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DAWN

An Irish magazine on nonviolent action
civil liberties and movements for change

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IRELAND'S ECO-DEATH

OSCAR FOR DR. REAGAN ?

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS AS PRESENTED BY PRESIDENT REAGAN

A CHANCE TO CAST OUR VOTE

IRISH CAMPAIGN AGAINST REAGAN'S FOREIGN POLICY



The 'Irish Campaign against Reagan's Foreign Policy' was launched to co-ordinate a protest campaign against that policy in connection with the forthcoming visit to Ireland of US President Ronald Reagan. A committee representing over 20 groups is made up of Peace and Disarmament organisations, church groups, Third World solidarity groups and human rights bodies who will organise and co-ordinate NW public protest and events preceding and during the visit. Among the groups participating in the campaign are:

- Action from Ireland, Association of Chilean Refugees, Co. Wick,
- Dawn Magazine group, El Salvador Support Committee, East for Life, Filipino-Irish Group, Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, Ireland-Cuba Friendship Society, Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Ireland-Chile Support Committee, Nicaraguan Support Group, Pax Christi, Sisters for Justice, Student Christian Movement, Trade Union CND, Women's Group for Disarmament.

The campaign is providing a forum which will:

1. Demonstrate Irish people's opposition to Ronald Reagan's foreign policy in regard to Third World countries, particularly in such areas as the Philippines, Central America and southern Africa.
2. Show to the world Irish people's revulsion at, and opposition to, the military policies of the Reagan administration, especially those involving nuclear weapons, which threaten the extermination of all life on earth.
3. Assert Ireland's neutrality and determination to pursue an independent foreign policy, without outside interference.
4. Alert Irish-American opinion to the stark contrast between the values expressed by Ronald Reagan and the horrific consequences of his policies upon the right to self-determination of all peoples - a right which is deeply cherished in Ireland.
5. Engage in peaceful and non-violent protest, at all stages of this campaign.

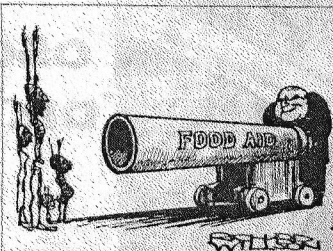
Public meetings have been held and a petition launched. The petition calls on the Prime Minister Dr FitzGerald to com-

municate to Pres. Reagan and to the people of the United States of America, that the invitation to him to visit our country does not signify that the people of Ireland endorse his policies. We totally oppose the policies of President Reagan with regard to: 1. Nuclear Weapons and the Arms Race. 2. Central America. 3. The Philippines. 4. Southern Africa.

Similar petitions are gathering massive amounts of signatures in Galway, Cork, etc., and a national petition day is planned for Saturday 19 May.

The following Saturday, May 26, a march from the Garden of Remembrance, Parnell Square, Dublin, at 2 pm, to the Dept. of Foreign Affairs will be followed by a Preliminary Rally outside there. Mass nonviolent protests will happen in Dublin on Monday 4 June the day when Reagan comes to Dublin to address the Dail and the Senate in sitting.

A 2 week 'Forgetting II Fran Push' will be relayed by some CND groups to go from Derry around the West coast and onwards to and in 'Ballygreen'.



FORM LOCAL GROUPS!

On the basis of full support for the aims outlined above local action groups are asked to participate in the Irish Campaign against Reagan's Foreign Policy. The co-ordination centre can be contacted at 86 Summerhill, Dublin 1, tel. 724632. Here the groups get suggestions for activities, petition forms, posters, leaflets, car stickers, badges and other useful signs.

WIMMIN'S CAMP

women for Disarmament are planning a peace action camp in Dublin from 30 May - 5 June - during Reagan's visit. Contact Women's Centre, 53 Dame St, Dublin 2, tel. Kathryn 774006 or Mary 894220.

SCHOLARS' PROTEST

The National University of Ireland is to 'reward' President Reagan with a Honorary Doctorate of Laws. It was decided by the governing body or Senate on 11th April after a 90 minute discussion and a vote of 25-6. The Prime Minister requested that Pres. Reagan be considered for an award and sat in on the deciding meeting. The doctorate is an honour given to people of 'exceptional achievements and qualities'. Much consternation has arisen since the announcement and has resulted in two academics handing back their degrees, with call for other NUI graduates to burn their parchments at the same time as President Reagan was receiving his.

The two academics, Dr O'Rahilly and Dr Burke, viewed that a Doctorate for Reagan devalues the members of the senate and deposes the concept of honorary degrees. They called for a 'delectoring ceremony for the handing back of degrees'. The Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland called on the NUI not to give the degree and they were joined by the Teachers' Union of Ireland whose conference urged the Government to cancel its invitation to Pres. Reagan because of US foreign policy.

POLITICAL PROTESTS

The Workers Party at its Ardcoil (annual conference) passed a resolution calling on the Government to withdraw the invitation extended to Pres. Reagan and called for 'massive, peaceful and orderly demonstrations' to show the widespread opposition in this country to American foreign policy in Central America, the Philippines, Grenada and the Middle East.

The Labour Party Conference passed a motion deploring the party leader Dick Spring (a Taoiseach in the coalition government) to present a petition to demand Reagan abhorring American foreign policy in Central and South America and the Philippines as signed by hundreds of delegates to the Labour Party annual conference.

The Socialist Workers Party, the People's Democracy and the Revolutionary Struggle group along with independent activists are involved in the Reagan Reception Campaign against the intended visit and held weekly meetings in the Dublin Resource Centre, 6 Crow St, Dublin 1 on Wednesday at 8pm.

MATERIAL

The Irish Campaign against Reagan's Foreign Policy (86 Summerhill, Dublin 1, tel. 724632) offers:

Campaign Posters: 'Reagan's Foreign Policy - Behind the smile... it's a killer' @ 40p (A3 size); Campaign Car Stickers: similar... bumper sticker 40p; Banners: 'Resist! Reagan's Foreign Policy... 40p (1 1/2" size); Ties: Reagan, Bright Blue/Red pattern Graphic and Poem by Kieran Murey... 50p (A3 size).

The Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (16 Dr Liffey St, DL, tel. 730877) offers:

Campaign Poster: 'The Black Briefcase'... commemorative poster... £1.00 (A2 size); Car Sticker: 'The Whole World in his Hands. Extermination in his Briefcase.' and 'The Briefcase is Coming. Meet it... June 1st-4th 40p each.

Badges: 'Briefcase is Coming' with logo. 40p.

