have a difficulty because it cuts through a lot of the type of official arranging between the church and state.

This has happened in Argentina, and earlier I spoke of the movement in Bolivia led by the miners' wives, these campesino (peasant) women. In Chile you have also the relatives of the disappeared, largely women. So I think the struggle for human rights has been taken up very strongly by women. There is in Brazil the growth of the struggle against inflation, as they call it, again led by women.

THE CHURCH

Dawn - So far as the church is concerned it has been generally identified with the forces of reaction. Where this isn't the case, and there are quite a number of examples, what would you consider were the principal reasons in causing people within the church to adopt progressive stands?

Pat - In answer to the last point, personally, I found myself in Argentina where I was at first in a university. Life in Argentina as I had known it was much better than life in Ireland in fact — we ate a lot of meat, there was plenty of wine, there was a good life, there were more amenities than here — this was middle class Argentina, the Argentina of the students and the universities. I decided that I hadn't really gone out to Argentina to be working in that area so I went out amongst the countryside. There the set-up was completely different and I discovered an Argentina where kids were dying before they were three years of age, where you see brutal injustice of the most blatant type, violence, of people being exploited. A society that is doing this to ordinary people has to change. So this stays with one, that there has to be a new structure come around.

But it is one thing to come to this intellectual conclusion, another is to grow up and see your friends, who are peasants, or whatever they are, suffering the consequences, and dying at the age of thirty-five. So, in reply to why people in the church become more progressive, it is because this experience really shocks us, to discover that all along we have been living in these big churches and colleges and everything else.

RE-READING THE GOSPEL

Then in that position with the poor, we began to re-read the gospel, and the gospel takes on a real message; I think in Latin America for years and generations the gospel has been buried under an official church with a kind of state religion — a lot has been spoken of how the conquerors came into Latin America with the sword

and the cross. Effectively it is a form of state religion in that the concern of the Spanish in getting to some area was to set up a church so that this city had a name, had a patron saint, and a bishop. Then across the plaza, on the other side of the square, you had the municipal building; today if you get into any Latin American city if you want to get the central church or cathedral, the municipal building, the police headquarters and that, you have to go to the central plaza and they are all together.

I think the church some fifteen or twenty years ago changed, began to move out a bit amongst the people, and called for change. This is why many of the church personnel of the Catholic church, and indeed of all the churches, became more involved with the poor and the struggle has grown up. I think there is now a decisive type of stage, the church is in fact divided; you have had a lot of talk of the danger of Marxism, the danger of socialism, of liberation theology, of priests in politics. But you have had very little if any discussion of military chaplains, of which in Argentina there are about 200, who I know in several cases have been present at least on the premises where torture has taken place, of military bishops, of a bishop in El Salvador who is a colonel of the army etc. So you have a church identifying even with the worst forms of fascism, of exploitation of the people.

The new movement that is developing, if we talk about the progressive forces in Latin America, has a new understanding that wasn't there a few years ago. I remember when I was imprisoned, the first fellow who was imprisoned with me, he had been locked up twenty years before that — he was a Trotskyist. And he said to me — the first time he was imprisoned because he painted on a church wall that religion was the opium of the people — and here I am now, he said, here I am now in prison together with you who are a Catholic priest! Where does this all leave us! He was reflecting on some of the changes that had happened.

It is not any more a question of Marxists over against Christians, there is, from having suffered together, an alliance, a friendship rather than an alliance, has grown up over the years. The question of the gospel has really come alive for many people, that Jesus announced a new world, he announced peace, announced justice, — I have come to give my good news to the poor, that prisoners be free, that the oppressed lose their chains. This has a true and real meaning for people, and is being integrated in a way which is very unique.

