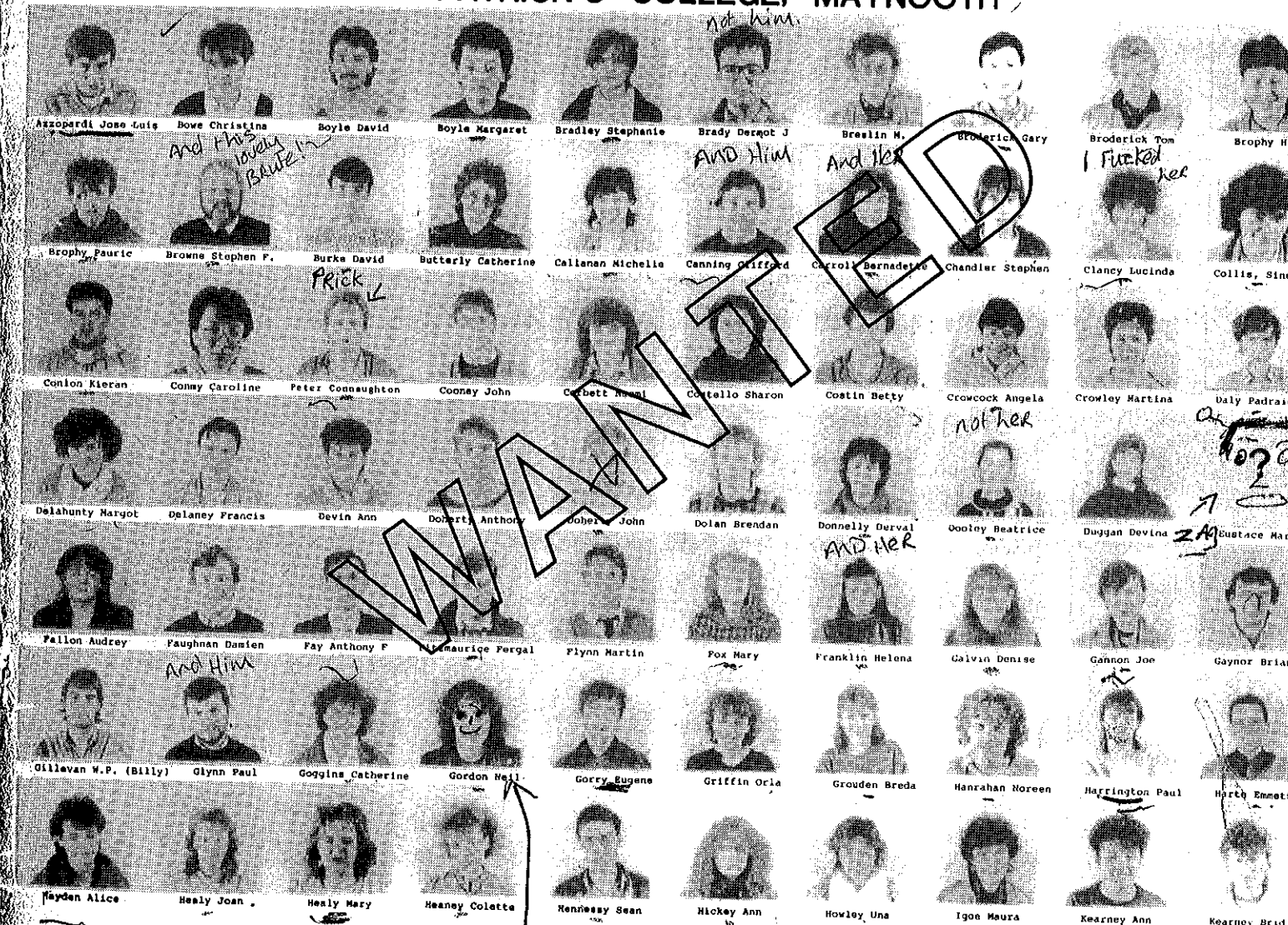


MILIEU

1986



1985/86
FIRST YEAR GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS,
ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE, MAYNOOTH



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Joe Leyden	Paul Daly, Pres..
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EDITORIAL

"MILIEU" is the annual publication of Maynooth Geography Society. It should prove interesting and enjoyable not only for those who have learned to cultivate an interest in the subject but also for many others who simply enjoy the acquisition of information.

The discipline of Geography contains within itself, and by its very nature, many sub-disciplines as can be seen by the varied contribution made to this publication. However, despite the accusation that Geography has its "finger in every pie" and its disciples are the proverbial "Jacks of all trades and masters of none" it has a distinctiveness and character of its own. The cornerstone of the discipline is man's relationship with his environment over space and through time. The spatial aspect is the vital link and it is in accordance with this basic premise that the Geographer bases his/her work. For as long the basic core is maintained diversification can only contribute to subject matter. Furthermore the Geographer does not limit his/her work to mere description but involves himself/herself in analysing and thus providing informed projections. These methods broaden the skills and techniques of the trained Geographer making him/her more adaptable to contemporary society.

This year's "Milieu", as always, is the culmination of many weeks hard work by all those involved in its production. We hope it succeeds in illustrating the vibrant scale of activity within the Geography faculty of Maynooth College and hope it stimulates an even greater interest in the subject and the activities of Maynooth Geography society.

Editors; Gerry Quinn
Joe Leyden

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We ^{gratefully!} greatly acknowledge all the help and advice given to us in the weeks leading up to this publication. Special thanks must go to all who contributed articles, to our typists, Carmel and Monica, to our publishers, Cardinal Press, to the Geography Department, especially Professor Smyth and Dr. P.J. Duffy, to the Geography Society for finance and advertising activities carried out by Ray McHugh and Lorcan Greenan and to its auditor Paul Daly. A special word of thanks is due to the college cartographer, Jim Keenan for producing the cover at such short notice, also to Joe Geraghty for advice given on the computers. To the countless numbers who offered words of advice, criticism, praise and even utter disbelief at the cheek of two Second Arts students on taking on such a formidable task. All of which provided the vital stimulus enabling us to produce such a fine work of art.