The Action For Ireland (AFI) (86 Summerhill, D.1, tel. 724632) offers:

Postcards: series of 6 cards to 'commemorate' Reagan's visit. They depict: 1. El Salvador/Ballyporeen, 2. Hiroshima, 3. Nagasaki 4. the Philippines, 5. 'Moving On', 6. El Salvador Woman. 25p. each or £1.00 for set.

REAGAN IN SCHOOLS

A school pack on the US nuclear and foreign policy is produced by action from Ireland (AFI) - in time before Reagan's visit. The pack includes class plans, information sheets, photos and lists of resources and suggested activities. AFI is also prepared to give illustrated talks to schools, youth clubs, etc. Any teacher interested in receiving this pack should contact Chris Midway, Third World Centre, 86 Summerhill, Dublin 1, tel. 724632

Dawn 100 (May 1984) was produced in Dublin by Tom Kenny, Eoin Dineen and Kay Wendel. The next issue will be produced in Belfast on 21/22 May; deadline for articles is 16 May.

Belfast Dawn action group is having a meeting every Monday. Phone Belfast 647106.

Subscriptions Ireland, Britain and world surface; 10 issues for £3.50 or supporting sub £6. Air-mail: worldwide £6, supporting sub £10. Or 5 recent issues post free for £1.

Dawn 1 Belgrave Square, Rathmines Dublin 6. You can contact Dawn in Belfast by phoning 647106.

DAWN ANALYSIS

WAITING FOR REAGAN

Ronald Reagan, President of the United States, is coming to Ireland next month - not as a movie screen star - not as the President of the United States but as a little bit of both 'a presidential election candidate actor'. True to form, he may come as a 'Presidential hopeful' coming to Ireland to stake out the 40 million Irish-American vote back home (usually a large Democratic vote) but he's almost sure to leave as a 'Doctor' bestowed with a Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the National University of Ireland if that great 'act' comes off.

Well the man... er... Dr... er... Mr... er... President is coming following an invitation by our Prime Minister... Dr... FitzGerald who'll provide an official welcome backed with £250,000 of Irish taxpayers' money.

Ireland will be dazzled for 4 days by that 'shining hill' and the 'crowing of 'Mr... America'. Coming with him will be the glamour of Hollywood. After all conditioned by a film actor's career and entering his fourth Presidential year, he has brought with him much theatre to the oval office of the White House - mere trimming decorations and cosmetics to the 'real theatre' he's set in Europe, a 'theatre of limited nuclear war' bedecked with 464 Cruise and 100 Pershing II missiles. A 'tragedy' of man's inhumanity to mankind with a 'grand finale', the 'rest' left to history.

The disaster

Four years of his foreign policy have doubled the cost of the arms race and have very much changed the world. It is a foreign policy of overt superiority built on nuclear brinkmanship and increasing intervention ('we must take a no nonsense approach to our vital interests') in Central America, the Caribbean an aggressive policy where peace is conditional on the submission of the Soviet rival, where the peace of the world is tied to the United States' physical capacity to run it. It is backed by a proposed military budget reaching up to 2,000 billion dollars in the next five years - armed with Cruise, MX missiles, neutron lasers, etc.

The foreign policy of the US government has seriously tarnished the image of Ronald

Reagan. His notorious foreign policy speech on 16 Jan '84 as a 'historical' statesman espousing a constructive and realistic working relationship with the Soviet Union 'that will serve to promote peace in the troubled regions of the world and reduce the level of arms'. Such niceties were nothing but a presidential election ploy. They were not substantial at the European Security Conference in Stockholm when the US were appealed for a renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons, a non-aggression pact, nuclear free zones in Europe and a ban on nuclear weapons in Europe.

Our Chance

We hope that the nonviolent protest against Reagan's foreign policy will increase Irish public awareness of

(a) how the US government backs repressive regimes (a process of awareness which started with the Irish outcry to the incarceration of P. Niall O'Brien and the 'Negros Nine' in the Philippines); (b) how US multinationals exploit Third World countries while sustaining the oligarchies of these countries;

(c) the US Cold War against the Soviet Union (a policy which calls Ireland into the NATO). The conservative press here, in an attempt to irritate the opposition to Ronald Reagan's visit, argues that US tourism and investment in Ireland will be hampered by such actions.

This offers us a chance to learn about how US multinationals have exploited cheap Irish labour, polluted our environment and after a tax-free stay run off leaving in the wake - empty factories and unemployment. The visit of candidate Reagan presents us with a unique opportunity too, for a peaceful, sincere and effective protest at his foreign policy. We ask our readers for your support and participation in sending a clear and powerful message for peace and justice. Millions of poor and oppressed people in the Third World would be envious of this visit by Ronald Reagan, they too would like to meet him, to ask where are their missing relatives and dead?

President Reagan's visit endangers our neutrality. The opposition movement could affirm it.

BEHIND 10 YEARS OF DAWN

by Rob Fairmichael

It was 27th April 1974 and 8 people from Belfast, Derry and Dublin met in the old SCM House in Prince Arthur Terrace, Dublin, to plan 'an Irish national peace magazine'. This idea sprouted at a Benburk conference of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Max Gristi a couple of months previously. I don't know who thought up the title 'Dawn' at that first meeting but I shall be eternally grateful to them for suggesting a name which is short, evocative and not too 'labelled'. Besides, it is ripe for all sorts of puns like 'Getting up for 'Dawn' leaves you tired out by tea-time'!

More work has gone into Dawn over 10 years than you can likely imagine. Long hours over weekends and during the week too, sometimes hopelessly understaffed and doing nonviolent battle to cope with layout, or letters or subscriptions. And because there has been so much to do and sometimes so few to do it, involvement has been (for me and for others) bloody painful. But there have been ups as well, good meetings, good issues, good pamphlets, good crack. I leave it to others to judge whether all the effort has been worthwhile.

Dawn has always depended on people whose occupation - or lack of it - enabled them to spend more time working for Dawn than the normal worker or student. George Binkley was probably the original of the kind; in Derry, and succeeded at various times by myself, Garreth Byrne, Eoin Dinan and others. That is not to say that yet others did not do as much as they could, they certainly did. A relatively recent change in the last few years has been having a full-time Eireac volunteer; Lyngborg Ott for a year and now Kay Wendel for 17 months.

Undoubtedly the saddest occasion of the ten years was the death of Dermot Hurley in the autumn of 1978. Dermot had become involved in Dawn during

its first year and played an important role in our work; with the subscription address moving to Dublin in 1978 his contribution would have been crucial. I quote from the tribute which appeared in Dawn, "Throughout his life Dermot dedicated himself to the non-violent struggle against repression and for equal opportunity, rights and freedom for all, not only through his activities with pressure and minority groups, but in his personal life also." We did indeed lose a good friend and a true comrade.

