



MEDIATION — MAKING THE BIG TIME

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A cockerel greets
the Dawn.....



Editorial

The main feature in this issue of Dawn Train is on mediation, a method of dispute resolution which is taking off rapidly in Ireland. We are pleased to give it coverage since mediation should be a basic skill which we not only possess but are prepared to use. It is an important tool in attempting to solve many kinds of conflicts.

But it is important to recognise what mediation is not. It is not a panacea. It is not a substitute for many other kinds of action for justice. It is not a solution to irreconcilables — pacifism and militarism, justice and injustice, poor and rich. Where there is a commitment to working out a solution and the parties concerned are not literally poles apart then mediation is a good bet — a better bet than courts, violence or inaction. NICMA in the North and CMS in the South will have rich fields for harvest, but doubtless many harvesters will need to be won over first — and trained!

The broadsheet in this issue on Bishopscourt (copies also available separately) is important in giving some recollection and reflection on Ireland's peace camp experience there. It was a small experience by international standards, perhaps, but important for a number of reasons which the broadsheet explores. Let's hope (and work that) Bishopscourt continues to be visited by people of the peace persuasion.

Also with this issue, folded in, is a two page reply sheet to the last issue of Dawn Train, "The Peace People Experience". We have printed all the replies we received.

The conference reports on nonviolence and feminism, and on the North Atlantic Network conference, represent important insights and inputs of international thinking to Ireland. It's great when such events land on our doorstep — and thanks to those whose work put them there.

Rural and urban organising comes in for analysis in the 'Rus v. Urbs' interview with Niall Fitzduff which throws some fascinating light on the Irish rural scene and ideas in relation to it which we should all take note of.

And for another experience altogether, read Narayan Desai's account of organising against nuclear power in Gujarat. The point in publishing this is not just to learn *what* is happening but *from* their experience and the effective methods they have found of organising.

There are some other small bits and pieces, including short reviews, but that is basically that. Happy reading — and a peaceful 1988 to you all.

— DAWN.

SPONSOR DAWN TO SCHOOLS

"Dear Sir/Madame.

Could you please send me some information. We are doing a Peace project in our school and we would appreciate some information....."

This is a typical letter from a school student received by Dawn. And, typically, we sent a load of pamphlets and broadsheets, postage alone costing 87 pence. Would you like to sponsor sending Dawn material to schools? Depending on how much you would like to contribute it could either help to meet our costs in this area or we could expand the service in a variety of ways (advertising the availability of material, producing a 'pack' with covering information, et cetera).

Contact Dawn Belfast if you're interested. Thank you.

NORTHERN GROUPS UPDATE

The Northern Ireland Conflict and Mediation Association is well enough covered, along with Conflict Management Services, in the feature on mediation in this issue.

There is now an Irish Network for Nonviolent Action Training (INNATE) in existence. A meeting has been held in Belfast and a workshop is being set up on nonviolent responses to violent situations. The network will probably be doing other things as well. INNATE can be contacted at 16 Ravensdene Park, Belfast 6, phone 647106.

Also being set up is a pacifist conference to take place early in 1988 in Belfast; this will include looking at violent and nonviolent approaches to change. You can get in touch by phoning Belfast 716925 (evenings).

There are other workshops being set up for people involved in anti-sectarian community work. Information on this and on a new project, Community Conflict Skills, can be obtained from Mari Fitzduff, 84 Drumaney Road, Cookstown, Co Tyrone, phone Coagh (06487) 37011. "The Community Conflict Skills project aims primarily to be of use to existing agencies, through providing flexible training and materials adapted to their particular need and where possible utilising their own skills and staff."; this could include inter group skills, prejudice reduction, recognising and dealing with discrimination et cetera.

DAWN TRAIN — CHOO CHOO CIAO?

This issue of Dawn Train, the first general issue of a Dawn publication for many moons, completes our current publishing schedule, though we are working on other material. We have published substantial pamphlets on education, the Peace People, and this issue within the last year.

With these three issues under our belt, we will now be assessing what the future direction of Dawn should be. More of the same? Something different? Oblivion? Ticking over?

Our most urgent need is for more people to become involved (hint). But even if you don't have the time or interest to be involved but can make your comments known, we would appreciate that. You can write in to either Dawn address, and also we will be holding Dawn meetings in Dublin and Belfast in the early part of 1988 to which you're invited to discuss what Dawn's future should be.

Dawn meeting Belfast; Monday 18th January 1988 at 8 pm in 16 Ravensdene Park, Belfast 6 (ph. 647106) (off Ravenhill Rd near Ravenhill Pk junction)

Dawn meeting Dublin; Monday 11th January 1988 at 8pm in 4 Clonmore Villas, 92 Ballybough Rd., Dublin 3 (Dublin Mennonite Community house; beside Royal Canal)

All interested welcome to both meetings.

DAWN TRAIN No.6; publication date January 1988.

This issue edited by Rob Fairmichael.

Letters, comments and material for possible publication welcome.

Further copies of this issue at 60p + 20p postage, or 5 copies for £3 post free.

SUBSCRIPTIONS;

If you would like to take out a subscription to Dawn publications please send £3 (supporting subscription £6) for which you will receive £3 worth of magazines, pamphlets and broadsheets, including postage. Frequency, size and cover price will vary. Send to; Dawn, 16 Ravensdene Park, Belfast 6, phone Belfast 647106, or Dawn, Po Box 1522, Dublin 1.

DAWN ADDRESSES;

Belfast — 16 Ravensdene Park, Belfast 6, phone Belfast 647106.
Dublin — PO Box 1522, Dublin 1.

"The basis of the early Irish law, known as the Brehon Law (from *breitheamh* — a judge), first codified in the 5th century A.D., was arbitration. Disputes could only lead to arbitration and compensation. The death penalty for a crime was enacted only in extreme cases. It was for the injured party to compel the injurer to accept the arbitration and under the law there was a custom of ritual fasting as a method of asserting one's rights. The Brehon Law finds its closest parallel in traditional Hindu law." — "A History of the Irish Working Class"

by Peter Berresford Ellis, Pluto Press, 1985, p.21.



Mediation feature

AN INTRODUCTION TO MEDIATION

by Jerry Tyrrell

"In every mediation, I still think, 'Oh this will never work', until halfway through, the session reaches a peak. Emotions have been spent and people feel hopeless. At this point a silence falls, time for absorbing and going beyond what has been said. I always hope the other mediator won't say anything. In our society we are not supposed to be silent; we have to fill the gap with music or talking. There is quiet, then suddenly it turns around. This seems to be a pattern." (1)

This anonymous quote by a mediator describes the turning point — the essence of the mediation process as practised by the Community Dispute Settlement (CDS) in Pennsylvania, USA.

Two years ago whilst on a visit to Philadelphia, I participated in their intensive training programme.

The CDS was created by the Friends Suburban Project, a Quaker agency, as an alternative to the court system, in an attempt to empower the disputants to resolve their own conflicts, in a nonviolent process.

I was very impressed with the course, particularly its effective use of role-play. Few of us have formally learnt effective ways of dealing with conflict, and yet, *"Conflict we know, is everywhere... .. The quality of any human group, institution, or society depends on how that conflict is handled."* (2)

Mediation is a form of conflict resolution. For the purposes of this article at least, it is worth separating it from other processes. *"The Mediator's Handbook"* (3) produced by the Friends Suburban Project provides some useful definitions: —

Conciliation

Bringing disputing parties to the point where they agree to mediation, arbitration, negotiation, or other conflict resolution process. A conciliator is usually a third party and is not always present at the meeting of the disputing parties.

Arbitration

A process in which an impartial third party makes a final, binding decision. The discussion and the decision may not be as rigidly restricted by law as courtroom procedure is.

Litigation

The legal process of settling a dispute in court.

Negotiation

A general term for the process of working out an agreement without the help of a neutral third party. (This term is often used loosely to refer to any discussion about a disagreement).

Mediation

A process which brings disputing parties together in the presence of an impartial third party, who helps the disputants work out an agreement. The disputants, not the mediator, decide the terms of this agreement. Mediation often focusses on terms of restitution and on future behaviour. (4)

This emphasis on the future, and specifically the future behaviour of the disputants is refreshing. Punishment, revenge and apportioning blame for past misdeeds may be the guiding forces behind the disputants wanting to mediate, but the process — whilst allowing for this — moves people towards a mutually acceptable solution. In addition there are three elements which



Jerry Tyrrell (centre) during his workshop at the NICMA inaugural conference, February 1987.

motivated the Friends Suburban Project to take on a mediation service. These are "empowerment", "nonviolence" and "alternative".

This trio of concepts is at odds with our received wisdom that *the court will decide*. Consequently, there is scepticism about its validity — as if it was peculiarly American and unpractical. However it is likely that we all have been mediators in family disputes, and may well have been mediated.

It is perhaps significant that in Northern Ireland where the very makeup of the courts in the political arena is a contentious issue, the notion of mediation is gaining ground. This means structuring existing mediations into a recognisable service, training mediators, and working initially at the level of neighbourhood disputes, and disputes at the workplace.

The recently formed *Northern Ireland Conflict and Mediation Association* (NICMA) is an encouraging sign of the growing acceptance of mediation as a means of resolving conflict.

The difficulty of course is getting the message across to a sceptical public that has been brought up on a diet of "Perry Mason", "Petrocelli" and "Crown Court". We may never have been to a court as plaintiff, defendant, witness or observer, but we have an idea of what that process involves.

Mediation in contrast suffers from being a private affair, with only the disputants and mediator(s) present. Even trainees have to make do with role-plays, until sufficiently skilled and confident to do it themselves.

Mediation endeavours to encompass nonviolence and empowerment, and be a realistic alternative to either "having one's day in court" or "taking the law into one's own hands"; the former being a masquerade for empowerment and the latter liable to be the opposite of nonviolent?

Mediation has often been seen as a soft option, naive in comparison with cases in the real world of the courts. The CDS has suffered from condescension, epitomised in the comment from a district justice that *'We haven't any cases trivial enough for the Quaker ladies'*. CDS was founded by women, and two thirds of its mediators are women. The teeling point is made in the book *'Peacemaking in your neighbourhood' that Quakers and women have endured.....a historical cult of false gentleness. False gentleness does not work in the turbulence of mediation.* (5)

Dark Pies Ink.

So what if anything is magic about mediation? It is described by quotes from disputants and mediators alike, that after all the heat of the argument, and an angry exchange of views, the disputants are inexorably drawn to build their own solution by mutual agreement. No it doesn't work every time, but when it does everybody wins. Even in role-plays it was possible to discern the reconciling quality of the 'turning point' which starts this article.

It may be worth looking at one process that has been refined through years of practice.

Preparation

It is arguably the case that by the time the disputants have been persuaded to mediate the issue it already has the potential of being resolved.

Opening statement

This sets the scene for the mediation; it establishes the ground rules, creates a climate of safety and establishes the role of the mediator. The mediator will stress good faith and the voluntary nature of the participation. This is an essential and integral part of the process. *The disputants have chosen to participate, there is a commitment to work on the situation.* (6)

Uninterrupted time

This affords the opportunity for each disputant in turn, to give their version of the story, being perhaps the first time the other person has had to listen to it, in full. The *uninterrupted* nature of this discourse is deliberate and crucial. Nevertheless in the handbook the comment is made *"It is nearly impossible for anyone to listen without comment when directly addressed, questioned or threatened."* (7) So speakers are encouraged to explain rather than confront.

Listening well is a key skill in mediation. *"The purpose of listening is to understand. This is not the same as agreement with the speaker."* (8)

When each person has had uninterrupted time the mediator moves the disputants on to: —

The exchange

This allows the disputants to respond to the issues, accusations and questions that came up during uninterrupted time. It also allows for the release of feelings and a chance to speak freely about issues. It can, by all accounts, seem like chaos. However in the midst of what can be fury, the mediator is listening to discern mediatable issues. The next step is *"building the agreement"*, and depends on the direction of the discussion changing from emotional attack and defence to a cooperative search for solutions.

Building the agreement

The purpose is to formulate specific proposals for resolving each main issue. It entails identifying the mediatable issues, checking that the list of issues is accurate and complete, ensuring that everybody's ideas are heard, and checking that each person accepts the proposed solution.

One effect of the Quaker influence in this particular mediation process is that consensus is an integral part of the process. There is a clear differentiation between consensus and compromise. Consensus endeavours to encompass the three guiding principles of nonviolence, empowerment, and 'being an alternative' (to court).

It is at this point that consensus is vital. The mediators are encouraged to look at a dispute as a situation rather than as a problem with two sides. The assumption is that with the goodwill that was established at the outset, and with everybody's participation, the disputants may develop a fresh workable solution.

Finally an agreement is signed when each disputant is willing to accept each point of the contract.

So much of our legal system's approach to resolving conflict has to do with apportioning blame and handing out punishment, that our whole 'mindset' when it comes to summarising a situation is likely to become judgemental. In the handbook, examples are given as to how to summarise issues: —

"Johnny's TV watching is a problem for his mother".
"The cost of fixing the fence is an issue for Jim Bloke."
"Namecalling is an issue."

DAWN TRAIN 6, page four.

NOT

"The problem is Johnny watching TV too much."
"Mr Bloke wants Timmy to pay for his vandalism."
"Mrs Louder's foul language is an issue." (9)

As well as being nonjudgemental in helping define issues, mediators need to refrain from imposing solutions. The sensible solution of an outsider might seem logical, but an imposed solution can relieve the disputants of a commitment to make it work.

Writing the agreement

The CDS hold great store by getting a *written* agreement; and one that is quite specific: —

The agreement should state clearly WHO is agreeing to WHAT, WHERE, WHEN and HOW. The disputants' wording can be used whenever possible. An effective mediation agreement should:

- 1) Be specific
 - 2) Set times.
 - 3) Be balanced.
 - 4) Be positive.
 - 5) Provide for the future.
 - 6) Dispose of charges
 - 7) Be signed by everyone present.
- (9)

Closing statement

The mediators take this opportunity to review what has been achieved by the participants, and compliment them on their determination to work through the situation, and remind them of followup arrangements.

There is a follow up to find out how things have been going, and whether the agreement is still holding up.

What relevance does mediation have in Northern Ireland?

I was at a day workshop two years ago, organised by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and entitled "Conflict Resolution". Fresh back from the USA, I enthused about this particular mediation training course, and was met with polite interest, but a definite impression that I had attempted to try to teach my granny to suck eggs, and yet simultaneously introduce something that was peculiar to America and not worthy of import.