And there is an originality in terms of church or religious practice, but also in terms of concepts of social organisation, forgiveness of one's enemies in Nicaragua, more consideration of the mass of people, of the literacy campaign, consideration of where people are at, of not forcing people too much — really a genuine consideration

that this is a movement of people, there are no great persons any more, there are no Che Guevaras, there are no Fidel Castros. So there tends to be a very broad range of people involving themselves in a very strong level of organisation.

SECTARIANISM

Dawn - To end off, if I could ask you a difficult question; if there are any comparisons between the situation in Northern Ireland and the situation in Latin American countries — any differences or similarities that may strike you?

Pat - There is one country that I find a lot of similarity with Northern Ireland, for one particular aspect of its problems, and that is Jamaica, particularly the city of Kingston. It is not very well known in Northern Ireland but Kingston, which is a city practically the same size as Belfast or a little smaller perhaps, has a similar sectarian problem to Belfast, with perhaps the same number of victims in recent years of sectarianism.

I spent some months living in Kingston, living in 'the ghetto', West Kingston, the area where this problem exists. The problem in Jamaica is largely political, of political patronage. You have the PNP, the Peoples National Party, a nationalist party, and then you have the Jamaican Labour Party, which is an opposition party at the moment though it has been in government before, which represents the trade unions or more or less the blue collar workers. There are certain ghettos down near to the harbour which are strongholds of the Jamaican Labour Party and then there are other ghettos to the north, all in west Kingston, which are PNP. In the two, local control is exercised by 'the gunmen', which are literally people with guns who control the streets. They control people going in and out, there's a no man's land, rows and rows of houses which have been bombed out, have been burnt down, there has been a lot of violence.

In that situation there are similarities; obviously there are differences as well — there is no religious differences between PNP people and the Jamaican Labour Party. There is a great religious plurality in Jamaica and particularly in the ghetto areas. A lot of the problems in Kingston are because of the acute unemployment, with robbery going on. Then there's a division of markets; in Belfast people get together in the centre of the city but in the market areas of Kingston they are separate as well. People there were asking me how, in Ireland, you distinguish between a Protestant and a Catholic; and I said — well, how do you distinguish between a Labourite and a PNP ?!!

STONES AND WHISTLES

Dawn - One other difference too that you were giving between Latin America and the situation here is that you saw six year olds throwing stones at the British army here in Belfast, people generally stoning the army and abusing them. In

Latin America the situation is quite different in that if a gun is pointed at people then they run.

Pat - Yes, that is true; if you see a gun being pointed at you you know it's going to be fired so you don't stay around. One difference in Latin America is that there is not such a big military display; most of the repression is carried out by civilian armed military officers. These are called sometimes right wing military groups, paramilitary groups, but the official word for them internally I think is 'task forces'. You just see these individuals riding around in cars and taking out their machine guns and picking up people. You know they're part of the army but they're not dressed. So there isn't such a visible military presence. I saw it in Bolivia and Argentina and you certainly were very careful when they were around, when the military had their guns out.

The confrontation that I saw in Bolivia was perhaps a stronger confrontation than here in that, during the military coup, they were beating the military out of it, and not even throwing a stone, through a series of whistling, and they just couldn't stick it. Even when their helicopters came over they started whistling so they started shooting. Then they continued whistling, and they'd have the funeral and put the coffin in white, and drape the Bolivian flag, and they wouldn't run from the military. They refused to run, even the bullets would be flying around them.

HOPE IN THE STRUGGLE

Part of my interest in coming to Northern Ireland, even though I've been back a few times since I left ten years ago, is that people in Latin America have been asking me a lot about Ireland. Here people talk much more about history than in the Americas. People here have probably got tired and stopped looking. There is a sense of tiredness.

In Latin America there is a sense that it is possible to create a new society, that new structures can be created. People are prepared for it. They have tremendous resources, in some of the gospel values, of ideas from the past, of redistributing wealth and creating an effective new society.