Ten years is not a long time in many ways and yet in others it is. When Dawn began the recent 'troubles' in the North were only 5 or so years old, and the Irish anti-nuclear power movement (precursor of the present anti-bomb movement) wasn't even dreamt of. At that stage nuclear plants were envisaged for both North and South, and Dawn was there to report and analyse.

While Dawn had a 'special relationship' with some peace and civil liberties groups, the reaction (or more accurately lack of it) from most 'peace groups' - who should have been the natural audience for Dawn - was disappointing. Because Dawn was independent it meant the magazine wasn't seen as anybody's baby and support from other groups - even in terms of being willing to provide material about the work of their own groups! - often wasn't forthcoming (with the honourable exception of a number of individuals). But the group persevered and has managed to cover many happenings and events unreported by any other media.

But the lack of a clearly defined readership does lead to some problems. One is as to the usefulness of the publication. Another is the lack of a readily available pool of people to draw on to do the work

and become involved. These two factors (principally) led to the decision at the start of this year to call 'Dawn' magazine to a close if things don't work out better. BUT Dawn has every intention of continuing to produce 'Dawn Direct' (a more theoretically based journal), occasional publications and publishing pamphlets, as well as working as an action group. My feeling at this stage is that Dawn coverage of a wide field of social change activities is necessary so something we won't get much news for.

Dawn has never had 'an office' as opposed to using members' homes as sometimes other people's premises for storage and meetings. This of course leads to difficulties of squeezing the large into the small. But since there's no way we could afford an office it saves having to pay for one! For production weekends we usually get the use of someone else's premises - in the past including SCM, IFS and WFI (to all of whom our thanks).

And a quick word about some other people without whom Dawn magazine would have long sunk, namely the non-commercial printers Dav and Marilyn. They've been doing Dawn now since No. 3 (initially just the cover but the entire thing since No. 19). Thanks.

But people usually do expect 'an office'. The interesting proposal came to light when we were served hosts at the old subscription address of 331 Ormeau Road, Belfast. A young German couple visiting asked did we know of Dawn magazine? They were amazed to discover that this Belfast terrace house was the nearest thing to a Dawn 'headquarters'. They had the impression that Dawn was produced by a large commune somewhere in the countryside! Oh well.....

There have been a number of personnel changes over the years, more due to 'natural wastage' of people moving or personal factors than to becoming disillusioned with Dawn. In Dublin for example, there have been at least 3 complete changes. We can always use more people; consider that an invitation! Although for short times the male/female ratio in Dawn has been equal, most of the time there has been a considerable preponderance of men compared to women. What this says about Dawn men and women I'm not quite sure and would be happy for someone to enlighten me, perhaps some woman who has been involved in Dawn would see something on this score.

A typical production weekend scene. This is from the SCM house, Dublin in 1961. Left to right; Tony Thompson, Stuart Mac Minto, Lyngborg Ott, Dawn Ruth Nelson.



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The action side of things is something which has often gone unrecognised. A natural feature of being a magazine is providing information to people through other means - verbal, letters, phone; Dawn often acts as an information service. But action there has been. In September 1975 two members of Dawn and two of Love, Peace and Justice jointly leafleted British soldiers in Derry with the 'Some Information for Discontented Soldiers' pamphlet in solidarity with the 'SWVIC 14' trial at the Old Bailey in London. Of recent Dawn has played its fair share in work for and at Bishopscourt Peace Camp. And Dawn has also been to the fore in promoting nonviolent action training (e.g. with various sessions and a training pamphlet - Dawn 72). At the moment we are trying to upgrade the action side of things.

We've been the first (and often the only people) to do or cover many things. As mentioned above, we were involved in the only Northern Ireland leafletting of the British withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign Leaflet. Our 'Nonviolence in Irish History' pamphlet was remarkable for an article on Daniel O'Connell which the editor of his collected letters said he learnt from, and a piece on American Irish history which opened new vistas of the Irish experience (and a radical one it was). Our two pamphlets on neutrality (the first in 1978 before it became the issue it is today) were important for their contribution to the vital debate on the Republic's international position. Another recent pamphlet, a first in its category, was the Dawn 'Alternative Defence Plan for Ireland'.

And so I could go on but that hopefully gives some idea of what we have achieved. And yet in other ways we have failed miserably. There is no radical, nonviolent social change movement. There is no great movement happening in the North. Dawn itself has never had more than a dozen and a half people involved at any time (and usually less). Many of our issues have been middling and mediocre. Sometimes we have failed to adequately share our vision with others.

Yet that vision of nonviolent social change for justice is an important one and especially so in our increasingly repressive and nuclear-terrorised age. The power of the pen may not always be mightier than the sword but combined with unarmed strength is a force to rout the mighty, depose the despots, and establish justice and freedom. Brave words. Let's see how we do in decade No. 2.



A Dawn training weekend: street theatre in Dublin, 1960. Left to right: Garreth Byrne, Patric Cannon, Eoin Dinan, Justin Morshan and Rob Fairmichael. (Garreth, Eoin and Rob were Dawn members)

KNOW YOUR DAWN PEACE GATHERING

Know your Dawn Questionnaire

Questions 1. In what Irish city did the army examine Dawn files and explain their presence in the house by saying a soldier had been leaning against the front door which had then accidentally opened (one of several such raids and questionings)?
2. When and where was an issue of Dawn literally derailed?
3. a) In what Irish city was a member of Dawn questioned at home by plain clothes detectives and accused of being a member of the provisionals? b) What would have been his quickest refutation of this?
4. What country seized about 94 out of a consignment of 100 or so copies of Dawn sent to an individual member in that country?

Answers 1. Derry, at the original subscription address of 56 Ferguson Street.
2. Early 1976, when the train Norman Lockhart was travelling on from Belfast to Dublin for a production weekend was bombed by the IRA and derailed, losing some production materials in the process.
3. a) Dublin. b) He was a Protestant.
4) The USA.

This short venture into some of the more unusual happenings behind the scenes of Dawn indicates something of the abnormality of the political climate Dawn has to face - abnormal, that is, by 'liberal' western standards but quite normal by 'illiberal' western standards. Yet Dawn work is mainly routine or more accurately routine rush to meet the monthly production schedule.

