

ANIRIAL

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A Belfast Anarchist Monthly

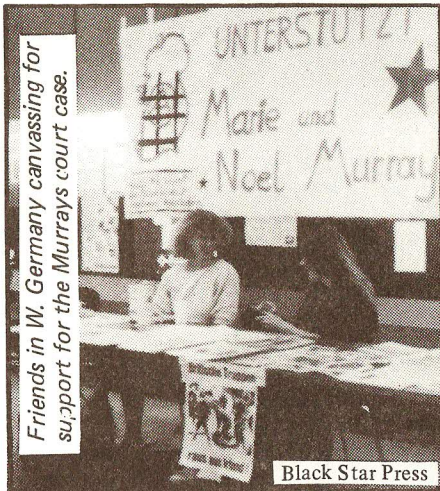
'SUPERGRASSES'



KIRKPATRICK, BLACK APPEAL.

Also —
Irish Steel, Asbestos,
Men, Video Review.

AINRIAIL - NOTES



AINRIAIL

Ainriail No.1 is still available. It contains articles on Plastic Bullets, Asbestos, the Murrays, and our 'Aims and Principles'.

Subscription rate; £2.10 for six issues. If you wish to take five or more copies of each issue, we will give you one third discount, and send it post free, payments and returns due each month.

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MURRAY'S' APPEAL

Marie and Noel Murrays' solicitors recently lodged an appeal against July's High Court judgement, which refused them conjugal rights (see AINRIAIL No.1).

The solicitors expect the Appeal to be heard in late Autumn. The normal six month wait will probably be shortened, because Marie's age is an important factor in the case.

One interesting aspect of the Appeal will be that in the three judges majority judgement, there will also be room for a minority decision.

Next month sees a relaunching of the campaign fund, so donations and ideas will be most welcome.

ILLUSTRATIONS

The 'Plastic Bullet' illustration on the front cover of AINRIAIL No.1, was drawn by Gemma Donnelly.

On this issue's cover, the graphic is taken from the video 'One Man's Word'. A comprehensive look at the 'supergrass' issue, by those affected, it is available for hire from Just Books, £1 per day.

ANARCHIST PUBLICATIONS

Other publications which have come out in recent years, include:

WORKERS SOLIDARITY 20p
(Dublin and Cork) monthly;

TROUBLED TIMES 10p
(Belfast) monthly

ANTRIM ALTERNATIVE 10p
(Antrim and Ballymena) monthly.

These are available from Just Books. Add to the price of the paper(s), 15p per single copy, and 20p per two or more, for p. & p.

GOSSIP BUT TRUE!

At a recent meeting on censorship in the Peoples (very own) College, during which the 'Real Lives' banned programme was shown, a bookstall was offering publications on censorship.

What, no publication on British censorship on Ireland? Surely they could have at least stocked Liz Curtis' excellent 'The propaganda War'. Why not? 'Too dogmatic', came the bookstall-tender's reply!

CORK STEELS ITSELF

On August 22nd the workers at the Irish Steel plant in Cork had to vote on whether or not to accept a Labour Court Recommendation. This urged the workers (members of nine various unions) to agree to a redundancy plan by Irish Steel management looking for 115 redundancies. The Government had negotiated a £24 million rescue plan which they refused to implement until the 115 redundancies were secured. The whole matter was referred to the Labour Court (whose findings are not legally binding, their role being to make recommendations) for 'arbitration'.

Needless to say the Court came down heavily in favour of the Irish Steel Management in proposing the unions accept the 115 redundancies and eliminate restrictive practices. These practices are one of the few ways workers can fight against the 'restrictive lives' in the workplace and force management to grant various reforms which to some extent ease the workers lot. To prove its 'fairness' the Labour Court also recommended that the State should guarantee additional payments from the EEC which might become available and that analogue payments (in line with other named companies in Cork) of 4.5% be paid by Irish Steel.

That Thursday the workers voted to reject the Labour Court recommendation - they refused to accept 115 workers being made redundant. Before Irish Steel had even given their reaction to the Labour Court recommendation the Government weighed in saying they were going to close down the plant completely . . . unless of course the workers would care to have a second ballot - and not on the Labour Court's recommendation but on the Government's version of it!! Their changes included analogue payments of 1.7% instead of 4.5%, and included a statement that the Government would not guarantee payments from the Steelworkers Fund (EEC). The Govt.

was, as one of the Union officials put it, holding a gun to the workers heads. On Monday August 24th the workers held a second ballot - they accepted the Govt. package.