FOREWORD

The publication of "Milieu" once again consolidates a well established tradition of the undergraduate geographers in this college, and testifies to the enthusiasm and skills of not only the editors, but also of the Geography Society in general. The diversity of articles, ranging from geography and gender, through political geography, to climatology is a fair representation of the breadth of the undergraduate curriculum, and that diversity should be viewed as one of the attractive elements in a geography education. While not denying the necessity of specialisation, the present curriculum does support the tradition of broad interest and diverse skills. That breadth, provided it continues to be related to an understood core of geographical approaches, can only be viewed as an asset. It is to be hoped that a breadth of knowledge supported by learned geographical skills of analysis will continue to prove attractive for undergraduates in Arts who are increasingly facing an employment market in which flexibility, maturity, and disciplined minds, rather than a narrowly defined set of skills, are seen as primary requisites. The editors of "Milieu '86" are to be congratulated for publishing this representative sample of the writings of our able undergraduates.

W. J. Smyth

GEOGRAPHY SOCIETY REPORT 1985/86

The committee commenced its activities in November. Our intention was to continue to promote the interest in Geography within the college which former societies had nurtured and maintained. Our task was aided by the distinguished speakers which we were fortunate to obtain for our lectures.

The inaugural lecture in November was given by Prof. J. Haughton, T.C.D.. Prof. Haughton, a widely travelled and learned man, thrilled his audience with accounts of some of his more memorable exploits from around the globe.

Our next function was the Christmas social hosted by Fran Walsh. The night began with a display of slides from his extensive collection, coloured by his well reputed wit which often had his audience on the floor. The night was a great success in promoting Geography to the student body. I'd say!

Our next engagement was the Joint Societies Lecture organised by the Geography Society of Ireland. Our Society had the honour of hosting this lecture which was given by Prof. Joy Tivy from the University of Glasgow. The title of her lecture was "Resources under Stress". The discussion stressing conservation, suggested a more careful approach to the use of natural resources.

The next lecture was given by Dr. Bill Carter of the University of Ulster, Coleraine. Dr. Carter's talk entitled "Gambling, Sex, Drugs and Other Coastal Processes", stirred interest throughout the college. Dr. Carter was ably aided by John Keegan in the witty discussion which followed. The discussion centred on man's impact on the environment along the east coast of the U.S.

Our final speaker was M.O' Brien of the Zoology Dept. of U.C.D. The lecture entitled "The Irish Brent Goose Expedition To Artic Canada" focused on the destruction by man on the breeding ground of the Brent goose.

The college also took part in the Annual Geography Students Congress which was held in Cork. Two papers were presented by Maynooth College, which received a creditable fourth place.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the Geography Society, particularly the committee, Ray Mc Hugh, Lorcan Greenan, and Gerry Quinn, for their hard work during the year. Also I would like to thank Paddy Duffy and John Sweeney whose work throughout the year was invaluable. The Society's final but lasting event of the year is the publication of this magazine. The editors had a difficult task working within stringent financial constraints. However, the final publication is a tribute to their hard work and dedication.

Paul Daly, Auditor.

THE ROLE OF SURPLUS IN THE EVOLUTION OF PRE-CAPITALIST MODES OF PRODUCTION

In the evolution of pre-capitalist modes of production, three modes and one variation of a pre-existing mode are observed; the primitive-communal mode of production; the tribute-paying mode of production; the slavery mode of production; and a variable of the tribute-paying mode of production i.e. feudalism. Like any system they are never found in their pure form(1). In any period of history elements characteristic of both the pre-existing mode of production and the succeeding mode of production are to be found intermingled, sometimes to the detriment of clarity. In this essay I interpret in historical terms the evolution of the above mentioned four modes of production, to be generally identifiable as in three transition periods. These are as follows; the transition from primitive communalism to Ancient Civilisation; from Ancient Civilisation to the empires of Greece and Rome; and from the empires of Greece and Rome to feudalism. A mode of production is an economic organisation based on a distinctive set of social relationships associated with a particular level of productive forces. That different modes of production have evolved is indicative of change in the basic symbolic characteristics of a mode, namely its' distinctive social relationships and the productive capacity of this relationship. This essay will analyse the role of surplus in affecting each modes' distinctive social relationship, and this relationships productive capacity, as determined by technology.

The evolution from a primitive-communal mode of production to a tribute-paying mode of production is seen in terms of the transition from primitive-communalism to Ancient Civilisation. The first societies were small, nomadic groups of hunters and gatherers, whose social relationship was largely based on kinship(2). The ultimate goal of these communes was subsistence, and as such the productive capacity of the social relationship was determined by the environment, because they lacked the means to develop the techniques which would allow environmental control. Because of this dependence on external circumstances, most communes collapsed, either being entirely eliminated, or more likely being decimated, to revive to the low levels of subsistence when environmental conditions improved. Ten to twelve thousand years ago, in two centres of the world, south south-east Asia and the Middle East, through a combination of chance and organisation(3), agriculture as a system of production was devised. This was the introduction of mans ability to control the environment. This enabled the commune to expand its' volume of production and, more importantly, to store surplus, decreasing the communes vulnerability to external forces e.g. drought. This surplus led to an increase in commune size, as communes could support an

increase in population, and more members survived droughts and famines. In shifting cultivation, because of its' nature, these large groups met more often than the smaller communes, and thus there was friction over the principle means of production i.e. land. Much of activity of these communes took place in river basins in Mesopotamia, e.g. agriculture was centred in the fertile crescent. The development of irrigation in the fertile crescent and other similar areas, facilitated the settling down on a permanent basis of these agricultural communes, thus reducing friction and allowing concentration on agricultural productivity. This resulted in the replacement of egalitarianism by the rank-ordering of society(4), as some social order was necessitated by the development of activities unassociated with production. In the fertile crescent this rank-ordering is identifiable by the establishment of leaders, soldiers and a state apparatus. Other ranks became established as the need arose e.g. artisans, people who left agriculture to become involved in manufacture. This occupation arose in response to the development of metal, the invention of the plough, the wheel, the sailing ship, weapons and tools. Merchants arose as the need for intermediaries in the exchange of goods became obvious. This rank-ordering or class-division necessitated that a tribute or tax be paid by goods-producing citizens, for goods and services received from the leaders, soldiers, artisans and merchants. This tribute was on average two-thirds of the citizens produce. This is indicative of the productive capacity of such social relationships, that is, the citizen produced enough for himself to subsist and could hand over two-thirds of his produce, which was surplus. It is clear that in the evolution of the primitive, communal mode of production to the tribute-paying mode, as seen in Ancient Civilisation, surplus played such an important role that it, in a sense, meant that society could afford to evolve in terms of class division and thus the division of labour, which made it possible for society to advance its' level of production.