Bishopscourt peace camp will see a 'Peace Gathering' on Saturday, 19 May, which work for maintaining the camp is to be done: in the garden, in the caravan, some painting, etc. The camp's future has to be discussed. Should it be a weekend-only camp? Who is going to live there during the summer? The purpose of the camp remains unshaken. The role of the NRO in the North should be highlighted as well as the breach of Irish neutrality by the radar base. Further on, the existence of the camp should support the women's camp in Greenham Common; finally, nonviolent protest is to be promoted. Fair enough, but what tactical aims did we choose, shall we choose? Up to now we didn't have a 'mass protest' at the base; the media coverage was rather poor and the local support has been of a kind that didn't show during the blockades. So pick up your waffles and ideas for tactics & actions and make the trip on the 19th.

PEACE STUDIES

Starting in October the Department of Peace Studies (aligned to the Irish School of Ecumenics) offers ten-lecture classes on 'War, Peace and the Churches', 'International Politics and Disarmament' and 'Ireland in International Affairs'. Scene of action will be the Milltown Institute in Dublin and the fee is £15 for each course (certificate courses are dearer). Enrolment forms from The Secretary, Dept. of Peace Studies, Irish School of Ecumenics.

BEYOND UNLIMITED GROWTH

The natural base of life on earth is in danger, some have felt since the early '60s. First the croaking poisoning by DDT of the nutrition circle (DDT in mother's milk) was revealed through Rachel Carson's 'Silent Spring'. In 1971 the first demonstration against 'peaceful' nuclear power at Rosneath in France marked the beginning of a broad movement. The direction the technological progress has taken was felt to disturb if not destroy the ecological system. Scientific predictions - the 1971 report of the Club of Rome about the world's future (or end) - fostered this belief, an ecological concern based on 'hard facts' not on 'romanticism'. The 'Global 2000' study, of which we carry a summary below, sparked off an

outcry in 1980, especially in Germany. In Ireland it remained unknown. Here ecological concerns slowed down after the Government's decision not to go ahead with the Carnore nuclear plant. Some groups kept on working - ROPE in Bantry, Clean Seas in Dublin, the Donagall Uranium Campaign, the newly formed Green Alliance. However, the switch-over from anti-nuclear power to anti-toxic industries as a major concern failed because in this field jobs are at stake as outlined by Joe Hill below. Without trade union opposition to hazardous industries no change seems likely. Nevertheless individuals form community action groups on local hills. The planned by-pass motorway in Dublin could be a major campaign in the next years.

GLOBAL 2000

'Global 2000' Report to the President' by the Council on Environmental Quality and the Department of State, Study Director Gerald O'Sarney, 3 vol., Washington: US Government Printing Office 1981. (1214 pp. with a summary of 47 pp., available in libraries)

In 1977, President Carter directed the Council on Environmental Quality and the Dept. of State to 'make a one year study of the probable changes in the world's population, natural resources and environment through to the end of the century'. The findings of the study were 'to serve as the foundation of our longer-term planning'.

Gigantic Prophecy

The study itself represents the US Government's first attempt to produce an interrelated set of population, resource, and environmental projections, and it has brought forth the most consistent set of global projections yet achieved by US agencies. The Global 2000 report's conclusions make disturbing reading.

Population checked by hunger

(1) rapid growth in world population will hardly have altered by 2000. (2) The world's population will grow from 4 billion in 1975 to 6.35 billion in 2000, an increase of more than 50%, 90% of this growth will occur in the poorest countries. At present and projected growth rates, the world population would reach 10 billion by 2030 and would approach 30 billion by the end of the 21st century. These levels correspond closely to estimates by the US National Academy of Sciences of the maximum carrying capacity of

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the entire earth. Already the populations in sub-saharan Africa and in the Himalayan hills of Asia have exceeded the carrying capacity of the immediate area, triggering an erosion of the land's capacity to support life. The resulting poverty and ill health have further complicated efforts to reduce fertility. Unless this circle of interlinked problems is broken soon, population growth in such areas will unfortunately be slowed down for reasons other than declining birth rates, such as hunger and disease.

Rich-poor gap widens

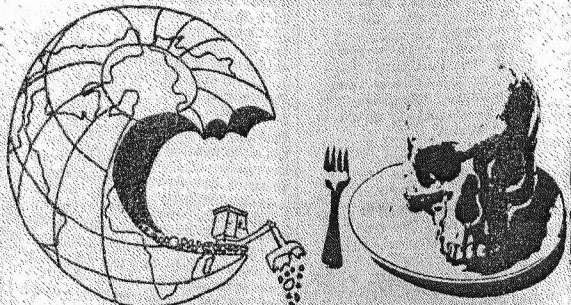
While the economies of the less developed countries (LDC's) are expected to grow at faster rates than those of the industrialised nations, the gross national product per capita in most remains low. It is expected to rise substantially in some LDC's (especi-

ally in Latin America) but in the great populous nations of South Asia it is not expected to do so. Therefore, the large gap between the rich and poor nations will widen.

World food production per capita is projected to increase by 25% between 1970 and 2000, but the bulk is expected to go to wealthy areas with an already high per capita food consumption. Meanwhile, per capita food consumption in South Asia, the Middle East and the LDC's will scarcely improve or will actually decline below present inadequate levels. Arable land will increase only 4% by 2000, so that most of the increased output of food will have to come from higher yields. Most of the elements that now contribute to higher yields - fertilizer, pesticides, power for irrigation and fuel for machinery - depend heavily on oil and gas.

No fuel for the poor

During the 1990's world oil production will approach geological estimates of maximum production capacity, even with rapidly increasing petroleum prices. The study projects that the richer industrialized nations will be able to command oil and other commercial energy supplies to meet rising demands through 1950. With the expected price increases, many less developed countries will have increasing difficulties meeting energy needs. For the one quarter of humankind that depends primarily on wood for fuel, the outlook is bleak. Needs for fuelwood will exceed available supplies by about 25% before the turn of the century. The world's finite fuel resources - coal, oil, uranium - are theoretically sufficient for centuries but are not evenly distributed; they pose difficult economic and environmental problems; and they vary greatly in their amenability to exploitation and use.



Non-fossil mineral resources generally appear sufficient to meet projected demands through 2000, but further discoveries and investments will be needed to maintain reserves. In addition, production costs will increase with energy prices and may make some non-fossil mineral resources uneconomic. The quarter of the world's population that inhabits industrial countries will continue to absorb three-fourths of the world's mineral production.

Rivers

Regional water shortages will become more severe in the 1970-2000 period. Population growth alone will cause requirements for water to double in nearly half the world. Still greater increases would be needed to improve standards of living. In many LDC's water supplies will become increasingly erratic by 2000 as a result of the extensive deforestation.