All this while Peter Barry, a local businessman of Teabag fame, Fine Gael T.D. for Cork, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, was making statements to the Press like how the workers in Irish Steel should be grateful to the taxpayers (who are now being laid off just like themselves) and to accept redundancies on offer as a way of repaying the taxpayers' kindness! That for the Govt. to guarantee funds from the European Steelworkers Fund would produce a 'knock on' effect throughout the public sector - sounds rough, whatever it is! But best of all from 'tea bags' himself was his comment that part of the problem at Irish Steel was that the Fords Company, when it closed down its Cork factory last year, gave redundancy payments which were much too high and which had therefore unsettled workers like those in Irish Steel! As a result of his displeasure at Fords over this he is now beginning to wonder if maybe they were 'coddling us last May' when they said they would come again this year with another factory. What a thought! Poor naive 'tea bags'.

But lest we become disillusioned with Barry he brought us some good news to bolster his diminishing image of himself as a caring T.D. - he tells us that two new multimillion pound industries for Cork Harbour will be announced before the end of the year. No contracts signed, no dates or details, no proof - nothing - except (and remember this at the next election!) that Barry brought us some 'good news'. Only thing is that these industries are rumoured to be pharmaceutical companies. How many more Eli Lilies and Merck Sharpe Domes can we handle?

ASBESTOS.....

This interview is the second part of a three-part series of the hazards of asbestos. Here a member of Divis Residents' Association reveals how it was used in the construction of Divis flats, and how their part-demolition has not been carried out safely, to the detriment of both the community and the workers involved.

Q. When did people in Divis first become aware of the dangers of asbestos

A. Well the first time it came to light was during the demolition of the Whitehall and Farcet blocks last year and it was coincidence. Around that time a few members of the residents association had read some stuff on asbestos. Suddenly they realised that what was being removed from those two blocks was fairly large quantities of asbestos. We knew from what we read it was highly dangerous, but we didn't know what precautions were necessary in its removal and we didn't know how to protect ourselves. All we knew was that to remove the asbestos, a specific licensed contractor was needed. Up until then the housing executive didn't even bother to find a licensed contractor; they were just using normal demolition contractors. The residents association, having what information we had, decided the first thing we would demand would be a licensed removal firm. It wasn't until after demolition and at the end of the process that we became aware that there should have been other precautions. The community needed to be protected from it. The fibres can be carried on the air - that meant the whole estate was in danger, the whole area should have been sealed off in an air tight vacuum. No such precautions were taken.

Q. Where in the flats is the asbestos?

A. Basically its everywhere. In the individual flats themselves, it's in the bathrooms, in the heating press, in the bedroom panelling and underneath the windows. Sometimes its found in the hallways, on the stairs of each flat and outside on the balconies.

Q. Last summer two blocks were demolished; what precautions did the Housing Executive and its workers take?

A. As I've said before there was absolutely no health and safety regulations adhered to during demolition. The only precaution that was visible was the two workers that were responsible for removing it wore these space suits. Since then, photographs which were taken have been looked at by the London Hazard Centre, which specializes in Asbestos problems. They have said that the protective clothing was not the right kind and the workers were actually at risk. As well as that the Housing Executive had promised that as soon as the asbestos was removed from the blocks it would then be taken away in sealed containers and deposited somewhere safe. In fact it lay in open skips for anything upwards of five days on the site and in the estate. Kids were playing with it and throwing at each other. It was scattered over the entire estate. These were major contraventions of the health and safety regulations.

Q. Have there been any cases of asbestos diseases?

A. We can't be positive about that. The problem with asbestos-related diseases is that doctors don't look for asbestos-related diseases, unless they have good grounds to look for it. So a lot of asbestos diseases get passed off as lung cancers from smoking, stomach cancers, severe chest ailments and unless they are actually looking for some connection to asbestos, they can't tell. What the residents association is trying to do now is a comprehensive health profile on the community to see if there is any relation between some of the local health problems and asbestos.