In the evolution from this tribute-paying mode of production to the slavery mode, as seen in the Greek and Roman empire, we first note that although belonging to different historical periods, these empires shared the same mode of production, namely slavery. First we must trace briefly the fate of the tribute-paying mode of production as seen in Ancient Civilisation. The system of irrigation allows Ancient Civilisation to establish itself in areas similar to the fertile crescent, and enjoy a high surplus. The further development of farrowing, allowing the soil to rest and naturally replemish itself, allowed the diffuse growth of agriculture. Agriculture now, was no longer dependant on environmental factors. This farrowing method did not realise as much surplus as irrigation and thus no large civilisations developed, yet the basic social relationships everywhere were contractual. The only way

leaders could extract a worthwhile surplus in areas where farrowing took place, was to change the basic social relationships of contract, to one of coercion. This evolution is seen clearly in the Greek and Roman empires. Its' copious natural ports made it a natural centre for the accumulation of new military ideas from the west and agricultural ideas from the east. As Greece built up her military techniques and became a centre for economic development, cities were established to facilitate the different classes. Greece's military techniques enabled it to acquire colonies and this process yielded slaves. These slaves, as a source of labour, effectively raised the level of surplus in the empire, as their owners provided them with only enough to subsist. This mode of production was characterised by a social relationship based on the slave owners, ownership and the utilisation of slaves and the surplus produced by slaves. These slave owners formed a unified class of capitalists though not of the modern industrial type. Slaves were bought and sold in the cities with markets, the price of the slave varying with his or her capabilities, and so there were various classes of slaves ranging from the household slave to the professional slave. These slaves had no family life and their breeding was prohibited. So we see that in the evolution from a tribute-paying mode of production to slavery mode, it was man's desire for surplus fueled by his technological advances that caused the evolution of a new basic set of social relationships, identifiable as the slavery mode of production.

In tracing the evolution from a slavery mode of production to a variable of the tribute-paying mode, feudalism, we must trace the transition from the Greek and Roman empires to the rise of feudalism. With the availability of copious surplus and leisure time, the slave owners of these empires invested their time and valuable surplus in developing the Arts. This investment of valuable surplus in the Arts was to the loss of the development of technology. Technology became stagnant, as the slave owners had no impetus to develop it, the slaves could do any work that needed to be done, so why develop labour-saving techniques. The production of surplus was affected by these social relationships as slaves could not operate advanced machinery, they would break it up and use it as weapons to revolt, moreover agricultural organisation needed to be very simple, usually limited to one crop tilled with crude implements. As a result much land was totally ruined and agricultural production was limited. This technological stagnation eventually left both empires vulnerable to other areas where technology was being developed. This is seen in the replacement of Greece by Rome as the predominant economic centre, and the fall of the Western Roman empire at the hands of the Slavs, Goths and Franks. Before the fall of Rome was accomplished the institution of serfdom made its appearance in Greece,

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ending slavery as a means of production: the supply of slaves depended on foreign conquest, because the natural reproduction of slaves was discouraged. Towards the end of the Roman empire foreign conquest ceased and the slave supply entered a crisis stage. This crisis was further fueled by a Roman law allowing a slave to buy his freedom. This resulted in a corresponding increase in "free" workers, *colonii*(5) working on farms. Now that the large surplus of slave labour was no longer available, cities, commerce, population, large scale agriculture, the Arts, and every facet of economic life fell into decay, small scale farming was again the only feasible, surplus producing occupation. Slave owners' estates were leased in small lots to hereditary tenants who paid a fixed sum, or to share-croppers(6) who received on average one-sixth to one-ninth of the years produce for their labour. These free peasant communities placed themselves under the protection and patronage of men of power. These men of power were organised into their own system of hierarchy. As in the tribute-paying mode of production, as seen in Ancient Civilisation, surplus allowed class division centred on the economic unit which was the manor. Here we find dissimilarity between feudalism and Ancient Civilisation i.e. the size of the group within the tribute-paying mode of production and the size of the manor, shows that the economic unit in feudalism was more localised than Ancient Civilisation, thus indicating that surplus was smaller and unable to support a wide variety of class division. The social relationships of feudalism were based on the manor, which was a self-sufficient economic unit, with the serfs providing all their own requirements and the overlord appropriating the surplus of their work. Technological advancement was slow and surplus increased only marginally and as such products were not fit for a wider market(7).

There were three forms of extracting a surplus in the feudal mode of production, through work, products and money. In order to sell this produce, to acquire the money to pay his rent, trade was established, this trade set the ground for capitalist accumulation.

In conclusion, the role of surplus played a very important part in the evolution of precapitalist modes of production. It was on the basis of the extraction of surplus that we have seen the evaluation of social relationships and their productive capacity as outlined in the historical transition periods, from primitive communalism to Ancient Civilisation, from Ancient Civilisation to the empires of Greece and Rome, and from the empires of Greece and Rome to feudalism, and it was also to develop the advent of capitalism.

(Damien Faughan)

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Dobb. M
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(London 1963)
page 7
(2) Hunt & Sherman
ECONOMICS
page xxx
(3 & 4) Johnson R.J.
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(5) Nabudere
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THE NATURE AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE TROPICAL CYCLONE

The tropical cyclone is one of the three major tropical disturbances differentiated from (a) wave, and (b) linear disturbances by its shape. Known as a hurricane in North America and a typhoon in the Western Pacific, a tropical cyclone is a rotating storm born over tropical oceans and is without doubt the greatest storm on earth, with wind speeds on occasion reaching 320 kilometres per hour, and often generating 15 metre waves which are capable of devastating large areas of coastline.

For some small initial disturbance (e.g. a small tropical storm) warm humid air will rise. "Hurricanes usually start out as a trough of low pressure embedded in a belt of easterly trade winds"(1). If this occurs far enough polewards then the Coriolis force will act upon it and give it a twist. It will rise further and as a result will cool down, forcing it to shed some of its moisture. When this moisture condenses out, the latent heat of condensation is released fueling the air around the disturbance with more energy. It rises further and draws in additional warm moist oceanic air from a large surface area of ocean. "A hurricane can be described as a heat engine that is fueled by the energy liberated during the condensation of water vapour (latent heat)"(2).