The school of thought was that mediation is best done informally, has been done so for many years and we don't need the Americanised jargon and high profile here.

I think that there is a greater issue at stake here, one which boils down to overcoming isolation. Am I alone in being affected by a 'North Pole' syndrome in the field of community relations/conflict resolution/reconciliation.

I mean by that there are two forces at work, firstly a large number of people working towards this goal, and secondly a recent recognition of its major importance by various funding agencies including the NI Department of Education and the NI Voluntary Trust.

The net result is that a number of people who through force of circumstance have been previously working in isolation, see their work vindicated, and a potential source of money.

Unfortunately this can lead to greater frustration and isolation, as those who can get their act together quicker get the finance, and leave others in greater isolation. Instead of co-operation — competition. And someone may arrive at the North Pole first, but nobody else will know how?

It is heartening therefore that the Northern Ireland Conflict and Mediation Association has been set up. It offers a structured support and forum for ideas and action in this field.

It also gives an opportunity for people to 'naturalise' the experience of other countries, and other cultures, in order to be tailored to the Northern Ireland situation.

As regards mediation, one of the difficulties is to encourage people to use such a service. 46 cases a year are handled by CDS in Pennsylvania, which is not many considering the service has been set up for several years.

Nevertheless mediation, in whatever form it takes, is worthy of consideration, and in conclusion....."Mediation is a process too powerful to dismiss. The final issue is not whether but *how* we choose to use it". (10)

SOURCES: 1, 2, 5, 10; 'Peacemaking in your neighbourhood', Jennifer E Beer, New Society Publishers, 1986.
3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9; 'Mediator's handbook', by Jennifer E Beer with Eileen Sieff and Charles Walker. Friends Suburban Project, 1982.

Ta(I)king mediation to H(e)art

Before he left Ireland in September 1987 after a number of months working on mediation, Barry Hart spoke to Rob Fairmichael of Dawn. Among other work experience, Barry was director of the community mediation centre in Harrisonburg, Virginia, for 5 years 1982-87; he has since returned to the USA to teach conflict resolution at James Madison University and Blue Ridge Community College, Virginia.



Barry Hart talked to Rob Fairmichael of Dawn.

Rob — If we can begin by asking what your position was in mediation in the States?

Barry — I was a director of the community mediation centre in Harrisonburg, Virginia, I did that from 1982 until 1987, the first part of this year actually. I was working there both as a mediator and an intake person, and also as a trainer. Probably half of what the centre was about was training other people in conflict management skills.

Rob — Right. How available is mediation and conflict resolution in the States? You get the impression that it's pretty widespread but is that just in particular areas?

Barry — I think it is widespread now. When I began six years ago there were 160 community based centres; today I suspect there are about 375, maybe 400 centres around the United States. At that point in time as well, when I began or prior to that, there were about 2,000 community based mediators; probably today there are 25,000 community based mediators. So it has grown quite rapidly.

It is something that has taken off in the hearts and minds of people because they see it as a creative way of resolving disputes rather than going to court or not dealing with conflict at all. A lot of people are avoiders of conflict and a lot of people like to use the court systems in the United States to resolve conflict but mediation is being seen by many as a creative way. And I say by many, I think because it is where the disputants themselves come up with the solution and not the mediator; it is different in that sense from arbitration and certainly from litigation. It's creative because of that fact and the fact that you have a win-win situation in about 80% of the cases that actually come to mediation.

Rob — Is that the key thing about mediation?

Barry — I would say so — the fact that people are empowered to come up with their own solutions. What I mean by empowering is that they are listened to, maybe for the first time ever, and they are told from the outset as well that they are not going to be given the answer. Through the listening process and restating process, and problem solving stage where people are asked to generate creative solutions, they are able to move past their positions to their underlying interest and come up with very creative solutions, as I said, in about 80% of the cases.

Rob — 'Conflict resolution' — would you define that as a wider term than mediation?

Barry — There's a debate on what is the best term — whether it's 'dispute resolution', or 'alternative dispute resolution', or 'mediation', or 'conflict management'. Actually the best term might be 'conflict management' but I like the concept of 'mediation', where a mediator, a third party, neutral, objective, actually is the go-between inbetween those people in a dispute, who then facilitates those people by listening and helping them come up with a solution, in the sense that he or she is mediator helps generate those solutions themselves.

Rob — 'Conflict resolution' could be talking about a global type conflict though.

Barry — Well, it could.

Rob — If you're using it on the neighbourhood level it means the same thing as mediation.

Barry — That is correct. That's very basically the case. But I might say that mediation or conflict resolution, whatever you might want to call it, basically the style or approach we use and teach is something which can be used at all levels of society — from the school yards where the children can actually act as mediators, and we've taught a lot of people in that area, to the national and international disputes as well. Roger Fisher, from the Harvard Negotiation Programme, has written a book called "Getting to yes" that describes some of his role in the Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt, and some of those techniques in negotiation are very basic and very similar to the mediation styles and techniques we use.

Rob — Prof. Mitchell when he was talking at the NICMA seminar back in the spring was quite interesting on that too. How did you get to come to Ireland?

Barry — Well, my interest in Ireland and in Europe had really been generated earlier on. I had been in France and Germany, Holland and Belgium, working under the Mennonite Conciliation Service (ed. note: the Mennonites are one of three 'historic peace churches', along with the Society of Friends/Quakers, and the Church of the Brethren, in the USA) which is in Akron, Pennsylvania. They had sent me for a short term, this was while I was director of the centre in Harrisonburg. But they had asked me to do some training in Europe and I enjoyed that quite a lot. In 1985 I did those countries that were mentioned.

And so when I resigned from the mediation centre the whole purpose at that point was to come to Europe. A letter was sent out explaining my availability to the Mennonites in Dublin, they sent the letter on to a number of groups, in Belfast and Dublin, and it was through that Pax Christi, the Glencree Centre for Reconciliation, and Extern, a group working in the criminal justice area; Extern has a number of other projects that they have started to develop including a neighbourhood dispute resolution programme. People from these organisations picked this up and invited me to come to Ireland, and I arrived in April.

Rob — How has it been going?

Barry — Well, being here has been going very well. I've worked with Extern, done some trainings for their staff, and done a workshop for a group that is working with youth in West Belfast. Extern also seconded Joan Broder to the Northern Ireland Probation Board and I've been doing some training through them as well, particularly those people working in domestic situations, family dispute areas. That would be something I've really enjoyed doing, having done several trainings for them.

Rob — Do you see mediation approaching lift-off point — information, you're talking about domestic, you're talking about neighbourhood. Do you see it approaching lift-off in the North?

Barry — I really do. I think there's some very creative work being done by a number of people here. I feel very sure that they have a clear understanding of what mediation is, I think it's just a matter of time as more people get trained, that mediation will become a very popular way of looking at disputes and the resolution of conflict in those areas.

I believe also that here in the North, NICMA, the Northern Ireland Conflict and Mediation Association, is doing a lot of work, an umbrella organisation for a number of people from peace groups, from neighbourhood resolution groups, cross-

cultural interest groups, just really providing an umbrella for these groups with regard to resourcing and that sort of thing. I would hope that the group itself will take off even more to provide mediation information and resourcing to a greater number of people.

Rob — Before we talk about the South, do you see mediation as easily applicable to the sectarian situation in the North?

Barry — I came here not with the idea that there would be any use of mediation necessarily in talks of any kind in the sectarian problem. But I believe the concept itself is certainly applicable to this situation because people eventually need to talk and the techniques and skills of mediation, the fact that mediation has at the heart of it a certain built in respect for the process and hopefully for the people on either side, that it will indeed be an approach and a skill that can be used.

I am very convinced that certain negotiation doesn't go far enough and doesn't clarify, and doesn't really hear, the disputants involved. And therefore it isn't as creative as it could be. I believe that's where mediation and its particular approach and steps and stages will really be helpful in any kinds of talks that may happen in the future. I don't say that with any great expectations but I guess I say it certainly with some hope, that the people who may eventually be trained in mediation will use these skills when the time is right to help out in the sectarian strife.

Rob — What about your work then in Dublin with Glencree and Pax Christi?

Barry — That's going very well. The work there has been within the school systems, we have done some training in four schools, working with young women in this case who are going to be leaders in the next year at sixth level. They are able to learn these skills quite readily. We work with a lot younger people in the States — we work through the spectrum from elementary schools right up to the high schools — and it's quite interesting how young children and teenagers can pick up these skills and utilise them in their own context.

That's one thing we've been doing in the Dublin area, along with working with two neighbourhood groups, hopefully to develop a dispute resolution programme within two neighbourhoods, in Dublin at Tallaght and Rialto, so that they can have people from their communities working with the disputes in their particular neighbourhoods. And so that's an exciting project as well.

Rob — In terms of the schools, do you see information and training in mediation as just part of basic education, that it should be part of what everybody is given during their school years?

Barry — I would really like to see that. I think it's certainly something that's taking off in different parts of the States; we have 16 States that are including these programmes in their systems.

What I want to say on those lines is that I believe we have thought all along we have taught our children communication skills and I believe we have not. I feel that very strongly, that the communication skills that are taught within the framework of mediation skills training are going to really, really enhance the children's ability to deal with conflict, now in their lives, and carry that through their lives into their adulthood. I think that might have great meaning wherever that's taught and in whatever part of the world.



NICMA – Conflict and Mediation Association

Enabling people to handle conflict

by Oliver Johnston

In Northern Ireland we are only too aware of the negative effects of conflict. Handled well, however, conflict can be a liberating experience, creating change, growth and well being. In human relationships conflict is normal.

Rather than avoid conflict we need to understand it and develop skills in dealing with it in our own relationships and when asked to intervene in the conflicts of other people, groups or communities.

Internationally, handling conflict is a major issue. People all over the world are searching for, and finding, better ways to achieve this shared goal. Over the years, considerable expertise has been building up in Northern Ireland. People, in all walks of life, have been learning skills to **HANDLE CONFLICT POSITIVELY**.

A friend of mine, a restaurant owner, comments that in other countries customers complain to the waiter if anything is not to their satisfaction. Here we wait until we get home and then complain to everyone! How often, when we do complain, do we also find ourselves being rude, aggressive and intolerant? My friend, the restaurant owner, knows only too well!

The more we are empowered by conflict handling skills, the more control we have over our own lives and the less we encroach on the personal rights of others. It may be also, that a population well skilled in dealing with conflict between individuals, will be better able to find ways of dealing with conflict between neighbourhoods, communities and countries!

NICMA (the Northern Ireland Conflict and Mediation Association) aims to promote the concept of **HANDLING CONFLICT POSITIVELY** to all sections of the population, in all geographical areas of Northern Ireland. After all, **HANDLING CONFLICT POSITIVELY** is about enabling ordinary people to handle everyday problems at home, school, work and in the community.

* NICMA is planning a province-wide touring exhibition, backed up with local training events and easy to read literature.

The Association was formed in 1986, by a group of professionals working with conflict in different settings, who realised that the concept of **HANDLING CONFLICT POSITIVELY** and the skills involved are common. The sharing of ideas, information, knowledge and skills, therefore makes very good sense and has become the second of NICMA's aims.

* Five special interest groups have been established for people interested and/or involved in the following areas: neighbourhood work; cross cultural development; family and marital work; international relations; education; others groups may be established as required, for example in Industrial Relations and victim/offender mediation.

* Conferences, workshops and seminars are organised on topics relevant to **HANDLING CONFLICT POSITIVELY**.

* An information bank, based in Bryson House, provides a growing amount of relevant and up to date literature, film, etc. from this and other countries.

* A list of Trainers is available to help groups, organisations and individuals develop their knowledge and skills.

* Over the coming months a Statement of Principles will set out parameters of good practice.

Membership of NICMA now stands at 60 organisations and individuals. If you would like to join or want further information on the work of NICMA contact Joan Broder, Secretary, NICMA c/o 46 University Street, Belfast 7, phone 244003. For access to the Information Bank, contact Peter McLachlan at Bryson House, 28 Bedford Street, Belfast 2, phone 225835.

Conflict Management Services

The Southern mediation experience —

HANDLING CONFLICT POSITIVELY

by Joan Broder, Geoffrey Corry, Sr Christina O'Neill

People have the capacity to resolve their own conflicts provided that a safe environment can be created and they work together through a conciliation process.

That is the message of Conflict Management Services, a training programme established by three people — Geoffrey Corry of Glencree Centre for Reconciliation, Sr Christina O'Neill of Pax Christi and Joan Broder from Belfast. The group was formed out of the experience of being trained together in San Francisco in September 1986 with the generous support of Ray Shonholtz and the Public Welfare Foundation.

Conflict cannot be ignored

Conflict is part of our everyday lives. Sometimes we are blind to how it is actually interfering in our lives. Other times we are only too well aware of it. We all have conflicts every day — with our kids, our husband/wife, our parents, the boss or even our best friends.

The issue is how we deal with it — seeing it as an opportunity for learning something new about ourselves or running away from it. For so many of us, we have been taught that conflict is wrong, unpleasant and negative. Denying that there is a problem or that you are angry is not going to solve anything. We need to be able to accept responsibility for a situation and have a range of skills for dealing with feelings.

Because Geoffrey Corry and Sr Christina have come from peace groups, the CMS group recognise how important it is to promote conflict management and mediation skills as integral to the work of building reconciliation in Ireland. For too long our aspiration for reconciliation has remained unfulfilled because peace groups did not have essential "how to" skills to handle disputes that arose in their own work. They believe that training in mediation and listening skills are essential tools for peace making.

CONFLICT HAS POSITIVE VALUE

We have adopted the 5 positive values of conflict set out by San Francisco Community Boards.

- 1. Normal** : Conflicts are the norm in society, have meaning for us and provide opportunities for personal growth.
- 2. Peaceful expression** of conflict in local communities enhances communication, gives deeper social meaning and improves security.
- 3. Acceptance** of responsibility for a conflict is a positive value and deepens understanding of ourselves and others.
- 4. Voluntary resolution** of conflict empowers the disputants and promotes cooperation and responsibility.
- 5. Tolerance** for differences and a willingness to learn from one another contributes to a community's strength and vitality.

How the group was formed

Our first interest in mediation was generated through the visit in March 1985 of Ron Kraybill, Director of the Mennonite Conciliation Service in Pennsylvania. Sr Christina of Pax Christi co-sponsored this visit with Dawn Ruth Nelson of the Mennonite Community in Dublin. Ron's workshop was so relevant and inspiring that a small group continued to meet afterwards.