Q. Has any help come from the trade unions or others?

A. There has been some movement. When we first started the campaign we realised that the only sources of information and access to resources was the trade union movement. They have been involved in campaigns before against asbestos - particularly unions like the Confederation of Shipyard Workers, and NUPE. They gave financial help to our environmental health project and also supplied us with all the publicity and printing resources that we needed. The Belfast Trades Council co-sponsored the project with us and they too have been trying to help us financially. In the future we'll be using the unions again, because people like the T.&G.W.U. and the Confederation have got asbestos monitoring equipment which we're going to need because with some skilled help we're going to do our own independent testing.

Q. To date has there been any help from the Housing Executive.

A. ABSOLUTELY NONE. They refuse to even recognise there is a problem with asbestos. They say that asbestos is safe, unless it is disturbed! First of all, asbestos should not be used any longer. There are enough suitable materials to replace it. Secondly, that if its not dangerous then don't disturb it. But what has happened here is that because people didn't know that asbestos was used in the construction of the flats, they have been drilling holes in it and sawing it, oblivious to the fact that this disturbs it. The Housing Executive workers themselves have been doing this - even they didn't seem to know. We have been trying to get the workers, the residents and tenants in the community to support us and not to touch the materials because they are putting themselves at risk. Also you've got demolition which obviously disturbs it, as well as security raids, by the RUC, and the Brits which is another major hazard. They knock down panels, especially in the heating press and in the bathroom to look behind.

(In our next issue we will examine successful campaigns to remove asbestos, and draw lessons from these).

..... IN DIVIS.

"SUPERGRASSES"

During the month of September, two important developments in the 'supergrass' system are due to take place. The latest, and longest trial involving the 'evidence' of Harry Kirkpatrick will resume; and the appeal will be heard of those convicted on the word of the first major 'supergrass' Christopher Black. Here we will examine in detail the Kirkpatrick trial so far; consider bail application in one case; and look at the upcoming Black appeal.

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

The Kirkpatrick trial was adjourned at the end of June under contentious circumstances. It had already proved impossible for the defence counsel to prevent the various adjournments which had characterised this trial. These had interfered with the defence's main tactic, which is necessarily common to all 'supergrass' trials, that of attempting to break down Kirkpatrick's credibility.

But when it was proposed to stop such an important trial again, and for nine weeks, Desmond Boal, on behalf of the other barristers, objected on several grounds. Judge Carswell, though, informed him that during the summer, construction work on the tunnel between Crumlin Rd. Jail and Courthouse, would pose a security risk, and adjourned the trial till September. It is interesting to note that other trials, bail applications, etc. have continued during this period, despite the 'security' risk.

BACK TO SCHOOL

But Carswell's accommodation to the prosecution was nothing new. The best example came earlier, after an application to adjourn for one week, because both senior counsel were ill. They were Malachy Higgins, who was only recently appointed, and Ronnie Appleton, the chief crown prosecutor. The two counsel were not confined to their beds, however, as it later was admitted by Kirkpatrick, in court, that they had both visited him in Castlereagh RUC station. When asked by defence counsel about the contents of their discussion, he openly admitted that they had once again gone through his evidence. It is rare for a

'supergrass' to require a refresher course in his (illegal) schooling.

HARRY'S GAME

In cross examination, Kirkpatrick (who has admitted 5 murders, and perjury in a previous trial) has given evidence concerning certain incidents which contradicts evidence about the same incidents given in previous trials. The best example concerns the shooting dead of an RUC man and the wounding of another, in Great Victoria St., on January 14th '81.

Sean McConkey is serving a life sentence for this shooting. His statement, which was accepted as evidence against him in his own trial, is at variance with Kirkpatrick's.

The first contradiction is that McConkey said the planning meeting for the attack was held in the Markets area. Kirkpatrick claims it was in Agincourt Avenue.

They also have different sets of people attending this meeting. Sean McConkey for example, did not include Jimmy Brown the Belfast chairperson of IRSP at the time, Kirkpatrick however does name him.

And thirdly, Kirkpatrick gives a totally different make of car used in the attack, to the one described by McConkey.

McGRADY SAYS

This blatant type of contradiction will not necessarily be thrown out. It was accepted in the McGrady case. Two courts accepted two completely different versions of the one shooting.