The formative stage depends greatly on the temperature of the sea surface. "Hurricanes develop most often in the late summer when the water has reached 27 degrees Centigrade or more and thus is capable of providing the warm moist air required"(3). The formation of cyclones is confined therefore to between 5 and 20 degrees of the equator. Within 5 degrees of the equator, presumably the Coriolis force is too weak to give the initial disturbance the necessary twist (i.e. the Doldrum Belt). The initial disturbances already mentioned are generally areas of low level convergence and lifting. However, only a few of these develop into actual tropical cyclones. "The key to this problem appears to be the presence of an anticyclone in the upper troposphere. This is essential for high level outflow which in turn allows the development of very low pressure and high wind speeds near the surface"(4). However, if the convergence and accumulation of air at the surface is not dissipated this would effectively strangle the storm centre and thus cause the storm to die. Upper level airflow (or dissipation of air at the top of the cyclone) helps to intensify storms by getting rid of the rising air as it reaches the top of the storm, thus forcing the cyclone to suck more warm moist air in at the surface which will rise, cool and condense and release latent heat to further fuel the storm.

This intensification stage is characterised by a well developed chimney mechanism which facilitates the ascending warm moist air. "The pressure drops below 1000 millibars as the wind begins increasing around a tight ring forming its 'central eye' (6). This central eye averages 20km. in diameter and the zone of calm associated with it is unique to the tropical cyclone. Cumuliform clouds develop outwards from this eye wall. Maximum winds and minimum pressure are achieved when the cyclone reaches its 'mature stage. "The central pressure at sea level is commonly 950 millibars and exceptionally falls below 920 millibars" (7). On the Saffir/Simpson hurricane scale the strongest and most catastrophic hurricane has a central pressure lower than 920 millibars and wind speeds in excess of 250 km/hr.

Extremely heavy rainfall is caused by the development of cumulonimbus clouds and an area of up to 200 miles in distance from the cyclone may be affected by the extremely strong winds. Cyclones can grow to over 12 km in height.

A cyclone will continue to grow so long as it is supplied with warm moist air at the surface. If this supply is cut off it is deprived of energy and dies quickly. By the end of the mature stage the cyclonic system, having been in an easterly airflow, usually recurves polewards and enters into the prevailing westerly wind flow, where it is forced to move over colder water which causes a reduction in energy supply, or sometimes it passes over a land mass which causes an almost total loss of energy. Friction caused by this passage over the land surface also adds to the demise of the tropical cyclone, and as a result they never get very far inland. However, the torrential precipitation continues inland for quite some distance, and frequently causes flooding e.g. Schuylkill County in the U.S.A. received 19 inches of rain in 24 hours during its encounter with Hurricane Agnes in 1972 (8). Quite often the rainfall accompanying tropical cyclone is beneficial to agriculture in areas that otherwise would be relatively dry at this time of year.

The most destructive element of the tropical cyclone is not the high wind speeds which one would expect it to be. The most destructive element and greatest claimer of lives is huge wind driven waves. A cyclone drives water ahead of it when it approaches land as a tidal wave or a storm surge. This storm surge is a "dome of water 65 to 80 kilometres long that sweeps across the coast near the point where the eye makes landfall" (9). Winds of cyclone force are capable of producing a wall of water 15 metres high, and also the extreme reduction of atmospheric pressure causes an additional increase in ocean surface height. Like a tidal wave, the reduction in ocean depth as the storm moves towards land increases the water level critically.

As a result of such a phenomenon, low lying areas of the world, such as the delta region in Bangladesh, are especially at risk. In 1970 the official death toll in one such a storm surge was 200,000 (based just on body counts). Unofficial estimates put the number closer to 500,000.

About 50 cyclones occur every year in the northern hemisphere. They are not as common in the southern hemisphere, presumably because the south Atlantic is the coolest tropical ocean. As I have mentioned their formation is confined to between 5 and 20 degrees North and South of the equator. In the northern hemisphere highest ocean temperatures occurs between June and November i.e. 27 degrees Centigrade or above, and consequently these are the months in which hurricanes develop most frequently. Similarly, south of the equator they are most frequent between December and March. In the past, due to their unpredictability, hurricanes were given the christian names of girls, but in more recent years categorisation has become less sexist, including male christian names too. However, despite this unpredictability, it has been noted that tropical cyclones sometimes follow preferred tracks.

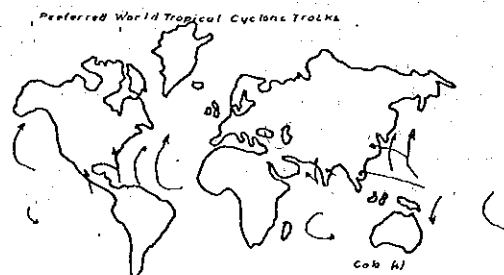
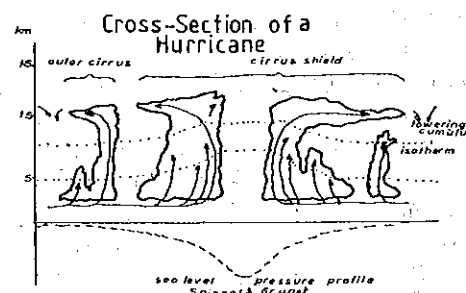
The fact that they tend to recurve back onto land in the Indian Subcontinent area and in the gulf of Mexico has been attributed to the effect of the summer monsoon airflow. It has also been noted that many more cyclones occur in the eastern portion of the North Pacific than had previously been known. This is easy to accept as this area is well away from land and shipping lanes.

In summary, the tropical cyclone develops from some initial disturbance, which if conditions are suitable will develop firstly into a tropical depression, and later, if it receives sufficient energy, a tropical cyclone. It may last for 2 to 3 days (on average) in which time it will wreck havoc on anything it runs into, be it ships or human habitation on dry land. The study of the tropical cyclone is hampered by the very danger of such a powerful and violent phenomenon. Monitoring and tracking cyclones can now take place from satellite or aircraft, but this is little better than an early warning system, giving people just a prior hint of inevitable disaster. Nevertheless, even though property damage or destruction is still extremely high, the number of lives lost in such storms every year is, on the whole, steadily decreasing. Man can do little at the moment but run away from hurricanes (even though experiments at present as to dissipating the hurricane by chemical spraying are said to have been quite promising). This is one element of the environment which, as yet, man lives in fear and danger of (probably because his comprehension of it is as yet incomplete).