Forests die

Significant losses of world forests will continue over the next 25 years as demand for forest products and fuelwood increases. An area equivalent to half the size of California of forest is disappearing each year. Most of the loss is occurring in the humid tropical forests of Africa, Asia and South America. The projections indicate that by 2000 some 40% of the remaining forest cover in LDC's will be gone.

ALTERNATIVES MOVE ON

By Aidan Meagher

Can anyone who reflects for even a moment on the horrendous social, economic and environmental disasters of the current transport situation in the 'developed' countries seriously deny that an alternative approach to transport is not only desirable but absolutely vital if we are to retain our sanity?

The Transport Utopia

If I were asked to outline a desirable scenario for the transport network of the future, it would be something along the following lines: the private motor-car, which is so dominant in the present system and which consumes for over 90% of passenger miles, will be conspicuous by its absence. Not that the private car will have to exist but the mounting cost of motoring and the adoption by local and national authorities of sterner measures to control the car will ensure that it will be less of a threat and closer to the same dimension of mobility. Twenty years

Croaching deserts

A serious deterioration of agricultural soil will occur worldwide, due to erosion, loss of organic matter, desertification, salinization, alkalinization and waterlogging. Already, an area of cropland and grassland approximately the size of California is becoming barren wasteland each year, and the spread of desert-like conditions is likely to accelerate.

Climate changes

Atmospheric concentrations of Carbon-Dioxide and ozone-depleting chemicals are expected to increase at rates that could alter the world's climate and upper atmosphere significantly by 2050. Acid rain from combustion of fossil fuels (especially coal) is damaging lakes, soils and crops. For example, of 1,500 lakes in Southern Norway with pH below 4.3 70% had no fish. Radioactive and other hazardous materials present health and safety problems in increasing numbers of countries. Extinctions of plant and animal species will increase dramatically. Hundreds of thousands of species - perhaps as many as 20% of all species on earth - will be irretrievably lost as their habitats vanish, especially in tropical forests.

'Optimistic bias'

This, then, is the disturbing picture of the world as it will be in less than 20 years. The projections depict conditions that

are likely to develop if there are no changes in public policies and if there are no wars or other major worldwide disruptions. The findings of the study do, however, point to increasing potential for international conflict. Also, the future depicted by the projections may actually understate the impending problems - the methods available for carrying out the study led to certain gaps and inconsistencies that tend to impart an optimistic bias.

The conclusions of the Global 2000 study are reinforced by similar findings of other recent global studies that were examined in the course of the study. The question naturally arises as to whether circumstances have changed significantly since the earliest projections were made in 1977. The answer is no. The changes that have occurred generally support the projections and highlight the problems identified.

Scrapped by Reagan

The Global 2000 Study as a whole was to serve as the foundation of our longer-term planning. This necessary foundation, however, lies not in study findings per se, because all study reports become dated. Through the study process itself, the US government's capability for longer-term planning and analysis was strengthened. It is, therefore, that the expertise and knowledge gained through the Global 2000 Study, has largely been ignored by the Reagan administration.



Aidan Meagher is Chairperson of the Association of Public Transport Users.

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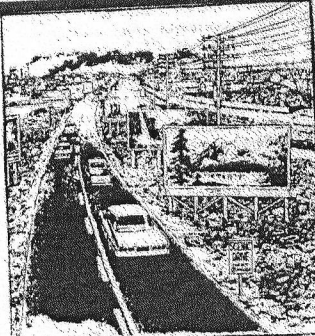
cause speeds will be strictly controlled and safety measures rigidly enforced.

The road carnage

The violence on our roads would alone be sufficient justification for the development of an alternative system. Despite all the pious platitudes and conventional expressions of horror when the annual road death statistics are published, despite all the road safety campaigns, the introduction of seat-belt legislation, and stiffer penalties for dangerous and drunken driving, despite all these and other measures, the violence on the roads continues at a high level. According to the latest figures, up to 6,000 people lost their lives and 86,000 were injured on roads in the Republic over the last decade. While I do not have the figures for Northern Ireland for the same period, it is well known that many more have been killed and injured in road 'accidents' than in the political disturbances since 1969. In the first two months of 1984, 80 people died on the roads of the Republic! The fact is that violence is institutionalized in the contemporary transport system; we have come to accept death and injury as an occupational hazard. However, all this slaughter and mayhem has an enormous economic cost also and places a severe burden on our health services. There are no figures available for this country as yet but if 30% of health spending at the world level is spent in looking after road accident victims, we can say that the figure for this country is at least 20% i.e. about £300 million!

Sick with pollution

Road deaths and injuries are not, of course, by any means the only evil of the present system. We also have to reckon with the gross pollution of our air by hundreds of thousands of vehicles especially in our larger towns and cities where the greatest concentration of traffic is. This poses a serious health risk to everyone, particularly older people with respiratory ailments but it is difficult to estimate the damage properly because of the impossibility of isolating air pollution from the other factors. There is stronger evidence, however, to link the damage to the developing brains of young children with the poisonous particles of lead emitted by petrol-driven engines. A number of investigations have shown that there is a close correlation between the low educational attain-



ments and erratic behaviour of inner-city children and the high levels of lead particles in their environment. Then there are the social and environmental problems of urban decay and suburban sprawl, the astronomical costs of road developments and repairs, the loss of agricultural land to road schemes etc. Many of these problems could be solved by the creation of an alternative transport network based on the alternative modes currently available, trains, buses, trams, bicycles and walking.

Reopen railway lines

The railways in this country have been in decline since the late '50s and early '60s when many of the smaller branch lines were closed. To be fair, it did seem reasonable at the time to close these lines because passenger numbers had fallen drastically. With the economic boom of the '60s car-ownership rose dramatically and this trend continued, in defiance of all the economic facts, throughout the '70s - the oil crises of 1973 and 1977 were simply ignored. Whatever justification there may have been in the past for rail closures there

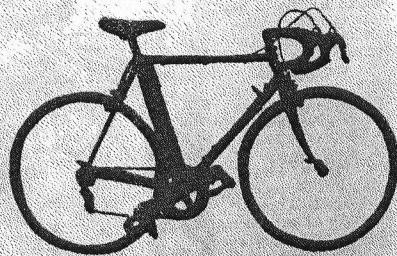
is none now; in fact, it would make sense not just to maintain existing lines but to reopen the lines that were closed since the Second World War because in the future energy and resource requirements will force governments to put a brake on the production of private cars and to promote the railways as the most energy-efficient of all transport modes.