Sean McGrady had been convicted in '76 on a statement forced out of him. Later, his brother, Kevin, turned 'supergrass' and

gave a different version which was successfully used to convict others. When Sean appealed, based on Kevin's evidence, this latter was thrown out!

JOHNSON'S MOTOR CAR

There are occasions when you doubt if Kirkpatrick was present at all in the incident he describes. One such occasion was the taking over of a house, by the INLA, prior to a robbery of Twinbrook Post Office. That house belonged to the Johnson family.

Originally prosecution witnesses, they were later to be called by defence counsel, because Mr. Johnson's version of what happened that night, differs considerably from Kirkpatrick's.

Firstly, two men left the house to take the car. The two men described by Mr. Johnson are not the same two men named by Kirkpatrick.

When these two were unable to start the car because of an immobilisation switch one of them returned to the house. Mr. Johnson was forced to go out and start the car. Kirkpatrick had no knowledge of this.

Thirdly, Mr. Johnson said that there were two guns used that night. Kirkpatrick claims there was only one.

HEY PRESTO

Perhaps the most glaring contradiction in his evidence concerns his testimony which has one man in two places at the same time.

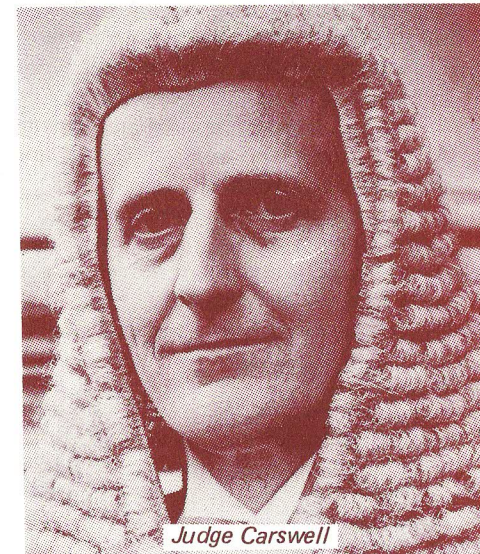
One of the defendants was accused by Kirkpatrick of attempted murder of a man called Dessie MBride, who worked for Bass Charrington. It was only during cross-examination, that the court discovered that Henry McNamee was in fact in RUC custody at the time of the attack.

To avoid any further embarrassment, the prosecution effectively dropped the charges, by 'offering no further evidence'. Yet Kirkpatrick persists in maintaining that McNamee was present at the time of the attack.

POCKETS IN MEMORY

As we have seen, Kirkpatrick's bouts of

imagination are only matched by his sudden losses in memory. We must remember that he described himself as having been a



Judge Carswell

member of the Belfast Brigade staff of the INLA. Yet during some operations, events occurred which he claims he was unaware of.

An example happened during the taking over of a factory for a planned ambush on British forces. The factory's safe was robbed, but despite Kirkpatrick being there, and in charge, he claims not to have known about this. One possible explanation for this, is that the money did not go into INLA funds, but was pocketed. This of course, would discredit him, so he denies it.

PIGGY BANK

On the subject of money, it appears that Kirkpatrick either was incapable of operating a personal bank account, or he just didn't trust himself.

When asked what bank branch he kept his money in, he knew it was the Allied Irish, but didn't know which branch. It transpired that his bank book was kept by his mother, who did all transactions. Again the question arises, did he make any private income from his position in the INLA.

"I FORGOT"

Dermot Drain and Laim Berkery were implicated by Kirkpatrick, some 16 months after his initial statements. He claims they were members of the INLA, and involved in apost office robbery.

When asked, why did he suddenly remember two people who were under his command, his reply is simple, 'I forgot'! Kirkpatrick was to give three batches of statements, despite his having given and signed a general statement, after the second batch, which declared that he had no further information to give the RUC.

SCOUTS HONOUR

The vagueness of Kirkpatrick's memory is mirrored by the vagueness of the conspiracy charges. Jimmy Brown is again named in 'evidence', which can be described as dubious.

Supposedly, Kirkpatrick and Brown went out on a scouting mission to set up an attack on a senior civil servant. But under cross-examination Kirkpatrick is very vague about the street. He only knew it was in the Malone area. When pushed about a description of the street, eg., were there trees, he can't remember. Were the houses semi, or detached? What was the garden like? He can't remember. Yet he remembered that the house was divided into flats. It also goes without saying that he couldn't even remember the date on which the scouting took place.