John Glenny

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Spiegel H. & Gruber A.
FROM WEATHER VANES TO SATELITES
(New York 1983) pg. 117
- (2) Lutgens F. & Tarbuck E.
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- (3) Lutgens F. & Tarbuck E...pg. 261
- (4) Barry R.G. & Chorley R.J.
ATMOSPHERE, WEATHER AND CLIMATE
(3rd Ed. Great Britain 1976) pg. 293
- (5) Spiegel & Gruber.....pg. 118
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- (8) Lutgens & Tarbuck.....pg. 266
- (9) Lutgens & Tarbuck.....pg. 265
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INTRODUCTION TO METEOROLOGY
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POSITIVISM SIMPLY SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND THE
WORLD, WHEREAS MARXISM SEEKS TO CHANGE IT.

A pointer for (an attempt at) Evaluation and
Resolution.

The dominant paradigm (Hoff Jensen:38) in geography up until the early 1970's was derived from the natural sciences and has come to be known as the logical positivist paradigm or "positivism" for simplicity sake. Since then positivism has come under attack from several philosophies including phenomenology, idealism and radical geography. Marxist geography is one of the best developed and most widely accepted of the critical theories, seemingly offering the greatest intellectual and political rewards to those who adopt its stance.

Historically, the Marxist criticism of positivism in geography developed after the advent of the computer and the introduction of elaborate statistical analytic techniques. It developed as a reaction to this "quantitative revolution" and as a means of surpassing its' (in Marxist eyes) limited effectiveness as a basis for geographical inquiry. However, positivisms' roots are deeper than the quantitative revolution in geography.

Hartshorne accepted the positivist idea of the unity of science - in this case the unity of physical and human geography. He accepted the deductive nomological model (Guelke:40) and the necessity of relying on observation. S.Chaeffer, who could be credited with the formal philosophical introduction of positivism into geography, disagreed with Hartshorne on geographical uniqueness. Hartshorne believed geographical regions were unique and must be studied as such; contrary to the positivist belief in dicoverable unities (laws). Schaeffer thought of geography as spatial analysis. The "new" or "quantitative" geographers, who accepted his views, did not practice spatial analysis but statistical analysis.

Marxists and other critical geographers think that when statistical analysis became the sole purpose of geography in the quantitative revolution, it lost the analytical insight it possessed. Statistics could only describe the world as it stood. Reality was ransacked in search of testable theory and laws because theory, in the larger positivist, scientific world was the aim of science: theory which was sought using the computer and statistical techniques. There is, however, a difference between the logical positivist method and statistical analysis.

Statistical analysis is only a method of examining some facet of reality statistically - looking for interconnections with statistical techniques. In the "new" geography imposed order was mistaken for order in the real world. There is a difference between statistical

explanation and explanation in the ordinary sense. The ordinary word has a connotation of causality, the statistical does not. Those who used the techniques did not emphasise this, but that does not deduct from the utility of the techniques themselves. Marxist geographers use statistical techniques themselves. Marxists, on my understanding, seem to have attacked, among other reasons, the positivist framework the techniques are used within and not the techniques as such. I think that the positivist method, if applied properly, is a powerful method of scientific investigation, as all results are open to test. If Marxists are not willing to allow their analysis stand on the evidence for it they cannot expect to be taken seriously.

Harvey says that "positivism simply seeks to understand the world whereas Marxism seeks to change it" (Harvey:1973:129). If this is so Harvey throws objectivity or any approximation to it to the winds. The implication being that Marxists, wanting to change the world, i.e. eliminate inequality by destruction of the market system and capitalism, base and their acceptance of theory on this aim.

Theory is selected according to a set of political ideals; to justify your stance. In effect, theory and ideology are fused with no room for objectivity. I personally agree with the Marxist viewpoint, but I would not go as far as Harvey in saying that the only purpose of Marxism is to change the world. First it must understand the world and the positivist ideals of objectivity and verifiability are at their most useful in trying to understand the world as it is. Harvey establishes a political scale for judging the value of theory, i.e. how you want to change the world. Acceptable if you agree with the ideological standpoint. By this classification of theory as revolutionary or counter-revolutionary (the political scale) he destroys any aim of objectivity which must, in my opinion, be a goal or an aspiration of scientific investigation.

Another problem with Harveys' classification of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary types of theory is his statement that "the counter-revolutionary co-optation of Marxist theory in Russia after Lenins death... has effectively prevented the true flowering of Marxist thought and, concomitantly, the emergence of that Humanistic society which Marx envisaged" (Harvey:1973:127). In this case the first practical application of Marxist thought as a basis for analysis and action is not seen as revolutionary, but counter-revolutionary and negative. Furthermore, it is not berated by a sceptic but by a leading self-avowed Marxist geographer. Whatever the merits of this observation, it must cast doubts on the validity of the whole argument for Marxism within and

without geography because what Harvey called revolutionary theory, when applied, did not achieve the desired aims. The very same aims which were the basis, if I have taken the sense of the quotation correctly, for its' acceptance. I believe this reiterates one of my central points; that there is a difference between formulation and application of theory. Marxist theory unashamedly (and rightly!) revolutionary was formulated without knowing whether it would be successful or not. It could be, but applying it is a different matter. In its application in Russia it was "counter-revolutionary" - it did not achieve the desired aims of freedom and equality, simply, any artifact or theory can be used for construction (a tool) or destruction (a weapon), depending on your viewpoint.

The positivists are correct in attempting to amass a value free body of knowledge i.e. the facts should speak for themselves. However, they do not give enough attention to the matter of objectivity. Neither do they realise that total objectivity is impossible. Marxists should not judge a theory on it's affects within a discipline or polity, but on the merits of it's description/analysis/explanation of reality. As an illustration of the application of Harveys' revolutionary/counter-revolutionary scale there is no logical bar, to my mind, for the acceptance or rejection of a Nazi theory of the supremacy of the Aryan race (chosen for it's antithetical nature to Marxism). The "Aryans" wanted to change the world i.e. to eliminate or subjugate the so-called "inferior" races. Such an outlandishly bigoted theory of racial inequality falls down on the empirically verifiable evidence against it, not because of it's classification as revolutionary or counter-revolutionary or because a Marxist stance refutes it. Marxists should criticise their own views in the same way as they do others.