Later that year, Anna Schneider came to Glencree as a volunteer from the Brethren Service (another peace church) and with Glencree's enthusiastic support, she wrote to a number of resource people. We were extremely lucky in securing Ray Shonholtz who happened to be on sabbatical leave from Community Boards in San Francisco after 10 years of intense involvement in building and refining a neighbourhood dispute settlement scheme.



YOU AND YOUR 'HANDLE'
CONFLICT POSITIVELY'!!*

Conflict Management Services is a joint venture between the Glencree Centre for Reconciliation and Pax Christi with the support of the Mennonite Conciliation Service and Community Boards of San Francisco. Address: 2 Belvedere Place, Dublin 1. Phone: 01 — 742717.

Ray came to Ireland for 1 week in May 1986 and did 5 very successful workshops in Dublin and Belfast. It generated a tremendous interest among social workers, teachers and leaders of religious communities who all asked for more follow up work.

Funding from the States

On his return to the States, Ray generated funding to the value \$ 5,000 from the Public Welfare Foundation sufficient to send the three of us for ten days of training with Community Boards in San Francisco. If that was not just good luck, the really good news came in March of this year. Having sown the seeds two years previously, Ron Kraybill made it known to us that Barry Hart, Director of a Community Mediation Centre in Harrisonburg and also a Mennonite, was looking at options for himself, including our Irish situation. The timeliness of this news was incredible from our perspective because we now had three trained people full of enthusiasm and energy for the promotion of this work but constrained through lack of time and funds.

Four month visit by Barry Hart

The events surrounding Barry's choice to come to Ireland and the support of the MCC (Mennonite Central Committee) can only be described as an act of faith and hope. We had no money to offer, no where to live, no real job description, only a conviction of the values of mediation and an awareness of its potential. Barry arrived in Ireland in mid-April with an open plan, an open mind and a will to serve. There followed a very busy time for him from April to August.

In Belfast, Barry supported training initiatives in the Probation Board and Extern and contacts were made with the recently established Northern Ireland Conflict and Mediation Association (NICMA). In Dublin, new work was begun with a number of schools, the Legal Aid Board, the Juvenile Liaison scheme for young offenders, neighbourhood groups like Barnardo's and Threshold who are working with landlord/tenant situations, the National Federation of Youth Clubs staff group and the Family Mediation Service.

If Ron sowed one seed and Ray invested in three other seeds, then Barry has sown a whole field! Present plans include more intensive training for community groups and teachers, the building of training teams and the establishment of community mediation centres in Dublin and Belfast (with Extern). We also see possibilities of this process being applied to resolving conflict between large groups and between young people, families and local communities.

Conferences

Two important international conferences concerned with peace have taken place in Ireland last summer and autumn. The first was a conference on Feminism and Nonviolence, organised by the War Resisters International (which, along with their Council meeting, took place in Glencree). The second was the annual North Atlantic Network conference, held for the first time in Ireland, and organised by the Active Neutrality for Disarmament Group of UCG, and taking place in Galway. We are pleased to present reports on both conferences —



-FEMINISM AND NONVIOLENCE

from the press statement —

Glencree Reconciliation Centre, Ireland, was the site of the Third International Women's Conference on Feminism and Nonviolence organised by the War Resisters International, July 26/August 1st. 50 women representing 21 different countries, all ages and sexual orientations, met for five days to share experiences, work in plenaries and participate in workshops and affinity groups. Regional presentations allowed women to give input about their countries' particular situation.

South African women talked about the End Conscription Campaign, a coalition group which works within the white community against conscription and apartheid. Three women spoke about the situation in the Pacific, where indigenous people are struggling against nuclear testing, militarism and colonialism, and to regain their land. Women from Spain reported on the situation in Riano, where nine villages have been destroyed to make way for a dam. Women of the villages have led the fight to regain their land.

There were reports from Thailand, where 1 million women are forced into prostitution in order to survive, many of them becoming initially involved because of foreign military presence; a report from Hong Kong on the emergence of a feminist peace movement and the struggle against construction of a nuclear power plant in China; a report from Yugoslavia on the successful campaign of the alternative women's peace and environmental groups against the conscription of women; a report from Poland on the difficult position of women caught between a socialist philosophy and a strong Catholic influence.

Workshops dealt with a variety of topics. These included Irish history, raising boys according to feminist values, nonviolence and liberation struggles, peace camps, nonviolence training techniques, peace education, social defence and sexism in the peace movement. Criteria were drawn up to help promote women's equal participation in mixed peace groups (printed after this piece - Ed.).

The international network of feminists working in the peace movement was greatly strengthened. Women will be able to work more effectively in solidarity campaigns and on future actions. Participants rejoiced in the news that Janet Cherry, the End Conscription Campaign activist held under detention for almost 11 months, had been released by the South African government. They were saddened by the fact that four Polish women were unable to attend because the Polish government refused to issue them passports. Lack of money and family obligations prevented other women from attending.

Various messages were sent to different parts of the world; to the Shibakusa women in Japan in support of their ongoing struggle to reclaim their land; to the South African government, demanding the release of Sue Lund and other women in detention; to the US, in support of Katya Komisaruk, facing heavy fines and a jail sentence for her nonviolent disarmament action.

A letter of support was sent to the Belauan people, now under massive pressure to repeal the world's first nuclear free constitution; letters of protest were sent to the United Nations and the US Congress, stating opposition to US attempts to undermine the Belauan Constitution. A letter was also sent to the Yugoslavian government calling for an amnesty for all imprisoned conscientious objectors and recognition for conscientious objection as a basic human right. A letter was also sent to officials in Cumbria, Britain, and to the Irish government, demanding the immediate closure of the nuclear reprocessing plant at Windscale/Sellafield.

A working group is now making plans for the next gathering while a newsletter, that has been publishing twice a year on feminism and nonviolence will continue to enable participants and other concerned women to communicate, continue the debate, network, and strengthen the links.

The WRI (War Resisters International) address is; 55 Daves Street, London SE17 1EL, England.

Demands on Mixed Groups and Organisations

(Summary of proposals from the workshop on Anti-Patriarchal Work in Mixed Groups)

MEN

1. Men should become conscious of their role in society and start taking responsibility for their role as oppressors of wimmin.
2. Men should respect wimmin's space, giving physical space in meetings, etc, as well as respecting separate wimmin's groups.
3. Men should challenge other men's sexist language and behaviour.
4. Men play an important part in discouraging wimmin from joining mixed groups by their behaviour in those groups. This behaviour has to change.
5. Men take it as an obligation to do tedious, repetitive and uncreative work, in order to take this burden from wimmin, who are usually preoccupied with this kind of work.

GROUP BEHAVIOUR

1. Be aware of and respect each other's needs and differences in regard to the age, race, sex, culture, class and ability.

The group should be aware that traditional, male-oriented ways of organising are not the only option. Liberation for us wimmin does not mean adopting male norms and codes of behaviour.

2. Group meetings shall be organised on feminist principles, e.g. allowing space to express feelings in a meeting; make sure that there is enough time for everyone to participate; listening to each other.
3. Groups should take on the issues of sexism and make space to meet and discuss the issues in single-sex groups.
4. Childcare needs to be a group responsibility.

ORGANISATIONS

1. Make struggle against male violence in all forms — be it overt or covert, direct or structural — a basic principle.
2. Money and resources should be given to wimmin and the cause of feminism. Wimmin should not always take on unpaid voluntary work.
3. Feminist work shall be integrated as one field of staff work; not as an additional part that one staff-wimmin has to add onto her other jobs.
4. Organisations should have a quota in their decision-making bodies based on sex, race, class background, sexual, emotional preferences etc to ensure equal representation on each of those groups. 50% of people in decision-making bodies should be wimmin. Other percentages need individual discussion.

What the conference meant to an Irish participant —

by Órla Ní Éilí

Throughout the week of the gathering as well as the 35 - 40 women residing at Glencree for the entire time, 20 or so women from Ireland came and stayed for varying lengths of time. We participated in and gave workshops, shared and gathered information, mourned and rejoiced.

Here we were in the country 20 miles from Dublin, totally detached from daily news and events yet getting intimate details of life circumstances for people in different countries and feeling very interconnected with them. There was much to bother us and from that came the resolve for some that the only hope we had was to work out with and keep a thought out for each other at all times, to find our own ways of working and to not be lulled into thinking that the bases of the non-violent, peace movement is always in harmony with woman oriented work, even though there can be quite a few comparisons.

Discussions on nonviolent responses to armed struggles were numerous, some had great difficulty with this area, others then had settled in themselves that the work they were doing was valuable and a very valid way of approaching changing the make up of societies which do not really value nor empower all. Unfortunately no women from the North of Ireland were free to attend the gathering to everyone's disappointment.

Some of the most important times of the week were when we held hands in our big powerful circle, sang, felt and gave to each other more than words could ever say or mean, these were very special times. Many of us will write, meet and work together again on a regular newsletter and on the planning for the next gathering which is hoped to be in the Pacific, and on particular areas of interest. Lists of names and addresses, work interest and knowledge were exchanged so the networking continues and grows.

6 ships which do nothing except take nuclear waste to Sellafield; what if one of these collided with another vessel?

The Irish Sea

What else about the local, Irish sea, situation? Frank Doherty, journalist, and Bernard Moffat of the Celtic league provided input in a workshop of 'Military overflights and submarine activity around Ireland'. Bernard Moffat had copies of a list of incidents in the Irish and Celtic seas; contact J B Moffat, 24 St Germain's, Peel, Isle of Man. I couldn't attend this so I'll quote directly from the workshop report;

"Submarine activity around Ireland — Bernard Moffat. Importance of having some system to monitor submarine activity in the Irish Sea was demonstrated by 1982 'Sheralga' incident, and other similar incidents in the Irish Sea. DOT and Ministry of Defence in Britain have consistently lied about these incidents, even denying presence of submarines in the Irish Sea." (Sheralga was sunk by entanglement with HMS Porpoise and the fishermen left).

"Ballistic missiles submarines can weigh up to 8,000 tons and travel at speeds of up to 30 knots. A major danger in the Irish Sea is now that one of these submarines should be damaged, and plutonium etc be released into the sea — a sort of 'underwater Chernobyl'. With Irish trawlers increasingly becoming entangled with submarines in the Irish Sea, the potential for a nuclear accident is growing monthly. Faslane Peace Group — best source of information at the moment.

Submarine activity — Frank Doherty. Americans are presently expanding their fleet of submarines. Exigencies of warfare demand that some safety factors be left out when building and using submarines.

Presence in the Irish Sea of American submarines, British submarines, other NATO nationalities' submarines and also Soviet submarines. At least twice a week, nuclear submarines are passing within 25 miles of Dublin. Submarines with missile-tubes removed can be used for other purposes — e.g. as troop-carriers. American and Russian submarines *have* collided in the past — e.g. at Valevostak Harbour.

Overflights — UK air defence and where Ireland fits in: UK air defence — based on East coast, from where traditional threat came (i.e. continental Europe).

US has most of its strategic defence missiles etc located in Britain.

Britain could NOT fight a Third World War without radar facilities located in certain area in Ireland, which they don't have at the moment. At present, for example, Russia could attack Britain via a large area off the West Coast of Ireland, and Britain would not have radar facilities to detect attack or combat it through the air.

Shannon Airport would thus be of VITAL importance to Britain/US if they could control it. Radar stations in Schull, Co Cork to control Irish/British air traffic. Potential dangers in this."

Strategic importance?

A ding-dong also developed between two prominent figures in the conference during a workshop on alternative defence (requests for their identity should be sent in on a £10 note). One alleged from his reading of international strategic and peace literature that Ireland wasn't really of any strategic importance. It is hard to see how this theory could be sustained. A friend thought perhaps he was saying that there wasn't much we could *do* to prevent any superpower who wanted to take advantage of our position, but that sounds something different entirely. Suffice it to say that there was next to unanimity that Ireland *is* of considerable strategic importance — at least as much now as it ever was. Perhaps NATO apologists would like us to *think* Ireland isn't of any strategic importance — and thus sell our soul to the devil (in the shape of a common 'defence' agreement in the EEC/Western European 'unity' context) for a bargain basement price. Unfortunately, as the Single European Act referendum showed in the Republic in 1987, many people feel they do not have a choice — and much of this would seem to be for economic reasons (get on the gravy train). But the example of Sweden destroys the argument that neutrality = poverty.



SECURING A NUCLEAR FREE SEA

A report by Rob Fairmichael

An interesting point to start with is the clash of perceptions on the Republic's position between Irish peace activists and some of our nearest neighbours. Irish delegates tended to bemoan the woeful state of Irish neutrality, the limbo-land existence of a 'neutral' state that defined its neutrality as 'military' but not 'political'. Delegates from Scotland, Wales and England tended to think how lucky we were to have what we have!

But the focus of this conference, the 5th annual NAN (North Atlantic Network) conference and also the first to be held in Ireland, was principally on the North Atlantic but also, through representatives of groups concerned with the Caribbean, Indian and Pacific oceans, on the world-wide maritime situation. The danger that was felt most of all was that agreement by the super-powers on land-based missile reduction would mean more escalation at sea. As if the maritime world was not already far too militarised.

Sean MacBride in his opening address said that Nuclear Free Zones should be procured for all the oceans of the world, and he pointed the finger at governments as the biggest terrorists (French attack on Greenpeace, US bombing of Libya). He also pointed to the danger of a nuclear accident concerning the

Alternative defence?

The workshop which I mentioned above was one on alternative defence where the input was from John Morgan, recently retired Irish army officer (not to be confused with Scottish disarmament activist John Morgan who also attended the conference!) and myself, facilitated by Sean English. John Morgan's thesis was that, in conventional terms, the Irish army could not possibly defend the country. So what he advocated was the restructuring and reorganisation of the army to be based around strategic facilities — ports, airports, communications facilities etc. These would be scuttled if necessary at an appropriate time if an invader was coming in, and the invader would be harassed militarily, using guerrilla tactics, if they tried to use what facilities were left of rebuild or move in other facilities.

My case was that which I outlined in the short Dawn pamphlet (Dawn 95-96) "An alternative defence for Ireland — some considerations and a model of defence without arms for the Irish people" (copies available from Dawn at 20 pence plus 15 pence postage). Like John Morgan I advocated the scuttling of facilities but put more emphasis on international public opinion and also on nonviolent civilian defence.

The debate was felt to be very relevant at the moment considering the review which was taking place of the Irish armed forces (with a view to cost-cutting). Of course the biggest cost-cutting proposal was that the Irish army be abolished!