Here a lot of the talk is about arrangements to end the violence; there isn't the same imagery of what kind of society can be created, where people can be better, where our children can live better lives, where there can be a greater love for the land of Ireland, that things are shared better. Here perhaps people can learn from Latin America a sense of hope; here are people hoping against tremendous odds for a new sense of the struggle, and I think feel a sense of being brothers and sisters.

The Irish-El Salvador Support Committee can be contacted c/o The chairperson, Brendan Butler, Pennock Hill, Swords, Co Dublin.

Archivo

Memoria

WOMEN against MILITARISM

by MARY KAY MULLAN

"How do we as women experience militarism and what is our non-violent feminist response?"

This conference — organised for War Resisters International by some of its women members and other women — was held from 26th to 30th July at Laurieston Hall, Scotland. It was open to women working for non-violence, especially those who were active in anti-militarism, as the organisers wanted to have a 'working conference' which would produce positive results and concrete plans of action. The conference was a follow-on from work started at the first "Women engaged in the nonviolent movement" conference in France in 1976 and continued at the W.R.I. Triennial Conference in Denmark 1979.

Organisation was taken on by two groups — The women non-violence discussion group in England booked the centre and looked after the practical side of running the conference; International representatives (mainly in Europe) planned the structure and workshop topics. 55 women attended the conference — from Costa Rica; U.S.A., the Basque country, Andalucia, France, Switzerland, West Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, England, Scotland and myself from Ireland.

WOMEN AND DEMILITARISATION

The following quotation from the Planning Group's invitation explains the reasons for the conference:

'The increasing militarisation of our lives, is something which has specific relevance for us as women, not only in the direct sense, of being 'allowed' into the military, as the 'need' arises due to falling birth rates, increased demand for defence, equal opportunity, (and other excuses) or being encouraged to 'reproduce soldiers', but also in relation to work situations, health, and living patterns that will be enforced upon us to ensure the continuance of the military-industrial complex. So far the connexions between women and militarism have not been explored in depth by either the women's movement or the non-violent movement, and we feel it's very important that an opportunity is provided in which women can share their ideas and reflect on their particular experiences as women.'

Some women within the women's movement are in favour of women being able to join the military, on grounds of equality, and we feel it's important to counter-act this attitude and make the contradictions within it clear. We see that the liberation of women and the demilitarisation of society have a lot in common.

The purpose of a women's conference is not to exclude men, but to include women in a situation where our experiences/ideas/reflections can be fully and openly shared.'



COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME

Background papers were prepared on the following among other topics:

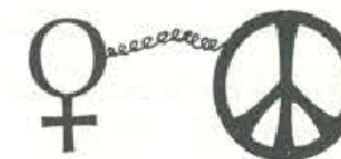
- Women and the military: Anti-militarism and Emancipation (from West Germany);
- Women and the military in U.S.A.
- Women and the future (Petra Kelly)
- Emergency laws in Britain
- Workshops were held on:
- The political function of the military;
- Compulsory service;
- Unemployment and military recruitment;
- NATO, disarmament and the U.S. connection;
- Total resistance to military service;
- Nuclear power and nuclear weapons;
- Rape and war;
- Women in indirect military work.

Celina Garcia told us about Costa Rica which does not have an army but where macho ideas are still dominant. I talked about women and the war in Northern Ireland — a discussion which aroused much interest and caused me to regret not bringing more information (including DAWN).

The first few days were difficult for everyone — settling in, language problems, fears of not producing concrete results after the long journey. Thus we spent long hours in large group meetings talking about 'process' and structure which made everyone feel more frustrated.

The final evaluation was good humoured and supportive, the party fun with lots of games, dancing, talk and laughter till the wee hours!

We went for walks in the woods, swimming and canoeing in the lake, frisbee and volleyball games on the lawn, strolls in the twilight to the local pub, women gradually communicating across language barriers, lesbians talking together, music and songs at night — full moon and dancing. Feminism coming to the core.