Accepting that there is a difference between the conduct of scientific investigation and the application of the results of that investigation, what can be said about the role of the scientist and which of the two arguments should she or he accept? The positivist ideals are necessary to conduct scientific investigation, geographic or otherwise, in an objective, factual methodical fashion, so that testable results can be obtained. What is done with those results should not concern them as scientists, it should concern them as whole people. (It could be argued here that in a multiplex society like ours that people play many roles and that because of the capitalist system, where money is supreme, the role whereby we classify people is their economic role e.g. scientists.) Scientists or geographers are not precluded from saying they wish the world was a certain way, but they should also say that as scientists they have no evidence for the merits of their case. Also, there are many different ways of achieving change - which is the best, and by what scale do

we judge those ways? Marxists do not recognise that there is a possibility of their stance being wrong or false.

The Marxist analysis of the capitalism/world market economy shows it creates systems of inequality, and that it can function only on a basis of scarcity is essentially based on empirical observations of economic conditions and spatial differences as they exist. They speak of viewing society holistically and say that explanation can proceed without reference to its' parts, as it is the relations among elements which count. "The issue is not one of determining whether, for example, culture and science "affect", "influence" or interact with the economic base, but rather of determining the precise way in which they are related"(Harvey:1973:211). This is where I think the Marxists fall down (perhaps I have not read widely enough or misunderstand them), but they do not seem to be able to quantify these relationships. It is clear that these relationships exist, but how much and in what way do they relate? The positivist approach would be at its most useful in trying to establish the extent of these relationships. If it cannot be applied then the Marxists are correct, it is useless as a basis for investigation in the social sciences and their methodology of historical materialism is of far more use. The whole question is highly debatable and open to much argument.

For the purpose of this essay the question remains - is the Marxist analysis based on empirically verifiable evidence? The unity of science by method is open to doubt. Positivists believe that science, natural and social, is unified by the deductive nomological method based on objective verifiability. Critical theorists, including Marxists, are not sure whether universal laws are derivable for the social sciences. Human behaviour is not the same as that of natural objects, it varies too much over time and space for any "laws" to be universal. These laws, historically in particular, are found using positivist methods of observation and are verifiable by re-examination until general behaviour changes so much that a new "law" is needed. Therefore, they are not laws in the positivist sense of universal predictors of events, but tendencies to behave, or manifestations of the tendency to behave in a certain way.

Positivisms' deductive-nomological method needs testable theories and laws, but humans and their societies cannot be experimented upon, as can natural objects - to propose anything else is ludicrous! In the social sciences control experiments are difficult if not impossible to stage, so any verification is confined to re-examination of the observed circumstances. Leonard Guelke says that Harvey (in 1969) was vague in assessing the utility of the deductive nomological model for geography. The model depends on testable laws and, according to Guelke, Harvey

was vague in discussing geographical laws. Harvey "missed an opportunity of rejecting geographic theory on logical positivist theories" (Guelke:1978:46), and said the social sciences were not truly scientific. He opted for Marxism in his 1973 book instead.

For positivists "the question of how scientists arrived at their laws was secondary to the question of whether the proposed law allowed accurate predictions to be made" (Guelke:1978:40). Marxists validly criticised them for not worrying about the origins of questions or to where their research was directed. Again, there is a difference between the deductive nomological method and the blind way it was applied or what to apply it to. Positivists who accepted the ivory tower approach of "it does not concern me" are extremely narrow-minded, guilty of a sin of omission by neglecting to see what the effects of their efforts were.

Seemingly, the two positions are irreconcilable. Is it possible to resolve them at all? There are elements of truth in both arguments: positivists seem to have adopted an ivory tower approach and Marxists have no proof that they are in the right. An interesting way of looking at the whole "dialectic" of argument is postulated by Habermas in Hay(22). Science falls into one of three categories; empirical/nomological (represented by positivism in this essay); hermeneutic (not dealt with here but phenomenology is an example); critical, usually structural (Marxism in this essay). Each category has different cognitive interests than the other, but they are not mutually exclusive, and a social science can contain elements of all three. In practice this means there is, for example, a law describing the range of a good, a hermeneutic explanation in terms of those who buy it, and a critical explanation which points out it is a function of the existing order and does not have to be this way. In effect, three different ways of looking at the same thing. The question is - which is to have primacy, which is "correct"?

In my opinion the first is most clearly provable, but only describes the world as it is - it does not offer much of a basis for change. The second is too individual centred and does not lay enough emphasis on the way society acts as a group or strata. The third offers a departure point for change, but is difficult to justify "totally" or empirically. Positivism is a throwback to the days of the Enlightenment and the reaction to it. When humankind is believed to be rational there is a danger that the socially normative quality of this rationality can be obscured, as I believe it is in positivism. Furthermore, there are few people who are totally, or even approximately, objective. They build structures of truth around beliefs in such ways that these structures reinforce the beliefs - "as evidence is sought to substantiate a cherished doctrine, the deeply

held beliefs of those involved may lead them unwittingly to error". Thus P.D. MacLean has suggested that the limbic system of the human brain "has the capacity to generate strong affective feelings of conviction that we attach to our beliefs regardless of whether they are true or false". In science, as Albert Einstein once remarked, "conviction is a good mainspring but a poor regulator" (Freeman:285). Positivists and Marxists are both convinced of the correctness of their analyses. Neither is probably totally correct, but there is much wrong with the world and Marxists propose change - positivists do not. However it is a mistake to throw out the positivist baby with the conservative bathwater.

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MAYNOOTH MENAGERIE 1985

(To be sung to the air of "The Star of the County Down"
or anything else that takes your fancy).

In 85 we headed out, we were two score and more
To Westport we did wind our way on Clew Bay's lovely
shore.
For Geographers it was a treat
This country to explore
The link between man-land is seen in Landscape and on
Shore

CHORUS

In Achill and in Castlebar
In country and in town
The Maynooth Menagerie in March
Turned theories upside down.

We counted shops and supermarkets, semis and saloons,
To see if Pringle's theories were just hot-air balloons.
We talked to people blissfully in bungalows sublime
To find out who they were and what they did in their
spare time.
We nosed around and some nosed down on Slievemore's
slimey sod
Where Mary and Celine slid down to check the rocks and
mud.
In Achill and in Castlebar etc.

We lost Peggy in Islandeady - thought we'd never get
her back
We found a gang in The Travellers Friend with maps all
doing pracs.
Some others trailed into our base from parishes
far-flung
- We tried to lose John Keegan there but Bernie brought
him home!
In Achill and in Castlebar etc. etc.