Buses criss-crossing the country

Buses also will play an increasingly important part in the transport system of the future. Although not as comfortable as trains or as energy-efficient they are extremely flexible and useful for serving housing estates. Many cities, including Dublin have provided special lanes for buses only during peak traffic hours to allow buses to overcome the handicap of traffic congestion. These and other priority measures will make public transport buses more attractive to the commuter, the shopper and theater-goer. As more people use buses, bus services will tend to improve and fewer cars will clog up our city streets. To provide bus services in rural parts a network of bus routes must be developed criss-crossing the country so that each small town and village is served by at least a daily service.

Cycling and walking

These are the two most civilized modes of all and must be encouraged by governments as much as possible. City centres must be made attractive places for the pedestrian and cyclist alike through the development of pedestrian zones and cycle lanes. City streets must as far as possible be kept free of motorized traffic so that they become once more human, sociable places, instead of dangerous race-tracks!



IRELAND A TOXIC HAVEN

by Joe Mull



It surprises and puzzles many people to learn that Ireland is the tenth major exporter of pharmaceuticals in the world. Of the sixteen US-based drug companies twelve have set up at least one manufacturing plant in this country. Why should a country of less than four million people, with an agricultural base and with only a small indigenous industrial sector have such a high profile in a very modern business? What implications does it have for the future of such a small nation?

The chemical industry rises

From the second World War until relatively recently the main industrial thrust worldwide has been in the chemical and pharmaceutical sector. This was due at least in part to the military research and development projects of the era. Very quickly this new technology began to be used in the other sections of the industry: synthetic fabrics, fertilizers, pesticides, artificial food additives, plastics and synthetic building materials all come from this upsurge in chemical development.

At the same time there were changes in the way things were being sold. The introduction of the 'planned obsolescence' philosophy meant that there could be a never-ending market for these new goods. Medicines and 'health care' products also began their boom period at this time. More recently the electronics industry (another major user of chemicals) has come to the fore along with the newest technology - biotechnology - now being used to create synthetic chemicals.

Jobs at all costs

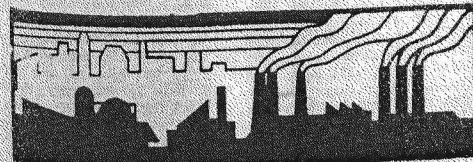
This upsurge in the chemical industry abroad coincided with an Irish attempt to attract industries of all sorts. The IDA - the Industrial Development Authority, started a drive to

get the expanding industries to set up in this country. The influx of chemical and pharmaceutical multinationals began. Ireland was, and still is, unprepared for what followed. Local authorities here, in vying with each other to get these new factories and jobs, bent over backwards to facilitate the chemical companies. Nationally the legal system was inadequate to handle these new plants. Fines in the region of £100 to £1000 do not scare multi-million pound corporations. Chemical plants throughout the country have gone through the phase of local opposition, some have legal battles to fight but they fear no restrictions while the blind belief in 'jobs at all costs' continues. Plants like Merck, Sharp and Dohme near Clonsilla, Eli Lilly near Kinsale, and Syntex near Ennis are all major employers in their areas and any local rumblings of opposition are quietly dealt with. Even continuing scandals like the pollution from Merck are not officially recognized.



Dump it secretly

The problem is not limited to the areas that have the chemical plants. Raw materials have to be imported and then transported to the factories. Toxic waste must then be taken away from the plants to be dumped elsewhere. This has caused disputes in communities sometimes miles away from the source of the waste. A typical instance is the proposed Baldonnal toxic waste disposal centre. An Asbestos dump for North County Dublin is another recent proposal. At the moment many local tip-heads are authorized by the Government (as an 'interim solution') to accept toxic waste as part of its normal daily routine. This outrageous misuse of the environment is harshly commented on by the 'environmental' organizations across the country.



with thanks to the author

A less obvious problem is posed by the dubious products that chemical and pharmaceutical companies manufacture. Recently a number of scandals involving multinationals with plants in this country have come to light. The Eli Lilly plant in Kinsale, for instance, made the drug OPEN which killed over 100 elderly people in the UK (at least five in Belfast). The Syntex plant in Co. Clare produced the drug MAPROSYN which came in for strong criticism by the US Food & Drug Administration.

A drastic solution

If we are to tackle this major environmental threat we have to make some serious decisions in our approach to industrial development. An ideal start would be an embargo on all new chemical and pharmaceutical plants. Then an urgent scaling down of existing plants with the objective of eliminating them eventually. The resulting loss of jobs would have to be balanced by encouragement of local initiatives using funds saved from grants to the multinationals (the IDA estimate that each new job in the chemical sector costs £6000 to £8000 in grants!). During this time the law must penalize heavily any pollution and insist that the polluter must pay for the cleaning up of his pollution. The most modern technology must be used to prevent the discharge of waste from these plants and what waste there is left should be incinerated or otherwise neutralized on site! Drastic problems require drastic solutions.

interview: veronica kelly

Edin: Veronica, your were charged in the trial in Italy 'with trying to force others by violent behaviour or by threat to do so, to do or not to do something against their will'. It's ironic, Veronica? Very, I'm glad that you think so, too. We were given a 20-day suspended sentence or a fine of £2500. I think the lawyers are going for an appeal and will go for an acquittal as we didn't get quite that, although we got the next best in that nothing was recorded against us which was a big deal in Italy. The original charge of 'blocking a road' was changed because of the heavy sentence it carried - 2 to 12 years imprisonment under Italian law. Anyway, in this new charge they decided to use the word 'violence' so we have appealed and we will have the appeal in a Higher Court. I think it's all going to revolve around 'violence' again: violence of nuclear weapons and violence against nonviolent demonstrators and violence of structures.

Italy breaks laws

Edin: Such violence was very much drawn out by you in making your defence. Tell us what the points in that defence were. **Veronica:** Well, we all made very personal statements. I started off saying that I had been studying translating in Geneva which is where all these international meetings about disarmament and Third World go on. I was studying International Law and Economics. The combination of those two made me realize more and more the connections between the state of the Third World at the moment and the arms race which I had been opposed to anyway. I began to see that it was part of this whole thing and so I decided that I should do something about it. It was urgent. In the trial I mentioned the fact that the Cruise missiles being inserted meant that disarmament was not happening. I mentioned some of the first-strike weapons and that there wasn't going to be dual key. Even from the



Veronica Kelly, still expelled and still active, on a prison course the first day in Dublin.

Italian point of view the Americans were going to decide the use of these missiles without consultation. I mentioned the fact that I'm normally a conservative sort of person. It took me a long time to decide that civil disobedience was necessary. I realized that I had broken the law but I was quite prepared to take the consequences. The Italians were breaking a lot of international laws, they even contravened their own article 11 of their constitution by putting themselves on the line. I thought that was a much more serious offence than what we did. The

lawyers took that up in the end when they too were allowed to make a statement in my favour.