FUTURE ACTIONS

It was decided to use the Feminism and Nonviolence Newsletter for future discussion. Also we should make use of W.R.I. and IROH network plus existing non-violence and feminist magazines to spread information and gather support for specific actions.

Some ideas put forward for international action were:

compiling reports of women who are or were in the armed forces; collecting military advertising propaganda to use in anti-recruiting campaigns. A week of action Women against war is to be held at the beginning of March 1981.

Other suggestions made will be contained in a report on the conference to be published later this year.

continued on next page —

I came home from the conference refreshed and invigorated - these strong women were representatives of groups working for non-violent change despite the huge obstacles of our patriarchal military-industrial society. There is still hope for the future if we can work together with patience, endurance, understanding and awareness of our strength.

Addresses:

W.R.I. 55 Dawes Street
London SE17 IEL

IFOR Hof van Sonoy 15-17
1811 LD Alkmaar
The Netherlands

Feminism & Nonviolence Newsletter
from: Jenny Jacobs,
168 Hamilton Road,
Longsight
Manchester 13
(£1.50 for 6 issues)

Interested in forming a Women and Non-Violence Discussion Group?

I would like to meet with other women for a study/discussion group.

Contact me: Mary Kay Mullan,
36 Great James St.
Derry BT48 7DB
tel. 69691

or through Dawn.

EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

- Eoin Dinan -

The controversial undebated decision of the British Government to deploy Polaris submarines with the lethal nuclear armed Trident missiles (costing £5,000 million at least) and U.S. plans to install destructive cruise missiles carrying large nuclear warheads throughout Europe as part of the NATO nuclear armoury in Europe - deployment already accepted by Britain, West Germany and Belgium - could contribute to a third world war with the theatre set for Europe where the two super powers may confront each other.

The will for peace is strong and preparations and promotion of disarmament campaigns are long under way. A new strength to the movements was the formation of European Nuclear Disarmament (END), which from 12-14 September held a conference of activist movements in Europe.

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END is sponsored by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation in co-operation with other peace and disarmament groups in Europe. It is supported by European churches, writers, trade unionists, academics, politicians, and other men and women.

Launched at press conferences in London, Paris, Berlin, Oslo and Lisbon, the END campaign statement called for a nuclear free zone in Europe. It called for joint action to free the entire territory of Europe from Poland to Portugal from nuclear weapons, air and submarine bases and from all institutions engaged in research into or manufacture of nuclear weapons. It asks the two super powers to remove all nuclear weapons from European territory, the Soviet Union to halt the SS-20 missile production and the U.S. not to develop Cruise and Pershing II missiles for deployment in Europe.

Irish CND was represented at the conference. Peace and Disarmament groups participating were from Finland, France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, West Germany and Britain as well as groups like International Mobilisation for Survival, War Resisters International, World Student Christian Federation, International Confederation for Disarmament and Peace.

Ken Fleet of END spoke about its aims and strategy: disarmament through action, communication and co-ordination, with a broadening of the campaign through lateral exchanges with trade unionists, students, peace and women's organisations to result in a possible European Convention on Disarmament. It was noted that as yet END is more Western European orientated. Contacts are to be made to seek East European exchanges perhaps through direct approach and through churches such as the Russian Orthodox Church and East European Peace Committees.

END is to be present at forthcoming conferences of Non-Governmental Organisations in Geneva from 2-3 October. A Unilateral Disarmament Day is planned by W.R.I. for 24 October. An END penguin paperback will appear at the end of October. In January 1981 there will be a peace researchers conference to liaise with activists.

A future activists meeting will take place at which I.C.D.F. and the present ad hoc END committee will transform into an END committee.

CND BELFAST MEETING: slide show of Hiroshima and nuclear arms race + talk on Sat 11th Oct at 2.30pm in FMH, 22 Marlborough Park North, Belfast 9. All welcome. Please also note London disarmament rally Hyde Park 11am 26 Oct. for Trafalgar Square 2.30pm.