Some people in the workshop found it difficult to relate to the issues of Doomsday defence etc., feeling that here and now peace action was the essential thing. But we have to be aware of what is done in our name, and we have to take into account that the superpowers *very much* consider Ireland in their deliberations and strategic planning. As someone said to me, if the Atlantic 'air bridge' was in operation with the USA reinforcing NATO in Europe, would they really avoid Irish air space? And if a crippled NATO ship was off the south coast of Ireland would they really take it back to Portsmouth instead of taking it to Cork? The answer to both questions is of course — you must be joking.

An informal network was set up by those of us who wished to take 'alternative defence' further. You can contact the following: Walter Kilroy, 4 St Davids Terrace, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, phone 01 - 370253, or Sean English, 2 Poplar Square, Naas, Co Kildare, phone 045 - 79123, or myself, Rob Fairmichael, 16 Ravensdene Park, Belfast 6, phone Belfast 647106.

The NAN conference dealt with international network — the principal focus of NAN — and with Portwatch operations. The postal and contact address of Portwatch Dublin is 11 St Patrick Terrace, Inchicore, Dublin 8.

The North

The workshop on neutrality and the North didn't come up with any startling information or conclusions, perhaps just restating the obvious; the strategic interests of Britain in Northern Ireland, that the North will likely stay part of NATO as long as there is a 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland', and that the Anglo-Irish agreement tacitly recognised British interests in the North. The task for NICND was felt to be emphasising the relationship between poverty in the North and the high level of military spending.

A world at war games

But I have so far focussed on some of the parochial interest of the conference — important because many of us did not know, as I did not, a quarter of what was happening. NAN has an important role to play in coordinating international events, including 'Disarm the seas' direct actions which will take place internationally next year from May 22 - 30. The hope must be that, with the impetus of the NAN conference, Ireland will be active in this.

One point made by Bill McSweeney, among others, was the new forms of cooperation possible between neutrals, countries getting out of step with their former allies (e.g. New Zealand) and the peace movements in aligned countries. He stressed the need for support world-wide — and a forum or structure to go with it — that could support a country the likes of New Zealand when it went anti-nuclear and banned visits of nuclear warships.

The speakers from groups working in the Indian, Pacific and Caribbean areas put things into a world wide setting. All in all

it is a story of superpower bullying, repression, breaking of international law, machinations, treaty violations — the list goes on. One area of concern was Belau in the Pacific where the USA was doing its damndest to have its nuclear-free constitution overthrown. Jaya Graves of the Campaign for the Demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean, based in Britain, called for the European peace movement to concern itself with North-South global issues and not just when there was a clear strategic issue at stake.

A useful pamphlet was distributed by Greenpeace at the conference entitled "Nuclear Free Seas". It details the offensive actions of the world's superpower navies, including the USA's 'Maritime strategy'. The latter is a plan for an aggressive role by NATO naval forces; attacking and destroying Soviet sea and air forces before they get away from home base, and escalating the conflict around the globe to fight the Soviet Union where her forces would be most stretched.

Such an escalatory strategy would likely lead to a faster use of nuclear weapons, and is unacceptable for many other reasons — including the obscene financial cost today. The Greenpeace pamphlet concludes that a nuclear war could easily start at sea; "Nuclear planners believe that nuclear war at sea might be 'contained, and could entail few, if any, civilian casualties.....The many accidents, incidents and misunderstandings caused by the aggressive and intrusive peacetime operations of the navies could escalate into a nuclear exchange....."

Greenpeace demands were that all land-attack sea launched cruise missiles be withdrawn from navies, Trident II and future Soviet and French equivalents be stopped, naval nuclear weapons for ocean combat be eliminated. Of particular relevance to the Republic, "Countries should challenge the 'neither confirm nor deny' policy of nuclear powers, suspend port visiting rights for nuclear ships"..... It called in the long term for navies to be denuclearised and their operations controlled and integrated into policies designed for confidence building and the prevention of war. We've a hell of a long way to go.

New Zealand

Kevin Hackwell, in the most relevant *organisational* input, spoke of the role of the PMA/Peace Movement Aotearoa (the last being a Maori word for the territory usually referred to as New Zealand; it means 'land of the long white cloud', as that was what they saw when they first came there from further north). This was a decentralised, effective body comprised of 400 local groups (population of New Zealand 3 million, or about the same as the Republic — where are our 400 peace groups?) comprising trade union groups, religious, nuclear free groups etc. Instead of a centralised office and bureaucracy they had a clearing house type operation which moved geographically (and the people changed) every couple of years.

Kevin Hackwell contrasted the success of this movement, where local groups had to lobby and act themselves, with the relative failure of the Australian peace movement. Both countries had similar backgrounds and political and military positions in the early 1970s (including involvement for some time in fighting in Vietnam). However the decentralised New Zealand movement was successful in bringing in feminists and environmentalists to peace work and really pushed the politicians on the nuclear-free issue. The Australian movement got caught up in centralised ego-trips (my description). Anyway, if the picture is as he painted it there is much to ponder. It reminds me of the French 'Non violence politique' cartoon roughly remembered and translated as: "What about decentralisation then?" — and the reply — "The government envisages a central commission to put it into effect!"

Galway

Galway was great, a city I was happy to have a chance to spend some time in. The Active Neutrality for Disarmament group at University College, who hosted the conference, are to be congratulated. They also integrated music into the conference, and provided a parallel session for a couple of hundred school students. I very much enjoyed the conference and the feeling of international solidarity. If I may end with a 'man bites doggerel' ending -

Arise from the seabed Atlantis
Consider the sea one of your assets
Let it bring peace to all that passes —
Fight for justice against them asses!

The Bishops court experience in pictures



Women for Disarmament arrive at Bishops court after a week walking from Dublin, 17th March 1984.



He stoops to cabbage, or breeding brassicas at Bishops court (garden motto; "Lettuce work for peas"); Peter Emerson, bending, watched immediately behind by Tony Thompson, June 1983.



RAF Regiment prepare to get blockaders airborne, March 1987 (the last blockade held at Bishops court).

Photo credits; Dawn (top left & bottom right L.J. Speight).



Pierce Murphy (horizontal) about to be shifted from approach road to main base entrance, August 1983.

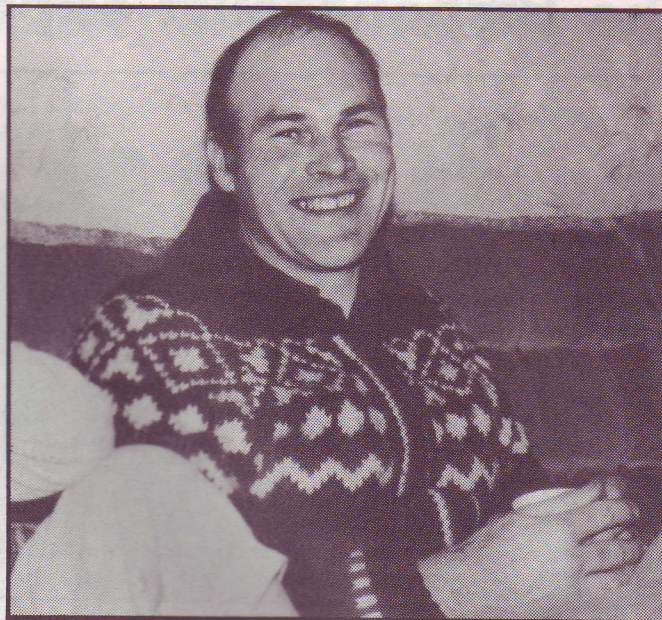


Tall funny hat (St Patrick) negotiates with peaked funny hats (police), 17th March 1984.

RUS v. URBS

an interview with Niall Fitzduff.

During the summer, Niall Fitzduff spoke to Rob Fairmichael of Dawn about the rural area he lives in, and about differences between organising in rural and urban situations. The interview has been left in colloquial style.



Rob — I have been interested in the question of how tolerant people in the country are, as an issue, since I was involved in a correspondence in "Peace News" with Jenny James of Atlantis in 1976 at the end of which she was threatening to come and kidnap me and cure me of my liberal crap! But maybe you could start by saying how tolerant you feel people in the country are of differences and of outsiders who come in — although in fact you are from the area you now live in.

Niall — That's right. In that sense I'm both an insider and an outsider. On tolerance, it's easy on the face of it to say people in the country are less tolerant, and there's a lot of prejudice and I've no doubt there is, and tolerance is a very thorny and difficult issue. You will tend to get very strong and protective feelings arising in relation to land, in relation to outsiders coming in. Intolerance of the outsider has been increased in some ways by the church which, to some extent, had total control over sanctioning ideas and the way in which people intervened in rural communities. So the parish priest could say — you may have seen so and so going around, or coming in, he never came to me for permission.

Rob — But is that dead and gone?

Niall — No. Not completely but it's changing very fast. Maybe you could find say fifty percent of people at the moment who would say that's the way things should be, and the others saying things are no longer like that. I think it's moving quickly to a majority of people who really realise they want to make up their mind about issues themselves, and will no longer take the ultimatums from the church one way or the other.

I'm not saying that is the root of prejudice or intolerance. Clearly land is so incredibly significant, which has historical connotations in that people who didn't own land before now own land, and somehow there is the residual feeling they might lose it again, and they need it for their family. The passing on of land is a very, very strong element in the rural community.

Rob — In terms of talking about the sectarian political situation, you're talking about a majority Catholic area. There is a Protestant area not too far away. Is it a clear divide?

Niall — It has a clear divide, given only a scattering of Protestant families in the Catholic area, but say you're talking about four families out of a thousand families. And in the village, three miles away, you're talking about at one stage 95% Protestant; that has changed dramatically due to housing development on the edge of the village, I suppose it's 60 — 40 Protestant — Catholic.

From the Catholic point of view the historical thing is very important. Ardboe is centred on an old monastic settlement stretching back to 590 AD, with the Devlins, Quinns, Hagans and Donnelly's arriving with the O'Neills about 900 AD. In the 17th and 18th centuries many people moved from the mountain

areas or were forced from the better lands during the plantation; there was quite an increase in population in the area at that time, people were squeezed into the poorer lands, the bog lands along the ribbon of Lough Neagh which was marshy and infertile.

Thinking historically, the water was incredibly important for fishing and navigation, and mobility on water was important, not roads or rail — although when rail came in and that brought an influx the lough became less important for navigation. Basically the residue of feeling that people have is that they are oppressed, left out, on the margins, never in the mainstream. I think that is indicative of the way in which people develop attitudes towards the outside, they're suspicious, there are a lot of negative things about outsiders coming in, they wonder why they're there.

Cooperation

Rob — But also it must prohibit cooperation between areas that are quite close, if there was cause for cooperation.

Niall — Cooperation happens at funerals certainly. Apart from political funerals, normal funerals Protestants will go to Catholic ones and Catholics will go to Protestant ones, without too much difficulty. Business wise in the last thirty years there would have been more contact, there would have been a few families who would have been in the business sector, including my own, who would have made the outside contacts and would have been expected to meet Protestants. But most of the people in the area would not have crossed the divide.

Certainly they would have been very aware who the police were, and how the police tried to police the area through the years. And that relationship ebbed and flowed as time developed. It was always difficult but in the early 'sixties it improved a lot, and obviously in the late 'sixties deteriorated totally. Now it's equivalent to Ballymurphy or any equivalent area in the city.

Rob — I remember in the area some years ago how the UDR (Ulster Defence Regiment) fired in the air as they passed us on our bicycles! I don't know whether this was a cowboy act or accidental.

Niall — I'm just trying to relate to the tolerance/intolerance thing. Basically it's an inadequate way to look at the issues because it's very loaded — if you're intolerant you're bad, or if you're tolerant you're good. Whereas I think it would be important for me to look at the reasons why people find it difficult to accept difference and to accept things from outside. What is their experience of dealing with a) institutions from outside b) people from outside?

But now, because of rural mobility, and jobs, television and the bombardment of new, different mass culture ideas, they have very much confused the traditional patterns and ways of moral behaviour and codes of practice. There is a tremendous confusion there. And it hasn't built confidence as one would expect that if you enlarged the range of received information

you would increase people's range of choice, and ability to deal with that choice. I think in reality what it does is puts more confusion in people's lives and doesn't boost their confidence, and therefore prejudice actually might increase as a result of that rather than decrease.

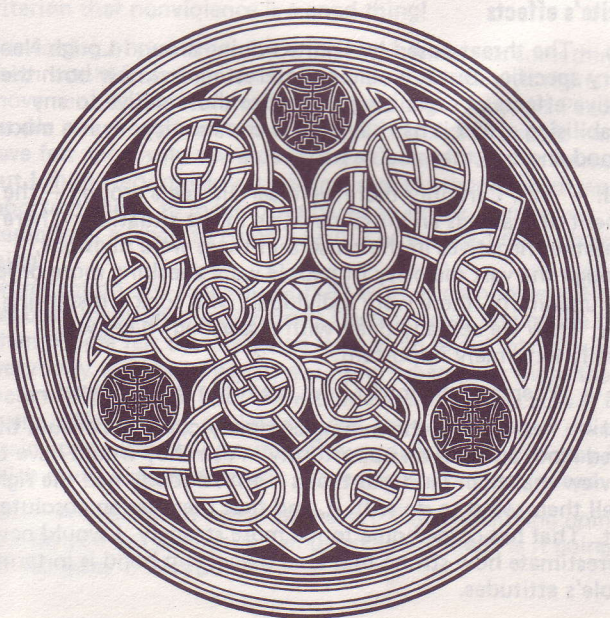
Rob — That's a very interesting possibility. Just within the Catholic area, how would you portray cooperation between people in day to day life? Is it a traditional kind of thing, is it something that still holds up?

Niall — It's a very interesting area because you've got a three way divide in the area. You've got Coagh, Protestant; you've got Ardboe parish divided into two — the Moortown area where the lignite campaign and community development have been based, a lot of people in the historical society which would straddle the two. There is a sharp division between the fishing community of Moortown and the upper end of the parish, which is the so-called progressive end of the parish, who have always been more willing to take on new ideas, they're much more business orientated, they're willing to get on and make money. There's a very sharp division between one end of the parish and the other, which traditionally has two football teams, two churches, and so on, so there's a lot of rivalry there.

In the Moortown area there's much more a tendency to cooperate on certain things. There's a strong individualistic streak as well due to competitiveness in fishing, which is very cooperative but also very competitive because your survival depends on that cooperation on the lough, of sharing information where fish are, also what the weather is, and a lot of traditional suspicions or superstitions, in a sense, would be shared. But there would be a willingness of people to come together if something goes wrong and you need the community together you get immediate cooperation, the community really come together in that Moortown area.