'Fantastic support'

Edin: One of the best achievements has been the amount of support this has learnt to civil disobedience and nonviolent direct action, and the fact that it has highlighted Cruise coming in within the last year and that your case is just an example to other people. What was the local support like? **Veronica:** Fantastic, really great particularly Women's Groups. There were women over from Holland and Greenham Common who had come specially and they all agreed to stay back at the court-houses although the space laid out for the supporters was fairly small. They agreed to stay outside and let the Sicilian women in. It was really wonderful, the whole thing was fantastic about the support and not just from Sicilian women but things like cards and letters of support from Ireland. We ended up with a huge pile. **Edin:** How strong is the peace camp now?

Veronica: Well, I think the support it has been given of late has given it a new lease of life. There's a group of local people, 6 local people who are on the Des Vanias Peace Camp which is land which a lot of us bought by square metre through the land campaign. They are cultivating that and they are there solidly. Now some more people from some other countries have come down to join.

Locals forced to work on base

Edin: Tell us, what is the feeling in Comiso with the people now that the first Cruise is there? **Veronica:** There are supposed to be 15 there since this month, the Minister announced that more or less. The feeling is mixed. Apparently local people, whose of them who had been expecting great things from the Americans, are now very disillusioned because there are 6000 Americans there and they are expecting them to sort of revolutionize the economy. There is a lot of unemployment and I was talking to a guy the other day who has a contract for 5 years. He told

us that he didn't agree with the missiles, he tried not to have anything to do with them but he has to work on the base. He says there are 5000 others like him who have applied. When asked how many jobs there were he didn't know, but the thing is that he is getting absolutely no money from the Italian State. He said that if you work for three months you can get a kind of Unemployment Benefit which amounts to 30,000 lira a month which is £15,000. And that's your unemployment benefit but you have to have worked for three months and he hasn't been able to do so. **Edin:** Now that you're back on your home ground we have heard that you've got a job with WHI. So let's wish you good success in your work. They are one of the supporters of peace camps? **Veronica:** Yes, that's why I respect this organization so much. They do practical things for conscientious objectors, peace camps, impoverished countries, etc. I would like to say just one thing, I am really grateful to everything and everyone who did so much, it was fantastic and we really felt it. Thanks.



PLAYSCHEMES

Pax Christi and the Fellowship of Reconciliation are looking for volunteers to spend 3 weeks of their holidays in children play-schemes in the North. The FOR International Workshop at Lurgan hosting mixed groups from Belfast will take place from July 21 - August 11, the Pax Christi play-schemes in Armagh and Dungannon from June 29 - July 21 and in Antrim and Portadown from July 20 to August 11. Write to: FOR, c/o Bob Bellagh, 25 Belfast Rd, Hollywood BT15 9EX, Co. Down, tel. 87-3261; Pax Christi, 52 Ir Rathmines Rd, Rathmines Dublin 6, tel. 01-965293.

TEACH ENGLISH

For unemployed people wishing to spend a year or more abroad teaching English as a foreign language introductory qualification courses are held in Cork from 16-18 May and in Waterford from 1-4 June. The fee is £30. Write to: Jim Wignate, Friends Meeting House, Newtown, Waterford, tel. 051-73435.

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S.C.M. SECRETARIES

The Student Christian Movement is looking for one full-time and one part-time organizing secretary (salary respectively IR£6,500/£8,5280 full-time, IR£3,250/£4,260 part-time) to work for this ecumenical student based movement Project areas it is involved in include poverty and the churches, Christians and disarmament, women in the church, and international solidarity. There is the possibility of being based in either Dublin or Belfast. Further details from, or applications to SMC, 35 Lower Buckingham St., Dublin 1, or SCM, 224 Lisburn Road, Belfast by 8th May or as soon as possible.

ANTI-MILITARIST MARCH

This year's International Anti-Militarist March will take an action shape. August 4-12 a peace camp will besiege the Super phoenix fast breeder reactor at Melville (near Lyon/France) pointing at the link between nuclear power and weapons production. The biggest ever NATO manoeuvre taking place around Fulda/West Germany will be besieged by 3 peace camps from September 15-30. Further info from Pat & Andrew, 2 Golden St., Totterdown, Bristol, tel. (0272) 541306.

NONVIOLENCE IN ACTION

A seminar 'Nonviolence in Action' geared to NVA's during Reagan's visit will take place in Dublin on Sat. 12 May from 10.30-5.30 in the Abbey Presbyterian Church, Farnell Sq, Dublin 1. The programme includes an introduction to NVA, affinity group training and role plays e.g. on confrontation with the police. It is sponsored by the Glenree Centre for Reconciliation, April and Dawn Magazine. Contact M. Trimling, 1 Belgrave Sq, Rathmines, Dublin 6, tel. 860963 or 336789 (Edin).

FESTIVAL FOR LIFE JUNE 24th

Irish UND are running a mid-summer festival: a day of fun and celebration of summer politics and life; with exhibitions, music stalls, dance, crafts and food. It'll take place on a 12 acre site in Red Rock, Sutton, Co. Dublin overlooking the sea with the hill of Howth as a backdrop... sure it's a grand place to go. Many good live acts including Keving Hearts, Auto De Fe, Les Enfants, Johnny Duban Band, and Outfit, Red Square, Jimmy McCarthy and Gerry MacMahon. One for the diary and tell 'em about it! T-Shirts 'Festival for Life' and graphic in red, grey, green, blue, black, S.M.L. £3.50, vests in navy or wine, S.M.L. £3.00 + 50p. Contact from MONT, 16 Ir Liffey St. D., tel. 730877.



PEACE WIMMIN

reviewed by:

Dorene Palmer

Keeping the Peace, by Lynn Jones. Dublin: Women's Press 1984. £3.60

Women's peace groups receive limited press coverage, however Greenham Common has come to the attention of most people worldwide, contributing greatly to the growing awareness of the nuclear threat. Women's peace groups are increasing as independent groups, what are these groups about? How do they act and what do they hope to achieve? Why are some women prepared to give up so much, often careers, families and home to set up a camp? Who are these women?

Peace and action

Well, many of the answers can be found in a book called 'Keeping the Peace' by Lynn Jones, a handbook of information, advice and resources without the often tedious facts and figures, this book is both inspiring and positive to read. It is about women talking action. Rather than concentrate on the peace movement in Britain, she includes contributions from women in Japan, America, Germany and Holland.