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

Paddy Tohill was named in early statements, but his brother Bobby was substituted in later statements. No reason was offered during the trial for this change. All Kirkpatrick would say was 'I made a mistake'. Either Kirkpatrick was confused or the RUC were confused in who to frame.

CUL DE SAC

His evidence about an attack on British forces in Sugarfield St. on the Shankill, from Bombay St. on the Falls, is less than

convincing. You again wonder if he was there at all. His description of the wall and entry where the attack was launched from, differed considerably from the defence counsels' own description, after their visit to the location.

IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME

Hearsay evidence has been accepted in previous 'supergrass' trials, most notably the Black trial. It is used also in this trial. Kirkpatrick 'knew' that Paddy McAreevy had shot at the Brits, because someone called 'the Greek' had told him that he had supplied guns to McAreevy earlier.

When the attack occurred, Kirkpatrick was in the area at the time, and heard the shots 'Ah, that'll be McAreevy', he said to himself.

WHAT BOMB?

Some people have been implicated in a bomb attack on British forces near White-rock post office. Despite the fact that no-one appears to have been injured, and the British themselves have no knowledge of such an attack, Kirkpatrick claims to have passed the scene shortly afterwards, and saw the debris.

'POSSIBLY SO'

There is one consistency in this trial. That is Kirkpatrick's response to an awkward question. In previous trials there was often a chink in the armour which the defence could breach — a failure to answer, a hesitancy, a stutter, and even worse, a lie. But the schooling of 'supergrasses' has seen a development in this direction. 'Possibly so' or 'Possibly not' is now the stock answer, when the going gets tough.

LONGEST

This is proving to be the longest 'supergrass' trial. Two loyalist trials have started and finished since Kirkpatrick's began. In both, Crockard's and Allen's, the judges acquitted all defendants who hadn't signed statements.

Its protraction, due to the prosecution's adjournments, seem to have two reasons — firstly to prevent a consistent line of questioning of Kirkpatrick, and secondly, to outlast the bad, if little, press which the 'supergrass' system is getting. It helps to diminish any public impact.

ALMOST FOUR YEARS REMAND

The delays in Kirkpatrick's trial could extend until Xmas, by which time defendants like Ta Power and Gerard O'Reilly will have been in prison just short of four years. This is the equivalent of an 8 year sentence. So even if they are released, the system has been used as a form of internment.

NOT A WORD

Compared with the blaze of publicity which greeted the first 'supergrass' case, Blacks, there has been next to no media coverage during this trial. From the beginning of May till the end of June, Kirkpatrick appeared daily to give 'evidence' against 27 people. Yet the establishment media never gave us a word of what he said. The press box in Crumlin Rd. courthouse was empty most of the time.

There is ample recent evidence to show how the British government ban programmes and influence programme makers.

The Open Space programme was recently shelved, but ironically, because of the adverse publicity from the 'Real Lives' ban, it will now be broadcast on Sept. 19th

Channel 4's Jeremy Isaacs has instructed commissioning editors that the 'supergrass' issue is 'a dead issue', and he won't consider any programmes on the subject.

DEFENSIVE

One reason for this sensitivity may be that the issue is proving embarrassing to the British. Out of a total recruitment of 27 'supergrasses', from Nov. '81 to Nov. '83, 20 have retracted. On one has been successfully convicted on the word of a loyalist 'supergrass' (Bennett's evidence was thrown out on appeal). And only three republican 'supergrasses' have not had all their evidence thrown out of court — Black, McGrady, and Quigley.

There has also been considerable interest from legal circles from other countries, especially Britain and the States, such as the NCCL, Lord Gifford, and Attorney King.

When Gifford came over last year, his position as a Q.C., as a member of the Labour Party, and of the House of Lords, enabled him to meet with the Lord Chief Justice, Lowry. When Lowry was pushed on simply legal grounds, Gifford claims he was evasive and very defensive.

SYSTEM STILL THERE

Despite the recent failures, the system is still there to be used. Note the recent (failed) attempt to recruit Eamon Collins, after the Newry RUC station bomb attack.