There was the tradition in the farming patterns of going from one farm to another; boat building you'd get cooperation; some on house building, so there is a lot of cooperation still takes place. Certainly caring, looking after the old people who are dying, very strong, anything to do with death, waking, funerals, illness, a tremendous amount of cooperation; it's quite amazing how much people do rise to that occasion where they would sit up all night with people, help out and bring food and share, and support, there's a tremendous amount of that still going on.

Those are the positive cooperative issues. But I think there is also on the other side, those who dare to start up a new business or to take on ideas from outside. There's a lot of suspicion around about why people do that and if they become cut off from the community in any way they do suffer by doing so, because they would receive quite a lot of underlying criticism for not being one of the community in the same way as the others. Therefore it is hard for married people moving in there; they don't get as much support as they would expect, they do feel it and feel quite isolated. That wouldn't be something that is recognised by the community as happening but I know it has happened.



Urban v. rural

Rob — You've been involved in community work in Belfast and you've been involved in different kinds of work in Ardboe, both in terms of education and the Lignite Action. Can you pinpoint what are the differences in terms of organising people in the two settings, or trying to get people to organise themselves? What differences are there there?

Niall — I was very struck in Belfast how easy it was to move into the community and to get a welcome from people. As an outsider I would have expected coming from Ardboe and that background not to have been accepted at the beginning at all, to have proved certain things before acceptance.

In Belfast it was very easy to interact and to intervene in the community. I suppose realising that people are generally the same wherever, there is another side to that; it is easy to get in and difficult to get out, though if you contravene a lot of the norms in terms of community culture and so on, if the community in the city take a dislike to you, you will feel it very hard at some point down the line. I would say that the difference is that in the country it is not that easy to move in. You would have to prove your credentials in moving into the situation.

Rob — What does 'proving your credentials' mean? Just being around and showing you're a normal human being for a few years?

Niall — Yes. Relating to where I was at, I lived there, fairly 'normal', low profile, for five years before I got involved with anything at a more public level in the community. I wouldn't have dared, or presumed, and just from saying those words it's very indicative, to have moved on issues in any shorter period than that.

Rob — So there was a very big difference in terms of time scale between trying to do something in a rural community like that and an urban community. But you have a community worker in Ardboe.

Niall — That's just in the last year. We set up a community development project and that's someone local, someone who's lived and worked as a fisherman, done a youth and community work course, so he has been in and out. He has a degree, he straddles the two, being part of the community, and also would have the same responses to him as I would in some ways except that he is more indigenous to that population, to people on the Loughshore. In other words he hasn't got the same Scots Irish, or Presbyterian, background way back, three hundred years or whatever; his family would have come in around about the same time actually, but Catholic.

Rob — So where do you see positive change happening in the rural scene then, if there is no way you can have the same community development type experiments or strategies that have existed in urban areas, if you're talking about a five year period of acceptance. That points to positive change coming very much from people themselves, or are there positive things being projected and accepted through the media, and contact elsewhere?

Niall — I think because of the flux of change, we're moving into an area where there is much more of a similarity in the urban and rural situations, and it's growing all the time, because of the media and all the other things. But I still think there are great differences.

On reflection, it would seem to me that part of the easy access to the urban community was also a description of the stage at which the bombardment of people in the city, and confusion, and distortion of reality, had taken place for people. A sense of knowing one's place, and who one is, had reached a point in the city of greater confusion than in the country because of the bombardment on every level — the loss of skill, power and institutional relationship — there were just so many levels at which in the urban situation people had lost any roots or grounding, which hadn't happened to the same extent in the traditional community in the country where there was much more self sufficiency.

I think that is the key disparity between the two; that change in the rural community, and certainly in Ardboe even still, has the remnants of a culture which has changed very slowly, whose patterns of change had been sanctioned by the community in a very slow and deliberate way. I think that still persists but to a lesser extent.

In the sense that intervention in the two situations would be different, then what I would be saying is — the support systems which can be built up in the rural community, albeit more slowly, have much more chance of being really supportive in the end than in the confusion of the city situation where really it is another part of the bombardment, and not that many people can take it on board. Whereas I think there is still the remnants of a chance that people in the country can integrate it into some sort of cultural meaning.

Rob — So it would be slower to build up but also slower to die down.

Rural development

Niall — That's right. After the five year stint and starting with something as ordinary as a woodwork class, and having people meet on a basis of doing something practical and something which was familiar, discussions took place. You could see that moving on, opening up the discussion of what rural development was about and where people would actually be interested in moving on from there.

Moving on to the local history classes, people had a forum for discussing their past and where they were at, and the lignite thing just arose from that, in that forum. It became a debate within it. It was a platform to discuss that intervention by an outside agency, and a focus that the people didn't have except through the church, or I suppose the GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) or the political parties.

But in a sense a community focus wasn't there in a way which was saying — take on the issue and debate it yourselves, because basically you do have some possibility of responding to something which is going to infringe on your lives. I think the case study on the Lignite Action Group bears out quite a lot of positive things in terms of learning and self esteem, and ability to make a case, to develop people.

Rob — The response, in terms of developing adult education, and in terms of support for Lignite Action, seems quite impressive to an outsider. And yet when you were initially establishing your woodwork class you were coming up against, in making enquiries of what was where, an urban prejudice that adult education stopped on the outskirts of wherever, and that was it.

Niall — Initially in proposing to run a class in an informal setting like a shed, in a rural area eight miles from Cookstown where the nearest WEA (Workers Educational Association) branch was the reaction was — well, it would be a bit far for people from Cookstown to travel to that area. It took a lot of time explaining that people actually lived in the country. I think that's not told against people in Cookstown as much as indicative of a way in which urban organisation and all the institutional bodies in our society view the country as not really a place where real people live, where real people can organise and have a power base.

I think in some way starting that programme inverted that idea, because in fact now there's a lot more going on in the rural area than there is in Cookstown!

The move from the Lignite Action campaign was to have not just a programme which was action based or protest based but to have a developmental programme alongside. That developed into a community development project. We raised the money through charitable trusts. The project is going for a year now, with Pat Grimes employed as a community worker. He's very much within the close-knit community that exists there, so in fact he has the very difficult task of being much more closely interwoven into the relationships of that community and yet trying to have an objective, some kind of separated view of the processes that are going on in terms of development.

I think that's even more difficult in the rural development issue than in the urban. Because I think people in the city will accept social workers and community workers, and God knows what kind of workers will move in, do their thing and move away without any big deal.

But in the rural situation where there are no statutory based organisations beyond the post office, the idea of a community worker being present is a bit of an enigma and it really does need a lot of explaining. And that process of explaining is part of the project, and it's a very important part, because people really do



Lignite Action poster using the distinctive shape of the old cross of Ardree as an identifying symbol.

dialogue about what this thing is about. And they need to know — it's not something that will be accepted because you've raised the money and provided a worker.

Rob — Here we are, let's get on with it!

Niall — No, absolutely not. But when it's suggested that it's actually a support mechanism, to people's taking power unto themselves, or enabling themselves to do something — and not an agency that's going to do something for them — that's very difficult as a concept to get across.

On the other hand I would say that there are more indigenous resources in the rural community, more self sufficient skills in the rural community than in the urban.

Rob — How do you mean?

Niall — Well, there is less feeling of dependency. Although the issue of dependency is around all the time, when you bring people together I am conscious that the ability of people to take responsibility unto themselves seems greater in the rural situation than in the urban.

Lignite's effects

Rob — The threat posed by lignite mining around Lough Neagh is very specific. But it would be interesting to know both the positive effects of organising to oppose that relative to any destabilising effect it has had on the community. Is it a mixture of good and bad that you've had?

Niall — Yes. Certainly there were certain fears around — the element of fear was an initial negative in the situation. There were other negatives in the sense that there were divisions, although the vast majority of people were speaking more or less with unanimity, there were individuals who took a dissenting voice. How we actually dealt with dissenting voices was actually extremely important.

Rob — Where people might have seen it in their interest —

Niall — Yes, to have the mining company come in because they owned land, and saw an opportunity. Also they would have taken the view that their land was theirs — that nobody had the right to tell them what to do with it, and that that was an absolute right. That has come home to me more strongly, I would never underestimate how strong that land ownership bond is in terms of people's attitudes.



Children among a big anti-lignite demonstration held at Ardboe Cross. Some placards list townlands and the number of families 'at risk' from mining.

It works both ways in this situation; people would want to hold onto that land, and therefore wouldn't want the economic benefits of lignite in a sense. But also others would want to hold onto the community and see the benefits of the community as opposed to having the economic benefits of lignite. But there were a few people who would have felt the community wasn't that important to them but the money might be, and would have reacted against the campaign.

We tried to deal with that, and I think it's a very real issue — not to intimidate people, not to leave people in a very vulnerable position if they happen to differ from the mainstream.

Nonviolence

Rob — The option which the Lignite Action group — or is it groups — made for nonviolence?

Niall — We have actually now constituted as one group, but there are three groups within that. They have all accepted that the tenets of the organisation are non-party political, non-sectarian, and that any activities would be through nonviolence.

Rob — Was there any difficulty with that, or with any part of those three?

Niall — Certainly the nonviolence one has raised some debates at times, in the sense that people wanted to know what the group meant by nonviolence, how far they were going to go. As newer members came in the perceptions differed, and the groups slightly differed in that some were formed later than the main group. But they have all agreed to that approach. How much it is understood is probably different, depending on how long people have been involved, but those who have been involved longest have the greatest understanding of it. Which I suppose says a little bit for the process, actually working through the issues and working on the issues has benefitted people — if one uses the criterion that nonviolence is a good thing!

The raising of the whole issue of nonviolence was something which would have been understood through the civil rights movement, as the main reflection, and slightly by the Peace People as a second reflective thing, but basically people would have felt negatively towards that particular image, or stereotype. But I think very quickly it became real for them, which was the important thing; to move from being an image, a memory, a stereotype, a label, to being a reality of working through something.

On reflection, the day you worked with us on nonviolent training has been mentioned many times since as being one of the days when people felt that they had learned an awful lot. Not that everybody was there, which was unfortunate, but those that were there really did gain a lot from that experience. Because it was a very different way of doing things, the whole idea of doing brainstorming and acting out stuff, was different to the way in which much organisation was carried out in the rural areas.

Rob — A little bit of urban whatever! One concluding point is how do you see the lignite campaign going now? Is it going to be well away from you?

Lignite outlook

Niall — It looks like for the present because of economic factors, coal seems a preferable economic strategy to adopt as the fuel to use at this point in time, because of the drop in oil prices. That made them relook at the figures, and because Kilroot power station was commissioned originally for 1200 megawatts and has 600 capacity for oil. The second 600, the plant is actually bought and there and would take a further £150 million to put it into place, as opposed to £400 to £500 million to build the lignite power station. So there's a clear plant saving there, plus the coal price, and the summation of that is it's cheaper to go ahead with Kilroot to burn coal than it is to initiate a lignite mine at this point in time.

Rob — It's interesting too that on Carnsore Point the battle was won on an economic issue, it's nice when the economics of the situation go the right way!

Niall — As with uranium mining in Donegal; that was more on an economic issue than the community view. The whole learning process of getting the organisation together, of having a political rally and the way it was conducted, people feel very good about themselves in relation to that. Writing 2,500 letters to the minister, then meeting the minister, and sustaining the campaign over a long period has made people feel that maybe they can change some things which affect their lives. For many the idea of organising a community and banding together carries greater possibilities for change than just trying to change things as individuals.

Certainly for the groups, the possibility of change through nonviolence is certainly on the agenda, whereas before change through violence was more or less the standard way that people would relate to issues as big as the lignite one.



Power at the margins

One thing that interests me is decentralisation, or power at the margins rather than at the centre. It's an idea about power residing as much with an oppressed group as with the dominating group who hold the guilt of their oppressing power. How you can use the moral superiority of the oppressed group as a very powerful weapon in a struggle. The same in terms of a decentralised situation, that people who are away from the centre of power, who are not so contaminated by the mainstream, would find it much easier to move.

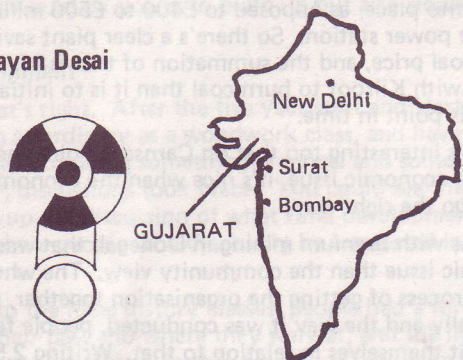
There are other freedoms which may be greater by virtue of working at the margins rather than in the centre. So there is a whole theme going on there which has a lot to be said about it. I don't know the validity of it in the end — will working at the margins actually produce communities which will have a greater ability to assert their values which are different from the mainstream.

All I can say at this point in time is the importance, and the lessons, of stopping work in the urban situation because of the bombardment that people were under, and you were another bombarding force. This is as opposed to moving into a slower stream, further away from the centre, where the changes which took place were more deliberate, and in one sense where people had more time to make up their mind about what change they want and what they didn't want, to be selective and assertive. There seems a validity to work at that level, and therefore in the rural situation.

ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTION IN GUJARAT

Educating the public about the nuclear power plant at Kakrapar, Gujarat

by Narayan Desai



Like many well-intentioned, but ill-informed peace-loving people of the world, we, the Gandhians of Gujarat, too entertained great hopes about 'Atoms for Peace' until we were disillusioned about it. We learned our lesson from the experience of some of the 'advanced' countries of the world, who in their turn, had learned it the hard way. The only people who were never disillusioned about it were the members of the nuclear establishment — because they never had any illusions about what they were doing.

Take the example of our own country. Although from the very beginning, while proclaiming from the house-tops that their policy was for peace, our decision-makers kept the option open for weapons. It is gradually becoming more and more clear to the world that the programs for atoms for peace is inextricably linked with the program for atoms for war. The fuel waste from the nuclear power projects could be recycled to be turned into plutonium for the bomb, and the atoms for peace program, on the other hand, could take shelter against public criticism by being under the umbrella of 'classified information'.

Years ago, when it was announced that Gujarat would have an atomic energy plant, leaders of different regions of the state vied with each other to establish the plant in their own area of constituency. Ultimately, when Kakrapar in Surat district was finally selected as the site for the plant, it was chosen both for political reasons as well as for the fact that the area was 'comparatively sparsely populated'. The fact that Kakrapar was situated in seismic zone 3 was hardly taken into consideration. Since it was an area predominantly inhabited by Adivasis was perhaps, considered to be a plus point. The Adivasis of South Gujarat are among the most docile people of the country.