It deals neither with the past history of women of where their future lies. But through the words of individual women, the book looks at the forms of action how to organize, and how some women have felt about becoming involved for the first time.

'Families against the Bomb'

Mothers out of concern and fear have become involved. Many like Anne Tutton of 'Families against the Bomb' agree 'that as women bringing up children they had something special to give the peace movement and that something wouldn't be tapped by more mainstream formalized organisations'. Some too, 'felt inhibited about asserting ourselves at more formal meetings'.

The women have cut across the cultural, economic, political and ideological divide in their quest for peace. What they do have in common is an emphasis on sharing skills, consideration and support for each other's needs in a non-hierarchical set-up. Reading 'Keeping the Peace', it becomes apparent that the women involved in the peace movement are not necessarily feminists first. The 'Nottingham Women opposed to the Nuclear Threat' (WONT) discovered that 'most feminists give the nuclear issue a low priority' choosing to deal

with issues of rape, abortion, violence and so on. However, the 'Women's Pentagon Action' (WPA) argues 'that only by making a connection between feminism, ecology and antimilitarism and resisting all forms of violence that life on earth can be saved'. The book is representative of women's varying views on the issue of feminism, the 'Duton Women for Peace' wanted to raise women's consciousness on the arms issue so that they could then go on to work in mixed peace groups. Whilst Anne Pettit wanted to find a way that 'ordinary women like myself' could express themselves she organized a walk to Greenham Common.

Power through autonomy

Lynn Jones realizes the importance of questioning the women's peace movement, 'are we being effective?'. Should we organize separately, after reading these stories of women, she feels 'that separateness creates a space for talent, power and joy to emerge, that can only add to the peace movement not detract from it'. With such a comprehensive guide for action and campaign for organizing a march, setting up a camp to letter writing and political lobbying with added notes on non-violent action, this book is a must for those who need motivation. Caring and acting for peace is our future and survival.

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NEWSLETTER

North-west Newsletter - 'the Journal of Irish Rural Alternatives' has become subscription-only with the April-May issue (No. 29). The reason is economic - they found they had to supply two copies for every one that actually sold in shops and this has led to debts. However, they hope that being subscription-only may have advantages in people feeling they are part of

an organization rather than mere reader-buyers. Essential reading for organic farmers, gardeners, crafters and alternativists in general. Sub: 6 issues for £4 to Marjorie Sachs, Aughranigan, Knockivar, Boyle, Co. Roscommon.

Women's News is a new, comprehensive women's magazine published in Belfast. It's monthly (first issue appeared in March) with a cover price of 15p for 12 pages. Areas covered in the first two

issues include: rape, pornography, violence, abortion, supplementary benefits, international women's day, Armagh, women's history, women at work. Ordinary, individual subscriptions are £4 a year in the North and Britain, IR£5 for the Republic (higher rates for women's groups and higher still for institutions). Send to: Women's News, 7 Wine-tavern St., Belfast 1.

BRITISH VIOLENCE IN IRELAND

'Against violence in Ireland' by Desmond Wilson. Talks to American groups working for democracy in Ireland and a submission to the New Ireland Forum. 45 pages, 60p plus postage from 123 Springhill Ave., Belfast 12 (also available at Just Books, 7 Winterton St., Belfast 1).

reviewed by Rob Fairmichael.

There was a time when Desmond Wilson was the liberals' darling but not any more, he comes more into the category of *hétéro* noise. The way he is viewed now is a paradigm of the whole Northern situation where those we listen to are those we already agree with. He still defines himself as a pacifist and I think he is owed at least as much attention to what he is saying, now as previously.

There are many good, forceful points made in this pamphlet. In the nature of it being an accumulation of talks, there is some repetition. Here briefly are a few of the most salient points:

British no 'neutral brokers'

The British system of government is 'the most primitive form of government in Europe' (p. 1). The problem in the North could be solved in two years if the Catholic church cooperated. (p. 6) The whole of British government policy leads to the creation of a civil war. (p. 10) In the British system the army, state church, monarchy and aristocracy are powerful in relation to the government. (p. 11) Irish people must be persuaded 'to unite in one common purpose, to set Irish people free to construct their own democracy according to their own wishes and needs.' (p. 19) 'There is no solution other than that the English government be made to withdraw, absolutely, completely and without condition. (p. 24) Partition was to do with maintenance of British military bases and control of the economy as well as 'protection of Protestants' (p. 34) Protestants (as in the south following partition) will withhold their loyalty from



any new political structures which they do not control absolutely. (p. 39)

A lot of what he says rings true, e.g. concerning the power of the monarchy in the British system. The power of the British monarchy rests almost entirely in its symbolism and that symbolism (of 'upper class control and right-wing politics hidden under the guise of a fairland paternalism') should be smashed for any self-respecting socialist. But is the British state apparatus any more backward than the supposedly 'republican' USA? I don't know. Obviously in the States power rests more with the big corporations and meritocracy relative to the traditional power bases in Britain.

What Democracy?

However, what I principally have difficulty with is the concept of 'democracy'. Desmond Wilson continually refers to 'Irish democrats'. But the problem of the North and the whole island with its double minorities makes problems for even talking about democracy. Majority rule, pure and

simple, is not democracy - that much is clear. If 'Irish democrats' of the nationalist tradition in the North have the right to work for 'democracy' what rights do the unionists have? I would feel it is obviously part of any modern definition of democracy that they don't have the right to exclude Catholics and nationalists from power. But if the two sides are so mutually antagonistic what rights do the Unionists, as the majority in the North, have? This pamphlet does not enlighten me on this question except to say they must be included.

Aquiescent pacifists?

On the question of violence he says (p. 16-17) it's the end of the line for those who say British violence in Ireland can be solved by non-military means, and 'either you admit that war is the only way of solving the problem of British violence in Ireland or you invent effective new ways of dealing with it which do not involve war.' That this appears so is undoubtedly true but I don't believe it is actually true. I'm sure the British government sometimes welcome violence because this reinforces their claim to be a neutral party in the eyes of people in Britain. Some non-violent tactics have been tried in the North, often with great courage and self-sacrifice. But imaginative non-violence hasn't been tried for a considerable period to test it fully. The blame here rests not with those who have chosen violence because they see no alternative. But with those of us who profess peace but have not given people the moral/ethical in terms of ideas and support to be peaceful. There are more nonviolent tactics and strategies than we have dreamt of, and many of these utilised in even more arduous situations than the North. It would be necessary in that these must be discovered and fitted to the local situation. So it's over to us - what, is that another deafening silence I hear out there?