I think a lot of work was done in tavern and in pub,
- We phoned a few and found a crew of geographers in
trub,
They said they interviewed the barmaids and others who
dropped in
- But the questionnaires are soaked in beer and the
clipboards smell of gin.

For some the pace was far too fast - late nights and

early morn
And Ward and Mason were aghast when the bus left 'em
alone -
They "hitched their way back to Castlebar", there were
no respondents left,
So they beat it back to base and bar in time for soup
and brek.
In Achill and in Castlebar etc.

The crack was mighty back at base with discussions long
and deep
On the in's and out's of theories grand and hypotheses
so neat.
- That Monaghan would win the League, that Laois is
still asleep
And all roads lead to Blayney town where the Harp is
very cheap.
In Achill and in Castlebar etc.

On Saturday we all return to Lab and Lecture Halls
Where Pringleism's urbanism theories are all Balls
Bridge is in old Dublin Town where some of us will go
Because migration we have found keeps the population
low.
We'll say goodbye to Achill and goodbye to Castlebar
And hope the countryside survives this shower from
afar.

And when we leave Hotel Clew Bay, weighed down with
questionnaires
And ham and cheese and bread and three-page essays on
the tours,
We'll say goodbye to fieldwork and footslogging and the
crack
And thank the Lord we made it back with all aboard
intact.

In Achill and in Castlebar
In country and in town
The Maynooth Menagerie in March
Turned theories upside down.

MARCH 28TH. 1985.

GLOBAL FAMINE IS LESS THE RESULT OF OVER POPULATION
THAN UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION AND INEFFICIENT USE OF
RESOURCES.

Where do we generally find Global Famine that is not
just the result of some Act of God? We find it in what has
become known as the Third World or Underdeveloped Countries.
The main areas concerned are Africa, Latin America and Asia.
What have these countries got in common?

1. They are located in tropical latitudes.
2. They are ex-colonies of European Imperial Powers.

3. The Gross Domestic Product ("Which is used as a
measure of the average standard of living within a country")
was 65.127 to less than 65 in the Third World compared with
393.5 (per capita GDP in Sterling) in the First World in
1970. From this we can see that the wealth of the world is
not evenly distributed.

4. Another feature these countries have in common is
a rapidly growing population. This has mainly been caused
by a reduction over a very short period of the mortality
rate. If we look at the situation in Venezuela in 1930 a
baby has less than 50% chance of living to thirty. In 1985
a baby has a 50% chance of living to 65.

The reduction of the mortality rate in the Third World
was brought about by European knowledge and technology. It
brought a better life expectancy for the people of the Third
World but as it was not accompanied by a significant growth
in the economy (unlike the First World with the Industrial
Revolution) and it took place over a very short period of
time (again unlike the First World). The result was that
the carrying capacity of the countries concerned was not
sufficient for the population, hence starvation and famine.

1970 - 1972 (per 1000 of population)

COUNTRY	CRUDE BIRTH RATE	DEATH RATE	INFANT MORTALITY
FRANCE	16.9	10.6	13.3
SWEDEN	13.8	10.4	11.1
EGYPT	34.6	13.1	116.3
KENYA	47.8	17.5	55.0

The difference in the infant mortality rate between
the First and Third Worlds can be seen in the above table.
When taken in conjunction with the Birth and Death rates, it
gives an indication of the living conditions in the Third
World today. This type of population growth leads to

growing pressure on the carrying capacity. The per capita living standards are difficult to improve as extra production is used to feed the new population.

The tropical conditions of the Third World also present many difficulties. The very heavy rainfall "leads to leaching of the nutrients and the creation of poor soil called laterite which is not very suitable for cultivation". (W, D&P). The areas close to deserts can be subject to drought and new political boundaries have put a stop to migration which was the traditional way of dealing with these problems.

In order to study the problems of the Third World today it is necessary to look to the past. The earliest Empires were China, India, North Africa and the Middle East (now known as the Third World). In the thirteenth century Marco Polo was overwhelmed by the civilization he found in China. He brought back glowing reports which inspired later expeditions; thus began the invasion of the Third World.

Colonisation of these areas introduced the plantation form of agriculture. The English, French and Dutch developed this form of agriculture in their own interests. The colonies were not allowed to produce goods that the home country could produce. They were not allowed to trade with anyone else. All trade between the colonies and the home country was in ships owned by the home country. This unbalanced relationship was the beginning of the unequal distribution of wealth.

Vast areas of land which should have been used for agriculture and food production were used to plant cotton, coffee, tobacco and indigo for export purposes, which in turn meant that these countries were dependent on the home countries for food and clothing.

As Lord Cromer, who governed Egypt from 1883 to 1907 put it:

"The policy of the government may be summed up thus:
1. export of cotton to Europe; 2. imports of textile products manufactured abroad: nothing else enters into the government's intentions, nor will it protect the Egyptian Cotton Industry, because of the dangers and evils that arise from such measures... Since Egypt is by her nature an agricultural country it follows logically that industrial training could lead only to neglect of agriculture while diverting the Egyptians from the land".

"In India in the period between 1934-35 and 1939-40 the area of India's soil under food crops declined by 1.5 million acres. While during the same period the area under export crops increased in the same proportion".

There are many more examples of this type too numerous to quote. The pattern which emerges however is clear. The Third World countries today are still very dependent on the First World for many necessities of life. In order to import what they require they must export what the First World wants.

"Food has become a source of profit, a tool of economic and political control, a means of ensuring effective domination over the world at large and especially over the wretched of the earth".
(Susan George)

Statistics have shown that the carrying capacity of the world is more than sufficient to feed the population. The control of food and wealth distribution is in very few hands.

In addition to the vast inequalities in wealth on a global scale, there are also inequalities within individual countries. There are indications that the plight of the very poor, especially in rural areas in underdeveloped countries is becoming worse mainly because of unequal distribution of wealth within the countries themselves.

The 1980 World Development Report gives some tentative figures on income distribution within countries.

In Brazil the poorest fifth of the population get 2% of the income and the richest fifth get 67%, for Malaysia the corresponding figures were 3% and 57% and for India 7% and 49%.

There are about 800 million people or almost 40% of the population of the so-called "developing countries" who live in "absolute poverty".