The tragedy of Bhopal shook some of us out of our illusion. Some of us met at Surat and decided to diffuse some of the knowledge we had learnt from the experiences of the 'advanced' countries among the local people. A series of workers' meetings were organised in early 1985. Each such meeting attracted new recruits for the campaign. They came from different backgrounds and had varying degrees of commitment. But they shared a common concern. The core among the activists remained Gandhian.

The first public demonstration took place on May 1, 1985. The whole of Gujarat, which was then experiencing convulsions in the form of anti-reservations and pro-reservations agitations, was under section 144 of the Indian Penal Code at that time. At an informal meeting between the organisers of the anti-nuclear demonstration and the police officers, it was clarified that there would be no objection if a meeting was organised on private premises, but the law would take its own course if a procession was made in public. The organisers thereupon decided to have the public meeting first in a private compound and then organise a procession on the road outside. The meeting, presided over by an Adivasi freedom-fighter, was attended by more than a couple of Adivasi leaders. While the meeting was progressing, some of the police officers were concerned about the rally which was to follow.

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They approached the organisers and explained their difficulty. They did not have enough vans to lift all the people assembled there if the meeting were to be converted into a demonstration and the only other way to disperse the crowd that they knew, was to use force. This was a situation they were keen to avoid.

The organisers showed their willingness to lesson the embarrassment of the administration by restricting the procession to a small number of selected volunteers. A list of 150 volunteers was prepared while the meeting was still going on and the rest of the audience was requested to stand aside and 'bless' the Satyagrahis who were ready to court arrest. Accordingly, the rallying volunteers were arrested when going out in procession, while the rest of the audience dispersed peacefully. The message of the day was well explained in the meeting by about half a dozen speakers for over two hours — both in Gujarati and the local tribal dialect: Choudhari.

The demonstration on the 1st May was described by the deputy collector Vyara, in private assembly as "the most peaceful demonstration he had witnessed in his life". Only a few days ago the Tehsil town had witnessed a pro-reservation demonstration which had turned violent. The leaders of that demonstration had disappeared from the scene after making inflammatory speeches and the audience had to face the tune. Here at Bedku-a-Door, the leaders decided to court arrest themselves, asking the audience to give them their blessings. This was a pleasant surprise for Adivasis.

The programme of May 1 was followed by some articles in newspapers about the nuclear issue and some more workers' meetings in different parts of South Gujarat. Then followed the Hiroshima Day demonstration at Surat, the district town. A procession was led by Babubhai J. Patel, an ex-Chief Minister of Gujarat, in pouring rain. Although the city, too, was under section 144 at this time, better sense prevailed among the administration and they gave permission to hold the demonstration. It was silent. But the pamphlets distributed with it were read with interest and discussed by groups of people in every nook and corner of the city.

There was also a public meeting in a private hall, presided over by Uma Shankar Joshi, a well-known poet of Gujarat. Dr Minco Parabia, a scientist of South Gujarat University, gave a scholarly discourse on radiation. Babubhai J. Patel confessed that he, himself, was among those responsible for asking the Central Government to establish a nuclear plant in Gujarat. Had he but known all the implications of such a plant, he would never have demanded one. Kumar Prashant, a young journalist from Bombay, congratulated the people of Gujarat for having started a struggle against a plant before it actually went critical. But present writer explained the connection between atoms for peace and atoms for war and warned the people not to be used as guinea pigs for war-mongers who were transferring their nuclear technology to third-world countries. In a moving speech from the chair, Uma Shankar Joshi appealed to the government not to sow the seeds of death any more.

The programs of Surat had wide publicity in the local press. The authorities at Kakrapar could not afford to keep quiet about it. There were articles in the Gujarati press, both for and against the atomic plant, following the meetings at Surat. Surat Municipal Corporation sent two of its engineers to Kakrapar to ensure that the Tapi river, from which the city drew its water, was not contaminated by Kakrapar. The authorities at Kakrapar explained to them that there was no such risk, because the used water in the plant had a closed cycle and no water could be poured out into the river. (Later on, in a direct confrontation with Dr Parabia, the same engineer at Kakrapar conceded that 'very little' (some 5 — 10%) of used water would ultimately be immersed in the river after use.

A state level organisation called 'Gujarat Anu Jagriti' was formed at Surat on the 6th of August 1986. But it must be stated that only the South Gujarat group has been active in the campaign. The interest of other members has been peripheral — so far.

But actually the massive public education did not begin until July 1986. The Sampoorna Kranti Vidyalaya at Vedchhi, which had played a pivotal role in the campaign since the beginning, decided to educate the public around Kakrapar in a big way. Two training camps for educators were organised by the Vidyalaya at Vedchhi and Vyara. These camps were attended by students and teachers of some post-basic schools in that area and also some village leaders.

The first training camp concentrated on preparing teams for cultural programs to be performed in the villages. Some songs were specially written and set to folk tunes for the purpose. A musical play was used to depict a future India comparing and contrasting Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Hindi Swaraj with Rajiv Gandhi's vision of a leap into the 21st century. The responsibility for singing songs and enacting the musical play was taken by students and teachers of several post basic schools. The leading role in the preparation was played by the Graduates' Basic Training College at Gandhi Vidyapith.

The village leaders took responsibility for taking the message to the villages through house-to-house contacts, a signature campaign and public meetings. A poster exhibit was also prepared in the training camp. Leaders of each Tehsil would cover most of the villages within a radius of about 30 kms away from the project site. 292 villages were covered by this program. Every hamlet of the village was visited, signatures or thumb impressions of several thousand adults were collected and one or more public meetings were held in each village and town.

The Kakrapar area is the constituency of the present Chief Minister of Gujarat. This whole campaign was taken by him as a personal challenge. Unfortunately, all he could see in it was a conspiracy against him by dissident Congressmen, never realising that this was a global issue and the majority of the workers involved in the campaign were non-party Gandhians. While pamphlets regarding the risks and costs involved in the nuclear power plant were widely distributed during the campaign, one or two pamphlets accusing the campaigners of being 'anti-progress' and 'anti-science' were distributed in one or two towns. This gave the campaigners an additional chance to meet the arguments of the opposition in public meetings.

As groups of people started gathering around Bedkuwa Door, and more and more people were planning to be present on the 6th, the government took it into its head to 'crush the campaign'. Promulgation of section 144 of the Indian Penal Code was announced in the whole area on the 5th August. It must be noted that this time there was no agitation in any part of the State. Some of the workers met local police officers as they had done the previous year. They were given to understand that there was no objection to holding a meeting on private grounds.

But no public meetings were allowed to proceed towards Bedkuwa Door village on the 6th. All regular buses were cancelled. All roads were closed to trucks, cars and motor cycles. While workers assembled in the village to hear reports about the work done during the last ten days, the police tried to prevent people from getting anywhere near the private ground where the meeting was scheduled to be held. But the Adivasis knew many more roads than the police. Their numbers swelled.

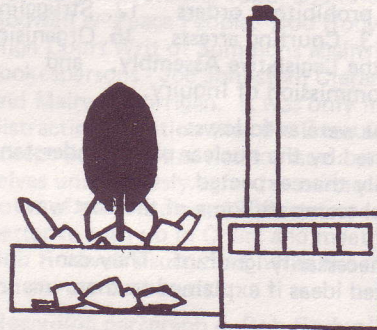
Although the meeting was to be held at one o'clock in the afternoon, the police started using their batons freely several hours earlier. They also had some mounted police among their ranks who would drive their horses at the people whenever they saw gatherings of some size. This irritated the people, who started booing and cat-calling and pelting stones at the horses. When the workers heard about this, they immediately dispersed and proceeded towards the place where the public meeting was to be held. They decided to discourage every act of violence even though the provocation by the police was very great. The workers then addressed small gatherings of people, passed a resolution paying homage to those who were killed in Hiroshima and demanding that the construction of the nuclear plant at Kakrapar be stopped immediately.

While these few hundreds peacefully dispersed after passing the resolution, thousands of others were not only prevented from reaching the meeting place, but were directly assaulted by the police. The crowd pressed on while the police used tear gas, batons and horses to prevent them from gathering. Sometimes this encounter took the form of a ding-dong battle between the charging police and the stone-throwing crowds. At some places

the police prevented workers from approaching the crowds. At others, when they found it difficult to control the crowds, they sought the help of the workers to restore normalcy. This kind of exercise went on for several hours until the weather gods intervened with very heavy showers.

In the meantime, over two hundred seventy persons were arrested and taken to Vyara and Songadh. Two policemen were hurt by the stone throwing. Two fell from their horses, while a large number were beaten after arrest. The case of Sombhai Patel, the principal of Shanti Sena Vidyalaya at Karadi, deserves particular mention. The police specially requested him to maintain peace. He went into the crowd where the police dared not enter, talked to the people and explained to them that it was against the rules of the campaign to resort to stone-throwing. "We do not want to throw stones," they said, "but why are they preventing us from proceeding to the meeting place? That only means they want to hide facts from us."

"They do so because they have now imposed a regulation that prevents the gathering of four persons or more," said Sombhai. "If you want to go there, go in batches of two and three." So the people followed Sombhai at a distance. The police immediately arrested Sombhai, beat him up badly, and whisked him away in a van. They started charging at the people again. The battle started all over again. Later Sombhai was charged for all sorts of offences, including looting of a bazaar several kilometres away from Bedkuwa Door and also for attempting to murder! While most of the others arrested were released after being detained in police chowkies for a few hours, Sombhai, with ten others, were released only on bail the next day. The cases against them were withdrawn months later.



The events of 6th August had not only surprised us but also shocked us. We were sorry that (1) the government had provoked the peaceful crowds. (2) the Chief Minister had taken the demonstration as an act of dissidents from his own party, trying to discredit him and (3) that we were unable to control the crowds in the midst of provocations. We issued a statement to the press, drawing the attention of the public towards all these three factors and declared that we would undergo a voluntary fast for two days as an expression of our anguish. About a hundred workers fasted for two days; some did for three.

While some of us went to Bombay to prepare for the seminar on Atoms in India, scheduled on Nagasaki Day, the police went roaming about in the villages around Kakrapar, beating up men, insulting women, and breaking earthen pots from their houses. The news of police approaching villages spread rapidly and the people dug trenches in the roads to prevent their vehicles from coming nearby. At one place the police resorted to firing, killing one boy and injuring another.

The students and teachers of the Graduates' Basic Training college at Vedchhi, who had played a leading role in preparing the cultural teams and spreading the message, now took up the role of Shanti Seniks. They walked from village to village inspiring courage and working for reconciliation and peace.

The events of 6th August and the following days generated a lot of public debate in Gujarat. There were questions in the legislative Assembly and front-page news in the newspapers. Even Akashwani could not keep quiet about it. There were several editorials in newspapers. The opposition tried to take advantage of the situation created by police firing. The government initially denied there had been any firing at all, but later the chief minister installed a judicial inquiry, met the parents of the boy who was killed and announced a measure of compensation.

A workers' camp for evaluation of events was organised at Vedchhi in the later half of August. Several meetings were held in the Kakrapar areas soon after that.

Although the government prepared an exhibit to educate people about the efficacy and safety of nuclear power, the exhibit, in spite of the money and energy spent, hardly served its purpose because it was visited by only a handful of people wherever it was taken.

Recently the government has stepped up the construction of the plant, while the local people are still determined to put a stop to the program, but are not yet organised enough to do it.

The Anu Jagriti and the Sampoorana Kranti Vidyalya have yet a long way to go before they can successfully and peacefully put a stop to Kakrapar's nuclear plant. But any neutral observer would testify that the kind of education they were able to impart was tremendous. The people living around Kakrapar are much more conscious that nuclear energy is neither cheap, nor clean nor safe. They also know that the nuclear establishment works against democratic principles of openness and participation of the people in the decision-making process. It also fosters a false concept about development and progress. (You often hear Adivasis asking questions like "development for whom?" or "progress at whose cost?")

The tools and methods of public education which were effective in the process of conscientization may be summed up as follows:

1. Workers' meetings
2. Articles in newspapers
3. Letters to editors
4. Publication and distribution of literature
5. Paday in the villages
6. Signature campaign
7. Writing slogans on the walls
8. Musical squads
9. Cultural teams
10. Display of exhibits
11. Disobeying prohibitory orders
12. Struggling against police repression
13. Courting arrests
15. Organising processions
15. Debate in the Legislative Assembly, and
16. Witnessing before the Commission of Inquiry.

Some of the lessons we learnt were as follows:

1. The people directly affected by the nuclear plants understand the problem much more easily than expected.
2. Music squads and Cultural teams are some of the best ways to carry the message.
3. Illiterate people are not necessarily ignorant. They can understand quite sophisticated ideas if explained to them in simple mother-tongue.
4. Nothing teaches better than action.
5. The struggle against nuclear plants will be a long-drawn one.
6. It needs a lot of grass-roots organization, training and preparation.
7. The idea of quick results leads to non-democratic and violent means.
8. The establishment is much better equipped, has more experience and training in violent methods than the people rising against it.
9. At present the struggle against nuclear plants concentrates on the issue of safety and the nuclear protagonists try to prove they have taken enough safety measures, but the real issue is much more comprehensive and deep.
10. The issues are safety, economy, democracy and the concept of development.
11. The path of nuclear build-up would lead to an unbalanced economy, concentration of wealth and power into the hands of the few, pollution of environment and war. The path of alternate sources of energy should lead to decentralised economy, participatory democracy, ecological harmony and peace.
12. The key to strategy lies in the effective and meaningful utilisation of all cooperating people in the struggle with different degrees of commitment and ability.

Sampoorana Kranti Vidyalya,
Vedchhi, 394641, Gujarat.

We were given this piece by Narayan Desai at the WRI Council meeting at Glenree in July. Dawn's pamphlet on the success of the Irish anti-nuclear power movement, "The Nuclear Syndrome" (24 pages A4) is still available from Dawn addresses at 50 pence plus 25 pence postage; written by Simon Dalby this gives a readable, detailed account of the movement in the late 70s and start of the 80s.

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Short REVIEWS

It has been such a long time since we had a general issue of a Dawn publication that many books and pamphlets which we might have reviewed have fallen by the wayside. What we'll do here is just a short review of some that are especially relevant.....

Victories without violence

"Victories without Violence — true stories of ordinary people coming through dangerous situations without using force", compiled by A Ruth Fry. Originally published 1936, this edition 1986, published by Liberty Literary Works, Ocean Tree Books, Sante Fe, with preface by Jennifer Goodwin. Available on loan from Peace Education Resource Centre, 48 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast 9.