Carnsore Reports

1. THE REAL

CARNSORE

by MAUREEN KIM SING

The spirit of Carnsore '80 was illustrated when a fierce-looking leatherjacketed Hells Angel couldn't start his motorbike, a motorbike torso married to the back of a VW. A shorn, yellow-swathed Hare Krishna disciple produced some jumper cables while a gent in a sober suit obligingly offered his well groomed car battery. Where else in Ireland would one find co-operation between such different people and philosophies?

If tolerance characterised the spirit, this year's content aimed at breeding a healthy intolerance for nuclear power and all hazardous industries. The Vietnam War veteran, Joe Bangerton, spoke impressively, warning about Agent Orange (the defoliant herbicide which resulted in the Sveso poisoning catastrophe) and the horrors of life threatened by chemicals - from the air, sea, rivers and bubbling up from earth, as at Love Canal. Irish listeners, recalling the recent chemical dumping which killed 40,000 fish near Mitchelstown, were shocked to hear that products containing 24ST, 24D, and dioxin are in common use here. NET nitrate and Elanco Pharmaceuticals came in for dishonourable mention too.

The other central focus this year was uranium mining. A number of groups (Cork Anti-Nukes, Leitrim, Belfast) produced well-documented publications and exhibitions, and the Donegal Uranium Committee mounted a sizeable outdoor display.

Most of Cork PoE went up on Monday (especially the electricians!) but even the laggards who rolled up for the weekend found ourselves working fulltime, with little time to

enjoy the fruits of other's labours: excellent slides, films, workshops, and pictorial exhibitions, comprehensive bookstalls, and theatre.

The crowds were down, some thought, partly blaming the uncertain weather. I felt, however, that we had more committed people and more ordinary families from nearby coming to look and learn. The attempts to play down the music and free entertainment aspect during months of planning meetings seemed to have worked in the main. It was sad that David Nolan's group (Nuclear Safety Association) felt they could not participate unless all festival features were removed (impossible!) and even sadder that the media chose to emphasise the withdrawal excessively.

Pre-Carnsore media coverage repeatedly named Cork PoE and the Trades Union group as the chief organisers, which was not correct. We took part in planning meetings and volunteered to do work, as did Rialto, Revolutionary Struggle, Limerick Anti-Nukes, and many other groups from all over Ireland. There were no 'chief organisers' - we did it together.

2. NOT MUCH POINT

We don't encourage unsigned articles in DAWN, but the following critical piece, by an anti-nuclear activist who wants to remain anonymous for reasons known to the editorial collective, is included for its sobering note of caution.

The third Carnsore anti-nuclear rally simply marked time for the movement to stop nuclear power and uranium mining.

It took place in a domestic political climate in which it is less easy than it has been for over two years to win new support for the efforts to block a nuclear power programme. It provided few easy points of entry for those first-time attenders who did come along. On the other hand, it was not organised in such a way - and possibly cannot be organised in such a way - as to allow the existing activists a possibility to discuss strategy and co-ordinate their activities. Notices of a meeting to debate current problems of the anti-nuclear movement during the couple of days before the weekend were sent only to selected people; the Trade Union Anti-Nuclear Campaign (TUANC) heard about it

The Friday nonviolence training session was great fun, playing games in the sunshine. Maybe next year we can cut down on some duplication and groups can combine, as Cork PoE did with the Trades Union group's health workshop on Saturday, which was most successful.

The colourful presence of the Fire Farm, an offshoot of an American commune, the Farm (Tennessee), with their excellent publications and Nuke-buster geiger counter (see cover of DAWN 61) reminded us that not all foreign imports have to be hazardous to our health. The Farm (including a member of Greenpeace) represented positive life-promoting earth forces, as did the gentle Hare Krishna people, supplying their usual free food with spiritual advice.

