

# ANARCHIA

A Belfast Anarchist Bi-Monthly

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Six Counties 20p  
Elsewhere 25p



Spanish Revolution —  
the Forgotten Women

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## AINRIAIL

As you may have noticed, we took off the month of July for our holidays—in the same 'spirit' as the Orange Order, Republican News, etc.. But that month turned out to be no holiday for anti-unionists in the 6 counties. Death and intimidation was how the 'Glorious Twelfth' was celebrated (see article 'Carnival of Reaction'). We return to our bi-monthly regularity, and welcome articles, constructive criticism, photos, etc. If you are interested in our work, you are also welcome to attend our meetings. Just write to the address below.

Our first public meeting, on the Spanish Revolution, was held in June and turned out to be successful. We are planning another in the near future.

### SUBS

Because of the increase of costs, the paper is now 25p & 20p (p.&p.) each issue for subs. A six month sub. is £ 2.50. Send to

Ainriail,  
c/o Just Books  
1 Winetavern St.  
Belfast 1.

## Journal Received

Race Today describes itself as 'Britain's leading Black Publication', and the latest issue contains articles on South Africa's working class struggles, as well as Black councillors, plus poetry, reviews etc.

## Video Available

'Songs of a Free People' records the visit to Belfast in Easter '85 by the Nicaraguan Folk group 'Heroes and Martyrs'. Songs, interviews, visits, and street theatre.

(£1 a day from Just Books, or £15 to buy from Cara Video, c/o 9, Winetavern St., Belfast 1).

## Out For Ourselves

Just published is 'Out For Ourselves' by the Dublin Lesbian and Gay Collectives. It contains articles from the north, as well as the 26 counties, and should be read by every one to help us understand more the importance of sexual politics. A full review will appear in the next issue of Ainriail.

## Hit Parade

Because of the lack of space we have also been unable to review Hit Parade's new record 'Nick Knack, Paddy Whack'! It is the Belfast band's first L.P., and follows two singles and the soundtrack for 'Under the Health Surface' (see back page). To be reviewed in the next issue.

## Organise!

We welcome issue no. 1 of 'Organise' from the Ballymena Anarchist Group. This news sheet has an excellent (and courageous!) article on the Anglo-Irish Accord and the ideology of Loyatism. Available from—  
Organise, c/o Just Books  
7 Winetavern St., Belfast 1.

## Back To The Point

Carnsore Point, that annual centre for anti-nuclear activity, has re-established itself on the calendar. On Sat. Aug. 16th there will be a day long festival of music, workshops, theatre, etc.

Carnsore Point, the once-planned site for a nuclear-power station in the 26 cos. has a good reputation for its mix of political discussion and entertainment, and if other years are anything to go by, should not be missed.

# STRIKE AGAINST CUTBACKS AT RVH.

From May 13th until July 3rd, 24 drivers at the Royal Victoria Hospital were out on strike, supported by work stoppages of other groups of the ancillary workers. The reason was that the management wanted to impose cutbacks without negotiations with representatives of the staff. Before the Eastern Health Board decided that £ 5 million had to be saved on health services. The RVH was to contribute £ 1.4 million and there the supportive services were expected to bear £ 800,000. For these workers it meant a cut in overtime-work, although the same amount of work had to be done. With a basic salary of £ 80 a week, the overtime earnings were

essential to get a decent weeks wage. Already hundreds of women on the site can't pay a National Insurance stamp because they don't earn enough money. The cuts would increase the number drastically. The NUPE is also worried about redundancies. The RVH is the biggest employer in West-Belfast, an area with an average unemployment of around 60%. The management tried several methods to undermine the strength and moral of the strikers and their supporters. Beginning with the incredible story, that wages could not be paid because the strikers wouldn't let the wages-van passing the picket line. Then the management payed privat con-

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# CARNIVAL OF REACTION

July saw the worst sectarian attacks by loyalists in anti-unionist areas in the north since the mid 70's, with assassinations, intimidation, attacks on homes, shops, schools, and churches, and triumphalist marches through estates. Belfast took the brunt, but other areas from Kilkeel to Dunloy, were also affected. As we go to print, at the beginning of August, the attacks continue sporadically. There have also been some sectarian attacks by the Catholic Reaction (ary) Force.

## ANGLO-IRISH ACCORD

Loyalist opposition to the Anglo-Irish Accord has been building up since its creation last Nov. Following mass rallies throughout the 6 counties, a one day strike in Feb. ended in violence against the RUC and the renewed campaign of attacks against anti-unionists.