I was wondering why Jennifer Goodwin was wondering around Ireland this summer looking for tales of nonviolent derring-do and the like for a column she writes in the States. Then I saw this 88-page book which she has prefaced and I saw a reason; it has half a dozen Irish, Quaker historical examples, mainly of around 1798.

I would disagree with Jennifer Goodwin's preface remark that the book is "in no sense dated"; social and political circumstances have changed to the extent that a remark in the piece entitled 'How to treat burglars' that "As a rule, I am alone in the house, except for the domestics who sleep on an upper landing" (p.55) puts it into a rather different era. Nevertheless it's a fascinating wee book with plenty of examples that deserve reflection.

Q-PAC

"Speaking our peace — exploring nonviolence and conflict resolution: the experience of the Quaker Peace Action Caravan (Q-PAC)". Written by members of the Q-PAC team, edited by Sandy Merritt, and based on the work of the team from 1980-85. Published 1987 by Quaker Peace and Service, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Price £2 plus postage.

Set out in clear, approachable style (as we would expect from something edited by Sandy Merritt), this 60 page, A4, pamphlet is really worth getting hold of. Some may remember Q-PAC's visit to Ireland in the early 1980s; their role-play of a meeting put on during a Northern Ireland Peace Forum meeting seemed to speak very closely to the internal dynamics and self-interestedness of such a body of us.

There's enough in this pamphlet to keep you and your group(s) thinking and working out for many's a long winter evening or weekend. It begins with an introduction to Q-PAC and its work and assumptions — the great thing about this pamphlet is the way things are clearly spelt out. It progresses through how their workshops evolved, agendas for different workshops they used, short talks, diagnostic exercises (= looking at ourselves in relation to nonviolence), practical exercises and meditations. One very useful piece at the end is a Sheila Rose and Lynne Shivers piece which I hadn't seen before on 'Seven controversies in nonviolent action' where they put both sides of the argument.

So you'd be well advised to beg, borrow or even buy a copy. Dawn Belfast has copies for sale (also of Martin Jelfs' 'Manual for Action') or you can get it direct.

Nonviolence and children

"A Manual on Nonviolence and Children", compiled and edited by Stephanie Judson. Forward by Paula J Paul. New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, 152 pages, 1984. Including 'For the fun of it! Selected cooperative games for children and adults'. \$ 9.95. Available in Europe through Housmans Bookshop, London.

A previous edition was reviewed by Larry Bond in Dawn 55; he concluded that "It presents great depth of thought with great lightness of touch. I would (as you may have guessed from what's gone before) strongly recommend everybody to buy it."

While much of the first half is classroom-oriented, it is nevertheless relevant to any of us who live with, work with or come into contact with children. It is strong on affirmation, something which we adults are very weak on. It gives plenty of illustrative examples.

The games section is great and very useful (personally tested for children's birthday parties!) and may set *you* thinking up some cooperative children's games. All in all worth having in your own personal library or a good present for teachers and families with children.

Irish anti-war movements

"Irish anti-war movements, 1824-1974", by Richard S Harrison. Irish Peace Publications, 1986, 73 pages.

We all tend to ignore what has gone before, and in our political endeavours feel isolated by being minorities. Richard Harrison has done us a service by bringing some pretty well forgotten aspects of Irish history to our fingertips in his readable account of 150 years of Irish anti-war action and propaganda.

His account begins with Irish members of the London Peace Society in 1816, and the formation of the Hibernian Peace Society in 1824. It is traced through the Irish Peace Society of the latter part of the 19th century, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, All-Ireland Anti-War Crusade, Irish Pacifist Movement, and Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the 20th century.

Although he points out that the Religious Society of Friends was not *per se* an anti-war movement, the statistics that 8 out of 13 members of the committee of the Hibernian Peace Society in 1826 were Quakers, and 11 out of the 16 committee members of the Irish Peace Society in 1913 were also Quakers, says it all about the role Quakers played in earlier peace propaganda.

We of the Irish peace movement(s) need to reclaim our past — you can begin here! Copies of this book are available to Dawn readers at a special minimum price of £2.50 from Richard S Harrison (to whom cheques should be made payable), 4/5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2 (a well known address itself in the annals of Quakerdom and peace action).

Corrymeela 21

"An Unfinished Journey — an anniversary anthology of the Corrymeela Community, 1965-1986" by Ray Davey. 244 pages, £4.95, published by Corrymeela Press.

This is a well produced and presented book which has the wise approach of an anthology to such a big experience for so many people as Corrymeela in its first 21 years. The 244 pages stated above are on my counting — there are no page numbers! It includes pieces by members about themselves, and pieces on people who have been influential ('Guides on the journey') including Eberhard Bethge, Allan Boesak, Bernard Brett, Roel Kaptein, Mother Teresa, Jean Vanier and Jim Wallis.

Beginning at the beginning, with the influence of Iona and Agape, and travelling in thoughtful, anecdotal and analytical style and in various ways through the years since (and with plenty of illustrations and photos), this is an inside-out account by insiders of the growth of the North's best known ecumenical community and peace group.

Really extraordinary

"What an extraordinary title for a travel book" by Peter Emerson. 1986, UK £7.50 / IR£8.25. 165 pages, hardback. P J Emerson, Rhubarb Cottage, 36 Ballysillan Road, Belfast 14.

Well, an extraordinary book with an extraordinary title, written in Peter Emerson's own inestimable, idiosyncratic style. This is his journey through North and East Africa, principally by bike, in 1979-80. As we might expect from an ecologist, peace activist, anti-imperialist, an ecological, peace centred, anti-imperialist book. Right.

It's full of observations on traditional life patterns, 'progress', the rich West that has 'made it' (and unmade others), trade and technology. Not to mention, which I'm just doing, his bout of malaria and his journey across the unfriendly, militarised border of Libya and Egypt in a home-made inflatable canoe where he risked being shot and/or drowned at sea — here it's almost Adventure Novel type stuff.

If you're interested in what's happening in the world and in Africa then get hold of this. Just don't expect a straightforward logical, travelogue. Sometimes his prose takes getting used to but if you stick with it you'll find it a worthwhile and humorous read.

Disarm

"Disarm — Ireland's anti-nuclear magazine".

This is recommended reading for anyone concerned with the struggle against nuclear weapons and for disarmament in general. Produced by an independent group on what is usually a quarterly basis (or thereabouts!) it will keep you up to date with Irish disarmament work.

Past coverage included an excellent special issue during the Single European Act referendum; current (Winter '87) issue includes coverage of the CIA moving arms to Iran via Shannon, the earthquake risk to Sellafield proposals for sub-sea waste storage, nuclear fallout in Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s from nuclear tests (radiation levels in excess of post-Chernobyl), and nuclear flights over Ireland. The only critical point is — the need to tackle the difficult task of keeping their 'Connections' (CND groups etc) list up to date.

Subscription rates are; Ireland and UK £5, elsewhere (air) £10, institutions £20; make cheques payable to Disarm, and send to; Sam Baneham, Otterstown Road, Athboy, Co Meath.

Peace People Experience — writer replies

Rob Fairmichael writes;

As there is some space to spare here, though not in the reply sheet, I'd like to deal with a few points raised and comment on a few others, in relation to "The Peace People Experience".

Firstly, I have been surprised by the *lack* of replies we have received. I would put this down to several factors. One is that, judging by the informal responses I have received from both continuing and former Peace People, there has been some general satisfaction with how people were dealt with. Another factor may be that people who would have replied didn't get to see the pamphlet! Though in fact I did make some efforts to get more people to reply.

A third factor may be that people had points they could have made but didn't consider it worth the effort of writing them down. Certainly some people preferred to let things lie as they were. And others felt constrained for legal reasons from replying.

One person who had been involved heavily in the Peace People, outside Belfast, commented that *"I found it most interesting, very clear and as unbiased as it is possible to be! For the first time I am able to get some kind of overall picture!"*.

Another person, who had been heavily involved at the centre, felt I had been too easy on the leaders. As I explained in the personal introduction on page 2, I did try to portray the truth as issues rather than personalities. I could have been harder on the leadership; I could also have been harder on other figures in the Peace People story, some of whom aren't even mentioned by name in the pamphlet. But the problem of understanding and making sense of 'the Peace People experience' was partly the problem of the *over*-personalisation of the issues.

There were also a few factual inaccuracies in the pamphlet. Regarding the allegation, which I reported on page 4, that the Maguire children might have been killed by British army bullets and not by the car which they shot at, I am satisfied that the children were killed by the crash and were *not* hit by any bullets. This may seem a minor, and in the event irrelevant, matter but there are certainly people for whom such a thing is important.

I inadvertently referred, on page 16, to Christabel Bielenberg's *"Native Germany"* when I should have said *"her adopted country of Germany"*.

It is also possible that some of the Trust and Company loan defaulters, listed among those funded on page 21, may be partly inaccurate in that some repayments might not have been shown in the records. Without checking each one out in detail at the receiving end I could only go by the records.

I have also been surprised at the lack of reviews the pamphlet received in the media. This is partly the result of it being a pamphlet format publication rather than a book, though the former makes it more accessible in terms of price. But perhaps it is that interest in the Peace People really has waned, even in the 'Whatever happened to.....' category. I would also feel that there is a certain element of people preferring their own ungrounded opinions or prejudices to some grounded facts. The truth in this case might not be that dangerous, it may be more a case of preconceived and long-established notions being comfortable to live with, and questioning these is a nuisance. One Belfast review which did appear would tend to support this inference.

Christabel Bielenberg's outline of the path of money from Norway (Norway — Charitable Trust — Company) is different to my under-

standing, as I outlined in the pamphlet. My understanding is that since the Norwegian money was gathered by public subscription due to an appeal or appeals in Norwegian newspapers, it was quite legitimate to transfer it first to the Company, and then to the Trust to 'hold' it. The ownership of the money was therefore with the Company, and it was therefore not restricted by charitable laws in how it was used.

Regarding Barbara Armstrong's suggestion that I could have invented replies from Betty Williams, I regret that I am not that good at fiction and the result might have been totally unacceptable to the woman in question. She has had plenty of opportunity to reply before, during and after publication. It is her prerogative not to reply and there was nothing I could do about it short of flying out to Florida and ringing her door bell.

YAWN

AT THE END OF DAWN

Compiled by Billy King

Voting

So you thought Irish politics were crazy. Well, just have a look at this list of abbreviations for the political interests different people represented in the June 1987 British general election; (from 'Belfast Telegraph' 12/6/87)

Comm — Communist; Workers Rev — Workers Revolutionary Party; RF — Red Front; BN — British Nationalist; Bread — Creek Road Fresh Bread Party; BT — Blancmange Thrower; CC — Independent Community Campaigner, East Oxford People; CD — Christian Democrat; CMNHY — Common Market No, Hanging Yes; CPRP — Capital Punishment Referendum Party; CPWSML — Capital Punishment Will Save More Lives; CSOSMG — Christian Socialist Opposing Secret Masonic Government; DC — Democratic Commonwealth Party; Dem — Democrat; Ex Lab Mod — Ex Labour Moderate; Falkland — Right of Falkland Islands to elect Westminster MP; FDP — Fancy Dress Party; FP — Feudal Party; GP — Gold Party; HP — Human Party; ICN — Indepen-

dent Christian Nationalist; LAPP — Let's Have Another Party Party; LO — Law and Order; Loony — Official Monster Raving Loony Party; ML — Moderate Labour; NFFG — National Front Flag Group; NPR — National People's Rally; OFP — Official Fidgeytous Party; OOBPC — Only Official Best Party Candidate; OSM — Orkney and Shetland Movements; PIP — Public Independent Plaintiff; PRP — Protestant Reformation Party; RABIES — Rainbow Alliance Brixton Insane Extremist Section; Rainbow — Rainbow Alliance; RCP — Return Capital Punishment; RRRPC — Revolutionary Reform Party Representative of Christ; SE — Spare the Earth; SPGB — Socialist Party of Great Britain

Erroring

Typeographical errors by our typesetter (woof! Woof!) that didn't make it into this issue include a reference to a member of a religious order as 'St' rather than 'Sr', and a reference to "the bog difference" between urban and rural organising rather than "the big difference"!

Camping

*Q. When were British army tents used at a peace camp?
A. At Bishopscourt Peace Camp, Summer 1984.*

How it came about —

There was a summer playscheme in a part of Belfast and, as often is the case, these involve both Teagues and Prods. Now the authorities are only too keen to help activities which have sufficiently balanced numbers of each species, so, application was made to the British army for tents. Off some of the teenage playschemers went on a bicycle tour, guided by a hairy man with a beard and a back pack (= Peter Emerson) to a beautiful spot of Co Down not a million miles distant from Bishopscourt base and more precisely to the camping site of Bishopscourt Peace Camp field.

But the sting in the tail (or more accurately the rain in the tent) is that the army tents leaked! Maybe Mars (god of war, sometime chocolate bar) was on the army's side!

Biking

Are you a two wheels person? Or would you be if you weren't scared ****less by some of the drivers on four wheels? Well known British investigative journalist, Duncan Campbell may have an answer; (from 'Sunday Times' colour mag, 1987)

"I've added some important extras to my kit for dealing with the 10 per cent of motorists who always look straight through you as they pull out or across. My marine foghorn — normally fitted to cross-Channel yachts — can be heard a mile off and is, I believe, an essential for urban cycling. One hearty blast guarantees your safe passage as the confused motorist screeches to an abrupt stop, convinced that at least 30 tons is bearing down on him."

Another guerrilla cyclist tactic is worth passing on. Anytime you meet a stupid action by a motorist, or the angry reactions that such individuals give to quite legitimate movements by cyclists, give them a big smile and a wave, as if you know them! This confuses them enormously — Oh dear, who is that, I shouldn't have done that and called them a *****!

Meditators for mediation

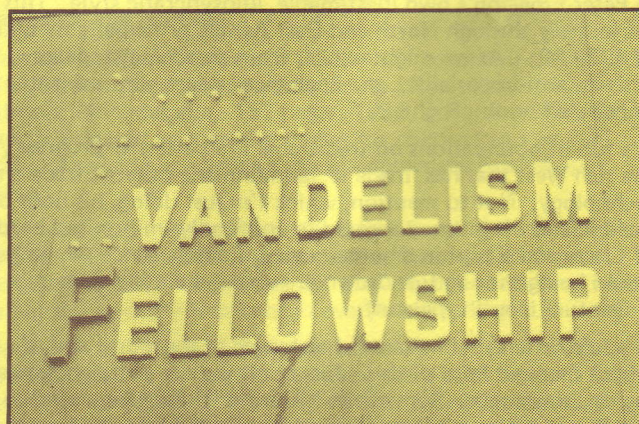
5 of the 11 people attending the first session of an evening course on 'Mediation skills' at Queen's University, Belfast, thought they were attending a class on 'Meditation skills'!! The opening blurb in the course handbook began by saying "Mediation is now used extensively in the United States as a way of solving conflicts....." Did people read this and see the word 'meditation'? Just one of the five 'meditators' came back for the rest of the mediation course.