Postmortem? Same as last year: be better prepared: bring more cardboard, paper, nails, markers, bullhorn. Advertise our workshops better. Take time off to benefit from and enjoy others' efforts. Coming home, the usual chagrin at finding the newspapers had done us in again, with lurid pictures of painted

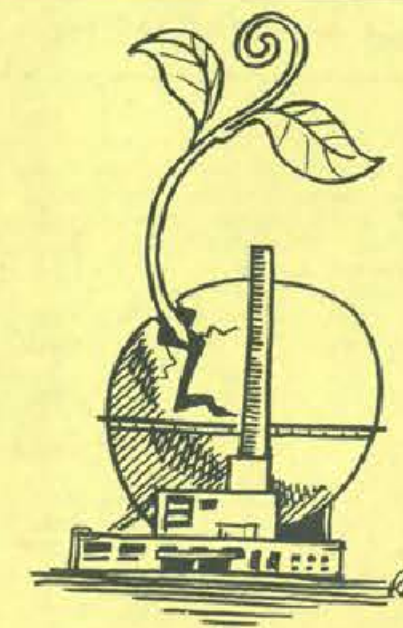
faces without mentioning that these were the theatre group and not your typical participant. Sigh. Tolerance? As journalists say: "Good News is No News". Still, most people who went there did indeed Get the Point, and many managed to make a few.

- Maureen -

PS: I was again outraged and sad to see the anti-nuke tent selling Outspan Oranges, especially this year when other non-South African brands were available. The 'they're cheaper' argument shows how far we have to go really to think anti-nuclear, anti-centralist, anti-exploitation. WHY are they cheaper?

PFS: And if people claim to be anti-pollution, why do so many Carnsore festival-goers throw so many papers, orange and banana peels, cigarette butts and plastic cups all over the ground, making an unsightly mess for other people to clear up later? - eds.

Maureen Kim Sing is an active member of Cork PoE. See her article, Nuclear Lies, in Dawn 55.



Evidently, some of the more conservative anti-nuclear forces in Wexford were not convinced. It would be hard to say that they were particularly missed (though it is of course sad that that it has proven impossible to sustain anti-nuclear activities in Wexford, so close to the target). However, the intention was only realized in part. The six-pack brigade had less to keep them than on previous occasions; some were only encouraged by the constant repetition of a Steely Dan album over the P.A. in the large marquee. But so many of the workshops and meetings drifted around, or were dominated by long speeches that the possibilities of participation or education were limited.

TRADE UNION INPUT

The TUANC went to Carnsore with its purpose and programme announced in advance. Its workshops were "aimed specifically at equipping trade unionists to counter the indifference or unspoken pro-nuclear feelings which led the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to defer a policy decision at its annual conference in July." Continued overleaf

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through London. A meeting of the Delegate Structure on the Friday evening gathered less than half a dozen people. And, as is now customary, the promised general meeting on strategy never took place.

BOOZE VERSUS BOREDOM

The intention to make Carnsore more educational, even 'serious', had been broadcast widely.

not much point - (from p.11)

Five workshops were arranged, all dealing with specific areas of trade union and government policy: energy usage; health hazards and political restrictions in the nuclear industry; the government's political handling of the nuclear issue; the economic benefits offered by uranium mining, as against the environmental, political, medical risks; the tactics to be adopted in the trade union movement. In the event, all the topics were covered, though in four workshops rather than five.

In one of several wilful misrepresentations of TUANC's aim, expressed at the final workshop, the quotation two paragraphs above was taken to mean that TUANC is interested exclusively or primarily in changing ICTU policy. This is not the case. Any progressive union or ICTU policy is only as strong as the

commitment of the members to enforce it. The ICTU conference demonstrated that there is strong anti-nuclear feeling in the unions (as had already been demonstrated over the months prior to the conference), but also that more remain to be convinced of the importance of the issue or of the need to reject what they see as just one other energy option. In that sense, the ICTU conference had provided a fairly accurate reflection of the balance of forces within the ranks of the unions. TUANC aims to shift that balance decisively - through agitation and education among the membership.