Because of the relative failure of the strike, and the lack of effectiveness of the loyalist boycott of Westminster, Assembly and the local councils, tensions were growing within the loyalist political pact of DUP and OUP, and within the loyalist communities. If the 'leaders' couldn't deliver, then the likelihood increased of activity being taken up more by the paramilitaries and groups such as the Ulster Clubs, and local Orange Lodges.

The Orange marching season around July was predicted as testing ground for both the populist DUP, and the paramilitary UVF and UDA. From 'Burn-the-the-Catholics' Seawright who warned that 'Catholics wouldn't be allowed to take over Manor St.', to Paisley's declaration of civil war, we had demagogues vying for leadership.

## SHOOTINGS

The most serious expression of loyalist sectarianism during July was the shooting

dead of 3 young men, and the attempted assassination of three other people.

Brian Leonard, a 20-year old from Co. Tyrone, was shot dead as he left work at a Housing Executive building site on the Shankill Rd., on July 10th. It was two days before the major Orange annual 'celebrations'. The Protestant Action Force, a front for the UVF claimed responsibility.

The next day, a 25-year old taxi driver escaped injury after he was shot at as he drove towards Ardoyne in north Belfast, which was to be the area most affected by attacks during the month. This shooting was claimed by the Ulster Freedom Fighters a front for the UDA.

During the weekend of July 12th, during attacks on residents of Manor St., a shotgun gun was fired twice at a group of women.

In the early morning of July 14th, 25-year old Colm McCallan was dragged from his doorstep in the Ligoniel area, and shot dead by the PAF. He was active in Militant and had campaigned against sectarianism within the trade union movement.

On July 19th, 28-year old Martin Duffy was waiting in a taxi depot in north Belfast for the next call. When he arrived at the house he was shot dead by members of the PAF.

Four days later loyalists struck again. A group of vigilantes was set up in Ligoniel to help defend the area from such attacks. 20-year old Alan McGoldrick was on his own and checking out some fencing, when he was hit by machine-gun fire in the face and foot. He was lucky to escape alive, but the use of such a weapon suggests that the intended target was a group of people.

## MARCHES

While many Orange marches lead to con-

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frontation or intimidation because they were allowed through or near anti-unionist areas, it was in Portadown that most controversy was generated.

After 'assurances' from southern politicians that no such marches would be allowed, due to their influence through the Anglo-Irish Accord, the RUC banned a march planned for the Tunnel area, but rerouted it through the anti-unionist Garvaghy Rd. estate (a compromise!). The nights before and after the 12th saw attacks on the area from loyalist groups.

## ATTACKS

The list of attacks on homes, schools, shops, etc. is too long for this publication to deal with, but one example will illustrate the violently sectarian nature of loyalist attitudes towards anti-unionists.

Rasharkin is a small village in Co. Antrim not far from Ballymena. In this predominantly loyalist village, a small anti-unionist estate, Bamford Park, came under attack on Sunday the 13th July in the early hours of the morning.

Between 40 - 60 people, armed with bars, hammers, and sticks, descended on the estate. Almost every window, door, and car was damaged, including the homes of two Protestant families. On several occasions, they broke into houses and smashed TV's and furniture. In one case a 15-year old boy was badly beaten up.

The systematic nature, and scale of the attack led people to suspect that it was planned from nearby Ballymena.

## CATHOLIC REACTIONARIES

The Catholic Reaction Force have made their small contribution to the 'carnival of reaction'. A 2lb. bomb was defused in a Protestant owned pub in Newry, and a building worker was abducted in Derry. He was later released because of pressure

from local groups, including the IRA, according to a statement from Martin McGuinness.

It was James Connolly who warned of a 'carnival of reaction' in the north, if partition of the country was to be imposed. Sectarian attacks, reinforcing institutional discrimination, accompanied the formation of this statelet, and remains an essential characteristic of its continued existence. ■

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tractors to carry out the dirty laundry and get it washed elsewhere. Eventually the laundry staff was laid off, although the striking drivers announced that they would move the dirty linen if the laundry workers were called back to work. The climax was the calling in of 'security forces' to protect the scabs, some of them were

medical staff, who tried to remove the laundry. 17 police and military Landrovers were brought to the site and the picketers joined by a hundred women workers were threatened by machine guns..

On the other hand the strikers enjoyed massive support for their case. Money was raised among the ancillary workers in the RVH, the Musgrave, and the City Hospital. Nurses brought out leaflets dismissing allegations made by management, that as a cause of the strike, patients health was in danger. Local community groups raised money and joined the picket line.