Graffiting

Graffiti in Northern Ireland is known less for its imaginative humour than for its blatant sectarianism and explicit violence.

There are exceptions, though some of the imaginative ones are also violent (during loyalist petrol bombings of RUC members' homes following the Anglo-Irish agreement, one sample was — "Join the RUC — come home to a real living fire"!).

However, the following example of creative arranging of a derelict shop's sign is worth publishing. It used to be the headquarters of the Child Evangelism Fellowship in Victoria Street, Belfast; now, due to discarding some of the letters and a slight change in spelling, it proclaims the 'Vandelism Fellowship'!



"PEACE PEOPLE EXPERIENCE" REPLIES

Garreth Byrne writes;

I've read your well researched pamphlet on the Peace People experience and am impressed. Interviews with Helen Senior, Margaret Watson, Mairead Corrigan and Peter McLachlan were most interesting. Also very interesting to learn that the PP never got millions, only about £665,000 in the years up to 1986. The section on local groups was the saddest part of the pamphlet. There was a real gap in thinking and acting between the high profile Executive leaders and the grass roots members.

Since I'm interested in Third World development I was glad to learn that PP groups and individuals were and still are active in fundraising for overseas development projects. From this perspective I was disappointed that you didn't mention in the Further Reading section a very interesting consideration of the PP experience relationship with some overseas donors in Holland and elsewhere by the Belfast journalist Alf McCreary in the long introduction to his account of third world development agencies entitled "Up with People". He compares the damaging influence some overseas aid, both governmental and private (NGO), can have on Third World development dynamics, with the damaging influence some overseas granting organisations had on the inner workings of the Peace People during the early years.

Una O'Higgins O'Malley writes;

It may be still too soon for proper evaluation of "the Peace People" in their early, public phase. But the invitation from Dawn prompts me to put down what seems to me inescapable reasons why that inspiring and courageous movement bore within it, almost from its inception, the seeds of its own destruction (I intend no disrespect to the continuing but much more low-key work of today's Peace People).

Two factors mitigated strongly against the progress of the movement set up by the gallant Mairead and Betty. Firstly, the massive support for their efforts shown right across N. Ireland was essentially and almost exclusively by *support for non-violence and for non-violence alone*. This support came, across the board, from brave women who were prepared to do their utmost to ensure, in solidarity with each other, that there was no violence in *their* area — but there was no consensus, no agreement, about the *causes* of the conflict or about anything to do with the politics of the situation. Consequently the movement, in my view, should have continued for much, much longer to be simply (and splendidly) women against violence — no more.

Secondly, it seems to me incredible that it appeared possible to the then leaders to sustain such a movement without clear Protestant partnership in the leadership. That three Roman Catholics could retain the trust of a vast interdenominational following was, I suggest, expecting the impossible in today's Northern Ireland.

The Protestant community needed to see two of *their* women on the platforms side by side with Betty and Mairead. The importance of that factor was brought home to me conclusively at meeting after meeting in East Belfast, when I attempted to mediate the collapse of trust which women in that area experienced vis-a-vis the Peace People.

A movement simply for non-violence led by "ordinary" women from both communities had a chance for success at that time which has not since reappeared. To insert into it political theories was a serious mistake but more serious still was the lack of combined Catholic/Protestant leadership. The personal courage and charisma of Mairead and Betty was dazzling, the virtual disintegration of their heroic efforts the more disappointing.

This reply sheet was published with Dawn Train 6 but relates to "The Peace People Experience" pamphlet (Dawn Train 5). Additional copies of the Peace People pamphlet are available from Dawn, 16 Ravensdene Park, Belfast 6, at £1.25 including postage (cover price £1), or 5 for £5 post free.

Mairead Maguire writes;

I would like to reply to Bob Rodwell's piece on page 48 of "The Peace People Experience" and make one other comment.

In paragraph 1, Bob Rodwell refers to my reviving the discredited allegation. The only occasion when the allegation that Bob Rodwell's reports of the February 10th, 1980, Peace People meeting, was discredited, was when the Peace People themselves issued a statement in an "out-of-court" settlement withdrawing the allegation. However, the Peace People's own Minutes unanimously recorded that this "out-of-court" settlement statement was itself inaccurate. The whole point of my October, 1986, statement to the Assembly of the Peace People, reiterated in "The Peace People Experience" by Rob Fairmichael, was to set the record straight. In short I stand over our original statement that Bob Rodwell's reports were inaccurate, unchecked and partial and I do not see how after 7 years Bob Rodwell can stand by them.

In paragraph 2, Bob Rodwell objects to my omitting to mention his membership of the Peace People Executive. In 1980 he objected to the Peace People mentioning his then recent involvement on the Executive on the grounds that it tended to reinforce the impression of partiality. It seems that he wishes to be known as a person who was completely impartial and at the same time as a person deeply involved and with very strong and partial views on the future of the Peace People.

Paragraph 3 concerns the litigation which went on from February to October, 1980, and referred to throughout as Rodwell -v- Peace People. Bob Rodwell did indeed issue a High Court Writ of Summons against the four Peace People spokespersons - Joe Johnston, Ciaran McKeown, Alan Senior and Mairead Corrigan. It was only in order to settle this distracting litigation that the Executive finally agreed to accept Solicitor's advice to issue a statement, which they themselves unanimously agreed was inaccurate. It is again the point of my October, 1986, statement that we would have been better to turn up in Court and meet the consequences of Bob Rodwell's suit, than 'wrap the matter up' with a knowingly inaccurate statement.

Regarding paragraph 4, Bob Rodwell's letter to Ciaran McKeown made no reference whatever to the views of anyone at a meeting in East Belfast. No names or groups were mentioned in the letter signed by him. It did reiterate at length Bob Rodwell's views which had been rejected by an overwhelming majority at a Peace People Assembly in 1978. Bob Rodwell takes this latest opportunity to refer to the Peace People policy, agreed by a majority of 2 - 1, as "the policy which Mr McKeown was so arrogantly and heedlessly following". Ciaran McKeown was in fact, consistently following the majority Peace People policy — as were to the best of our private and public knowledge, Peter McLachlan and Betty Williams.

This again underlines a point of simple historical fact that Bob Rodwell somehow finds unable to accept. The Peace People did not split over the 'H' Block issues and any story to that effect was 'inaccurate'. When Ciaran McKeown refers to Bob Rodwell's views, he is referring to Bob Rodwell's views as written at length in his letter, and as earlier rejected by Peace People Assembly.

Bob Rodwell refers to 'McKeown's withdrawn book'. The tragedy is that Ciaran McKeown's book was withdrawn only because the publishers were forced by another Bob Rodwell litigation to take account of the Peace People's inaccurate statement in October, 1980, which sadly the Peace People have yet to repudiate.

Finally, Rob Fairmichael makes reference (page 45, paragraph 4) to the way in which "Peace by Peace" dealt with the 1980 'split'. The reasons the facts were not given at the time were: Ciaran McKeown was party to the Executive's decision to maintain confidentiality and in fact had proposed that motion. The Executive took this decision to remain silent because it was such a difficult matter, involving people so personally. Ciaran McKeown could not have used his privileged position as Editor of "Peace by Peace" to print the story.

Barbara Armstrong writes:

In your pamphlet, I find that you have been 'all in all' extremely fair, in what must have been a most difficult task.

I find it very sad that Betty did not reply to you, as it makes it somewhat incomplete (to me personally at least) as without her example, I myself might not have had the "Experience of the Peace People". I can understand that there are many reasons why she might not have wanted to.

I don't think she would be offended if you included her (in abstentia) as you did the others, entitled perhaps "What Betty would have said." Surely what she has been, done, and her contributions to "Peace by Peace" warrant this.

Another thing, some of us heard in the Peace People that the girls had been told originally at top level to keep the Nobel Peace Prize monies and there was talk about building something on the peace-line. I find Mairead's explanation for keeping the money remarkable, as do others. This is the woman who was strong enough to tell us to get up off our asses and get on with the work, i.e. to face S.F. I feel in the long run we are all responsible for our actions, and must not lay our decisions at another's doorstep.

I had never heard of the Finaghy Peace Person who paid the supreme price for peace, so much for "lest we forget" and "a continuing warning"!!? (plaque needed). Neither did I know that lovely Sadie Patterson had been hurt physically.

The first Youth for Peace were marvellous, front line troops. They were not appreciated enough by us ALL selling "Peace by Peace" — then in pubs, like the Sally Annies, was great fun.

Our Peace People children were taken everywhere we went. This was very dangerous, in fact a lot of work was dangerous — not enough emphasis on this, I think.

Regarding Lifeline, please include "innocent victims of violence" who had no military, or para-military involvement. There were quite a few of these murdered and maimed. We did not condone the *bad apples* in the security forces. We found the victims in general to be most forgiving, and to expect 'the lion to lie down with the lamb' was a bit premature, but we hoped someday..... that forgiveness and repentance would prevail.

Now, I wish the Peace People well. I feel nowadays they appear like a branch of CND. Nothing wrong in that but yesterday I think we had something more. Of course I'm biased, but truthful I hope. I have told you that we loved our fellow men outside the movement, but not enough inside. This happens in so many groupings. Suffice to say, like Margaret Watson, I'm glad I didn't miss my Peace People Experience.

Christabel Bielenberg writes:

Thank you so much for sending me a pre-publication copy of the Peace People Experience which I found not only most interesting but also as objective as was possible under the circumstances.

Before going into any detail, I let you know that I was not a member of the Peace People Executive and never attended one of their meetings, any reports coming from that direction therefore would be reliable hearsay. I did attend all of their Assembly meetings however as a Council member of the Southern Movement for Peace which was founded by Brendan O'Regan (now President of Co-operation North) as a sister organisation to the Peace People.

I would stress here that the Peace People as seen from the Norwegian & German viewpoint was always considered to be a *women's movement* founded and led by the two charismatic figures of Mairead and Betty.

The appearance of Ciaran McKeown on the scene definitely confused the issue, and my explanation that the women probably needed a representative from the media to help them deal with the publicity surrounding the movement, was not made easier by McKeown's obvious ambition not to remain an adviser in the background, but to be well up front, even so far as to consider himself as a Co-Founder of the Movement.

Due to the fact that smaller donations sent to Belfast direct were not receiving thanks or acknowledgements (doubtless due to understaffing) and also as a result of an extremely successful tour made by Betty & Mairead in Germany, I was approached by Hamburg friends with a view to founding a channel whereby funds could be passed on to the Peace People direct and could hopefully be assured of acknow-

ledgement. The Verein für Frieden und Verständigung was then founded for this purpose; our Board members including an eminent banker Eric Warburg and the wife of the Economics Minister for Schleswig Holstein, Daniela Westphal.

After very successful North-South collaboration in a prestigious exhibition 'Du und Deine Welt' and a further tour of various German towns and business organisations undertaken by Betty, and promoted by the Verein, when I acted as interpreter, it became clear that much larger sums would be forthcoming if the Verein became registered as a Charitable Trust. The establishment of such a Trust would take some time, as the laws governing such Trusts in Germany are rigid, needing assurance that monies donated could only be used for certain educational or social projects.

I was asked by the Board to be responsible for this being the case, and was confident that I could take on this task as an old and valued friend, Peter McLachlan, had agreed to become Projects Manager, and another reliable and respected figure, Jim Galway, was Treasurer to the Peace People.

In the meanwhile certain disagreements and resignations from within the Peace People's Executive were causing questions to be asked which I found hard to answer. Journeys by McKeown to Israel and Czechoslovakia, a plan of his to found a Peace University in Achill Island, hints in the Peace People newspaper 'Peace by Peace', of which McKeown was editor, that an entrance into the political field was contemplated etc etc.

On examination of the Peace People's accounts shown to me by Jim Galway, a further question arose as it seemed that the monies donated to Mairead & Betty by the Norwegians (Peace Prize) had been transferred by them to Belfast and placed in a Charitable Trust. Some three weeks later all these monies had been transferred to a Company, Peace by Peace, and McKeown had been appointed Chairman of both Trust and Company.

I have only glanced through McKeown's book "Passion for Peace" and must therefore take it that some explanation for this arrangement must be revealed in it, but there is no doubt that under laws governing a German Charitable Trust such manoeuvrings would be an impossibility.

Be that as it may from the Verein's point of view the fact that the newly founded company was called Peace by Peace could only indicate that the financing of McKeown's newspaper in which they had no interest whatsoever was included in the deal, and the fact that it lacked advertisements could only mean that it must constitute a considerable drain on P. People's resources. This, added to the strict rules now governing the Verein which had succeeded in being established as a Charitable Trust, was enough for Eric Warburg to approach my husband Peter on a visit to Hamburg & ask him point blank could I still guarantee that all monies which were now becoming considerable would be certain to reach the required goals. My husband replied that under the circumstances he could not do so, & it was decided that other outlets such as Lagan College should be found and financed, which has since taken place.

There would be two minor points which I feel should be clarified as from what I could gather from McKeown's account of the occasion, I would consider it not only slanted but incorrect. When Betty informed the Executive that the German fund would undertake to finance Peter McLachlan's salary, she was correct in doing so. The importance of Peter's continued involvement with the Peace People was considered all important by the Verein who knew him and trusted him. When rumour reached Germany that there was a chance of his being sacked due to lack of funds, the sum of £2,000 was offered immediately in order to carry things over for him for a short period. I later confirmed with the Verein that they would have been willing to provide further finance for Peter if need be and this was doubtless the contents of the telephone call mentioned by Betty, & which came from Eric Warburg.

To conclude, it is not easy to read extracts from a book written about such a wonderful experience as was the Peace People's by someone who with undoubted journalistic talent seems to waste so much time blaming everyone but himself for its disintegration and shows so little appreciation for other help received.

Perhaps it is therefore better to ignore the details (the a's and the z's) and to remember that Mairead's and Betty's spark has perhaps been dimmed but not extinguished, for in my experience so many smaller flames which were lit by them seem to be glowing still.

DAWN TRAIN; REPLY SHEET