No judge has yet criticised the system as such, just this or that supergrass. They seem to be saying to the British government, if the political climate is right, and you can get us a credible supergrass, we'll convict. What is credible in a Diplock court, would not of course be credible in a jury trial, in Britain, or the U.S.A.

..... **KIRKPATRICK**

INTERMENT BY REMAND

10

During the initial five months, when Gerard Power was detained on the word of Harry Kirkpatrick, he made a number of applications for bail. These were all adjourned. He was finally granted bail by Lord Justice Gibson in Nov.'83, and remained on bail up until the start of the trial, in Jan.'85. He had complied with the conditions of his bail.

When all those who had been on bail, applied for continuing bail to Judge Carswell, the trial judge, he revoked all bail. He did this unilaterally, without even consulting prosecution counsel. As the trial looks set to run till Xmas, then Power will have served the equivalent of a two year sentence.

At the end of June a further application for bail was made, because of the lengthy summer recess. It was decided not to apply to Carswell, the trial judge, who had already made his views known, but to Justice Higgins.

Higgins had heard the Budgie Allen 'supergrass' case, in no.2 court, directly opposite Kirkpatrick's case in no.1 court. All those who were out on bail prior to this trial, had been granted continuing bail during the trial. And Higgins had gone even further. After acquittal of most of the defend-

ents, Higgins had to deal with a number of others who had made statements, and whom he had found guilty. Some of these had been on bail during the trial, and after conviction, they were granted continuing bail until they came up for sentence.

So when Power made his application in front of Higgins, the point was made that in all previous 'supergrass' trials (with the exception of Black's) defendants who had bail before their trials, were granted continuing bail during their trials.

It was also pointed out that during the life of the Kirkpatrick trial, in the two loyalist trials, continuing bail had been granted.

In spite of these glaring inconsistencies, Higgins declined to interfere with the decision of Carswell. These two judges are both recent appointees. Higgins is a devout Catholic, while Carswell is an equally devout Mason. They have both been party to a vindictive and sectarian decision. They also ignore the 'practice direction' given in the criminal lawyers 'bible' - Archbold - given by High Court judges in England in 1976, which recommends continuing bail if a defendant has already been granted bail up to their trial.

BLACK APPEAL

It is well over two years since the end of the first major 'supergrass' trial, 35 people were convicted, some for life, and most on the uncorroborated word of Christopher Black.

Only one 'supergrass' appeal has been heard so far, that of those convicted by Judge Murray on the word of loyalist, Joseph Bennett. His 'evidence' was thrown out, and all charges based on it, dropped. Significantly Murray was also the judge in the 'accomplice' trial of McCormick. His conviction here was also overturned on appeal.

The importance of the Black appeal rests on the defendants having republican sympathies. With the Bennett appeal success, no one has been successfully convicted in a loyalist 'supergrass' case.

It will also have significant repercussions for the Kirkpatrick trial. The outcome of both will depend less on truth, justice, etc., and more on the political and legal climate.

Lord Chief Justice Lowry, who will head the three appeal judges, was the ingenious architect of the McGrady judgements. After throwing out most of the charges because they were based on evidence which was 'contradictory, bizarre and

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MEN - Some Thoughts

11

It should not be expected that women constantly challenge men about their sexism, but that men and boys should challenge each other and themselves. Here is a contradiction. On the one hand, men and boys benefit from a sexist society which discriminates in their favour because it claims they are 'better', 'stronger', more 'skilled' etc. On the other hand, socialist and anarchist men claim to want an equal and free society. It is rare for any group or class of people to give up power over another group.

At the basic level, women will not wait, and like any group of oppressed people must take their own power back. Where does this leave men and boys.

POWER

It raises a fundamental question about the way we live our lives, and the type of society we want. Historically anarchists have argued for the abolition of power, usually meaning centralised power. But there is also a power that each person possesses - a sense of self-worth and ability. We should be calling for a re-distribution of power - an abolition of the power over others, but an affirmation of the power of self.

Power over others is corrupting. It not only oppresses others, but distorts our own personality. Not only are half the population denied their rights, but the other half deny ourselves our humanity.

TOLL

We are not supposed to be warm and caring, open and trusting. The toll this takes on our personalities is frightening. It makes us fodder for the discipline and exploitation of 'jobs'. It turns us into recruits to slaughter and be slaughtered for the causes of our rulers. It turns us against each other, and prevents us from

sharing our worries and hopes. The discipline, sacrifice and violence against us is re-directed by us against women, children, and other men who don't fit the 'straight' image.