The strike seemed to be over when an agreement was negotiated at the Labor Relations Agency, which would have brought reinstatement of the drivers on their terms. The two sides agreed to discuss whether savings could be found in some other areas of the supportive service budget. But this agreement was blocked by Sam Hazlett, the unit manager. 5 days later a peace formula, pending a Committee of Inquiry into the dispute, was agreed between the NUPE and the management. This was only possible, because wives and children of the strikers occupied administration offices in protest at the managements refusal to the agreement. The women saw the need to talk to the management about the implications the strike had on their lives. The management who always stressed during the strike that they were concerned about the wellbeing of the patients, didn't want to face the problems they caused and locked themselves up in one of the office rooms and only came out when the women withdrew. ■



# MUJERES LIBRES

## Spanish Revolution – the Forgotten Women



With the 50th anniversary of the Spanish Revolution and Civil War falling this year there is much talk and analysis of what happened. Often, at least in Ireland, anarchists get little or no mention. And as for anarchist women they have been almost totally forgotten ..... Almost.

### Mujeres Libres

Mujeres Libres ('free women') was the name of the anarchist women's organisation in Spain during the 1930s. It was founded by women who were activists in the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist trade union movement. By 1939 they had built an autonomous organisation of over 27,000 women; the overwhelming majority of these were working class and peasant women. During this period there were 147 groups throughout Spain.

### Aims of Mujeres Libres

Through their own and others experiences in the anarcho-syndicalist movement (CNT – FAI) they had come to believe that an autonomous women's movement was necessary to address what they called 'women's triple enslavement to ignorance, to capital and to men'.

Within anarchist theoretical frameworks hierarchy and formalised authority have always been seen as crucial problems – unlike many socialist movements which prioritise only class relations. Thus anarchist frameworks have been able to treat var-

ious types of subordination (for example sexual and racial as well as economic) as more or less interdependent relationships each of which would need to be addressed by truly revolutionary movements. As early as 1872 the first Anarcho-Syndicalist conference (after the split at the 1st International) set the overcoming of women's subordination as one of the goals of the anarcho-syndicalist movement. Despite this at the theoretical level, the issue of women's oppression had never been given a high priority in the Spanish anarchist movement. Many anarchists refused to recognise the specific nature of women's oppression and those that did reckoned that women's emancipation would follow either from a) their incorporation into the paid labour force or b) simply the establishment of an anarchist society.

The anarchist movement in Spain insisted that social and economic revolution should not be postponed until the war was won. Yet women anarchists were made aware that their liberation had to await the end of the war. While the authority of the capitalist over the worker, and the landlord over the tenant, could be challenged, that of man over woman could not be attacked until military victory was assured.

But the women in Mujeres Libres insisted on more conscious and direct action being necessary. While women or 'compañeras' were very involved at many different levels

prior to the revolution they felt that most anarchist men while talking a good line did not actually change their behaviour towards women on a day to day basis. For Mujeres Libres, as for anarchists in general, changing peoples consciousness of themselves and their place in society was a crucial step towards revolutionary change. They insisted that the means must be consistent with the ends – therefore as the goal of revolutionary struggles is a non-hierarchical egalitarian society it must be created through the activities of a non-hierarchical movement. Thus Mujeres Libres was a federal, decentralised organisation. It had 147 local groups clustered in areas that were also major centres of the Anarcho-Syndicalist movement – especially in Madrid, Catalonia, the Levant and Aragon.

### Spain before the War

Up to the 1930s Spanish society was dominated by the churches and was extremely sex divided. Most women and men had to keep almost exclusively to the company of their own sex. Also, the subordination of women, both economically and culturally, was much more severe than that of men. For example, rates of illiteracy were much higher for women and women who did work outside the home (predominantly unmarried women) had the lowest paid work and the worst conditions.

But also during the early 30s neighbour + hood cultural centres called 'ateneos' had been set up by the anarcho-syndicalist trade union movement (CNT) in many areas but especially in Barcelona. These played an important role in educating and preparing members for revolutionary change. They were particularly important for women in so far as they attacked illiteracy and helped build self-confidence. So while these went some way towards meeting the needs of women and unorganised workers in ways the union itself could not do, many women recognised the limitations of the ateneos. On the one hand they felt they were not treated with the same respect and seriousness as they should be. On the other hand they were aware of the inability of the CNT to attract many women since less women had had less 'preparation' prior to the civil war period.

### Free Women

In late 1933 in Madrid a number of women in the anarcho-syndicalist movement sent letters to women throughout the country – both within the CNT and outside – saying they wanted to set up a women's organisation and asking what issues women felt needed to be addressed. There was an immediate and large response from women. Meanwhile in Barcelona women in the CNT were becoming very concerned that