As it turned out, the Carnsore rally was not a useful arena to carry out that work. There were few present who identified themselves strongly as trade unionists, even if they did have formal membership. There were more who were openly hostile to the trade union movement, seeing it as part of a bulwark of

bureaucratic institutions, and unable to oppose effectively the drive towards the nuclear state. With attendances ranging between 20 and 100, the workshops went through details of the various energy demand projections and the assumptions behind them; they teased out what the attractions might be to trade unionists of what the uranium industry has to offer and how to take the shine off these apparent attractions; they considered how and in what circumstances the government might revert to a harder pro-nuclear line.

Any political gains to TUANC were limited largely to the benefit which eight trade unionists had from preparing and presenting contributions and which they shared with each other and maybe two or three times that number of people who participated in more than one of the workshops.

TUANC, like the rest of the anti-nuclear movement, simply marked time.

NEWSVIEW

Compiled by Billy King

HERNIA

And so Hibernia is dying of a hernia (from lifting too much in the way of going weekly and financially in costly libel suits). May it rest in peace for it will be missed; a unique publication in the English speaking world. That's not to say that it was the greatest and most radical thing since unsliced wholemeal bread was invented - but it was an example of journalism at its better (we don't see much of it at its best).

Talking of it dying of a hernia reminds me of the time a number of years ago when it started a satirical back page called 'Hernia'; this only lasted two or three issues as the printers refused to print a piece which treated the possible abdication of the then Pope (Paul) in the manner of a football star leaving a club!

Hibernia did of course have a 'business' section and an arts section. It wasn't by any means uniformly left or radical in any way. But the chances are its successor paper - the 'Sunday Tribune' - edited by Hibernia's editor John Mulcahy and with the current Hibernia staff providing the nucleus for the new publication - will be very much less so.

Backed by 'Sunday World' founder Hugh McLaughlin (a friend of mine seriously describes the 'Sunday World' as the worst paper he has ever seen), the 'Sunday Tribune' is intended to be an 'up-market' Sunday. There has already been a public barney between McLaughlin and Mulcahy; McLaughlin said there would be no radical politics in the 'Sunday Tribune', and Mulcahy replied saying that editorial policy would be the responsibility of the editor. Aiming at sales several times Hibernia's, it may yet turn out better than any of the other Irish Sunday's. But that's not saying much. We'll see from November onwards.

COMPARISON OF THE MONTH

In a debate on planning a link (twinning) between Belfast and Durban in South Africa (subsequently voted against by 25-18), Belfast councillors were at their best. Prize for the most fatuous comparison (of the century) must go to Alderman Bob Newman. Here's a piece about the debate;

Councillor Alasdair McDonnell (SDLP) said: "I don't think that with all our own problems we should become embroiled in the problems of South Africa." But Alderman Bob Newman, the deputy Lord Mayor, said the majority in Ulster suffered far worse than the blacks in South Africa.

Belfast Telegraph 2/9/80.

SENSITIVITY

Somehow the RUC didn't exactly show much sensitivity in charging the father of Michael McGartin, shot dead by the RUC while carrying a paintbrush (they apparently mistook it for a gun). He was bound over to keep the peace for 2 years after asking an RUC patrol near his home (close to where his son had been killed) had they any paintbrushes. Considering what the boy's family had gone through - their 16 year old son shot dead while out painting graffiti - it seems amazing that such jibes should be seen as anything more than the product of grief and despair after the boy's death and the manner in which it took place. Ah, the wheels of justice.....

ADOLFUS

Remember it's not too late to send in your nominations for the 1980 Adolf award (see Newsview in the last issue). Vote early, vote often! Now is your chance to make enemies and influence people! Our team of experts (virtually all of them were perts at one time) will assess the nominations as they stream in in a steady trickle of nothing so far.

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