The divide and rule tactic of the bosses cuts us off from each other and from women and children. Our male social evenings are not occasions for openness, support, and enquiry amongst each other, but to praise the 'strong' and ridicule the 'weak', not only in society in general but even amongst each other.

OPEN TO CHALLENGE

So how can we change this. How can we make the shedding of power over others, a positive thing. How can we unlearn competitiveness and isolation, and develop trust and openness. Learning is education. Not only in our home and with friends must we begin this mutual education, but just as importantly in our political, community and work groups. It will not be easy. We must be open to challenge, and demand that others be open too.

In our personal lives, we must undermine any sexist division of labour, whether that be from the most basic of house-work, through to the sharing of responsibility of children, and the sharing of skills. In our community, social and political lives, it goes without saying that we be supportive of women regaining their power. And we shouldn't fall into the trap that certain issues are 'women's issues' and wait for them to raise them. Sexism, violence, contraception etc., are vital issues for us too.

As anarchists, the struggle for a revolutionary change in society begins now. That revolutionary change will unearth enormous potential, both on an individual and collective level. But it won't just happen. It has to be worked for. The process has to start now. Hopefully we will start to shed the power we now have over others, and begin to reclaim our humanity.

on Sexism

SAME AS IT EVER WAS!

The video 'Same As It Ever Was' touches on most of the major aspects of the judicial system peculiar to the north. These peculiarities have been created solely for the purpose of attempting to contain all opposition to the British State — internment, Diplock courts, the 'supergrass' system, and general harassment by the 'security forces' of working class and mainly anti-unionist people.

An interesting combination of footage (of the RUC and Brits attacking people), theatre and music is used throughout. The main part of the programme is done in the format of a 'This is Your Life' programme featuring a man who has been done on the word of a 'supergrass' as well as all the different people involved with him — the detectives, RUC, paid informer etc.

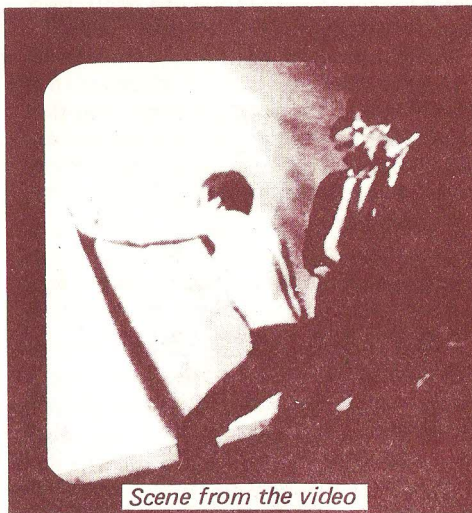
The acting in it is very sharp and witty! The Brit officer being interviewed 'Live from the Falklands' is a clever idea full of black humour — even if it does involve an unnecessary war stunt at the end. As for casting the part of Inspector Young — how did they manage to get someone with such an uncanny resemblance to Capt. Ferrillo in Hill Street Blues!!

It is good to see such an innovative approach to political video. As a piece of humorous and very enjoyable propaganda it seems to be aimed at those who already know about the states corrupt judicial system.

contd. from p. 11

incredible', he went on to convict others, on precisely the same evidence.

If the appeal is successful, it will be based on legal embarrassment by the British Government over the 'supergrass' issue. While those serving long sentences will no doubt rejoice, some defendants have already served their sentences! Dessie Breslin,



Scene from the video

Yet the different characters could have been developed to explain the background of people 'done' under the system as well as the system itself. Without this kind of information being given through various characterisations I fear some of the clever irony and humour may be lost. But with this background the video could reach a much wider audience.

(This video will be shown as part of a Autumn season of video screenings in Cafe Hideout - above Just Books. It is also available for hire from Just Books.)

for example, is actively campaigning around the world for an end to the system. When the appeals are heard, it is important that public attention is focussed on them, and all pickets etc. be supported.

(For more details of the original Black trial, see Belfast Bulletin, and the pamphlet 'Victims of the "supergrass" system' and 'Supergrasses' by the C.C.G.