The existence of trade unions or any form of organisation representing the poor is often minimal or non-existent. Severe repression by the generally Marxist type government authorities is the rule rather than the exception.

It is obvious from the restrictions imposed by the First World when giving "Aid" to the Third World that the main concern is political control and power over these countries. President Nyerere attempted to lead Tanzania in a new way i.e. to go it alone and not be dependent on the West or Russia - but "to create societies which ensure human dignity and self respect for all". He felt that in



order to achieve this the only path was that of Socialism. His failure however was partly due to the fact that they got little or no aid, except from Switzerland and Canada, and the disillusionment and bankruptcy following the war with Uganda.

I feel that the people of the First World have been kept somewhat ignorant of the real causes of Famine in the Third World. More emphasis is being placed on over-population and how to control it, without the back-up of economic growth. The First World is interested in maintaining the status quo for self-preservation purposes.

"Just as the propertied classes of yesteryear opposed every reform and predicted imminent economic disaster if eight year olds could no longer work in the mills, so today those groups that profit from the poverty that keeps people hungry are attempting to maintain the status quo between the rich and the poor worlds".
(Susan George)

I think the case of China is worth looking at to see how one of the Third World countries has progressed to the Second World.

In looking at China today we must take into account that the economy inherited by the new regime was "in a shambles". It is against this poverty and lack of industrialisation that subsequent developments must be measured.

In the 1970's China came to grips with its own population problems, this followed its more secretive effort of redistribution of the population which was relatively effective. Families are strongly encouraged to have only one child. The system works on a reward basis. The one child family gets more food, better living conditions, and the best education is guaranteed for the child. As the power structure in China encourages responsibility at all levels, second pregnancies are easily noticed and strongly discouraged. The system seems to be working. In order to stabilise the economy and feed the people strict measures were imposed. As the population is now starting to decline and conditions are improving people are being encouraged to produce surpluses which they can sell or trade for their own profit, land ownership is starting to come back again. The difference seems to be that instead of a small proportion of the people being given the opportunity to control the wealth of the country, there is equal opportunity to improve one's lot.

KINSALE GAS

"Kinsale Gas" was first discovered in the Celtic Sea by Marathon Oil (Ireland) Ltd., in November 1971 by the drillship "Glomar North Sea", 37 miles off Kinsale Head and 3000 feet below sea level.

The origins of Kinsale Gas Field can be traced back to 1969, when Marathon Petroleum (Ire) Ltd., was awarded an exclusive licence to explore the Celtic Sea. On receipt of the licence Marathon carried out a seismic survey of the Celtic Sea over the period 1969-1971. The result of this survey encouraged Marathon to undertake a drilling programme. The first two wells were dry but the third well, drilled in November 1971 became the discovery well for Kinsale Gas. Subsequent drilling of "step-out" wells and an appraisal of the find confirmed the commercial viability of the project in 1973.

Having discovered a "commercial" gas field Marathon set about exploiting and developing its newly found asset. Under the terms of its exclusive exploration licence which Marathon converted into a lease in 1970, an annual rent of 25,875 pounds p.a. was payable to the State up to 1976 and thereafter 51,750 pounds p.a. These fees merging in royalties at the rate of 12.5% of the market value of the petroleum produced. The agreement with Marathon also stipulated that aggregate tax and royalties could not exceed 30% of the profits for the first 5 years of commercial production, and 40% of the remaining years.

From Marathon's point of view the agreement must have been looked on as favourable when compared with similar agreements made elsewhere. In the U.K. for example a 12% royalty on wellhead production was imposed together with a Corporation tax of 50%. The U.K. government expects to get between 55-65% of Oil Company profits. In Norway government policy regarding terms offered to companies involved in oil-gas exploration has resulted in the State taking up to 60% of company profits. Amending legislation in 1972 increased the government's "take" to 80% of profits. Legislation in the U.S.A. and in most European countries enables governments "take" on average 50% of the profits of the Oil Companies. In the Middle East the average government "take" of profits varies from 80-90%.

In retrospect, it appears that Marathon received very generous terms from the government. However it is worth keeping in mind that when the agreement between Marathon and the government was signed, there was no comparable yardstick to measure it against. In 1969 oil was very cheap and the Multi-Nationals had a firm grip on the production and distribution of oil world-wide. Also, the full potential of the North Sea had not yet been realised. Any oil-gas find off the Irish coast would be so small in international terms, that the country would not be high on Marathon's exploration priorities.

However many observers point to the Marathon agreement, as evidence of a lack of a comprehensive energy policy in dealing with Multi-National corporations who exploit our energy resources. The subsequent allocation of natural gas to the E.S.B. and B.G.E. would seem to confirm their views.

With the arrival of natural gas in Ireland in 1978 the government's energy policy came under scrutiny from many quarters. Regarding natural gas, the government policy was stated as being "to broaden the use of our existing natural gas reserves, to underpin the security of essential, energy supplies and to maximise the returns to the Exchequer and the economy from gas reserves" (1976 Gas Act).

The decision to allocate gas to the E.S.B. for electricity generation was seen by many observers as a wasteful and inefficient use of a valuable resource. In support of their argument they point out that gas retains only 35% of its energy when used to generate electricity, whereas it retains 75% of its energy when injected directly into a boiler for heat generation. The need for the E.S.B. to be supplied in the first instance is also questionable. At the end of March 1982 the E.S.B. had installed generating capacity of 3274 megawatts, compared to a peak demand of 2000 megawatts. Furthermore when the plant nearing construction comes on stream in 1987 generating capacity will be increased by a further 1320 megawatts.

In 1981 the E.S.B. were paying B.G.E. 9 pence per therm for Kinsale gas compared to a cost of 30 pence per therm for imported fuel oil, and 46 pence per therm for imported gas oil. The N.E.S.C. argue in their report "Irish energy policy" (no. 74 OCT. 1983) that all users of Kinsale gas should be charged a market rate for it, in order that, B.G.E. "captures" the "rent" for the nation as a whole, rather than give it to a specific organisation. A "rent" is said to exist where payment to any factor owner exceeds the minimum payment required to retain a factor in that use. Any return in excess of the minimum is called "rent" (N.E.S.C. No. 74 P.14). This in the case of E.S.B. is a potential "rent" of 21 pence per therm in the case of fuel oil and 37 pence per therm in the case of gas oil is lost by the State. Implicit in the above pricing arrangement is a "ghost" subsidy for the E.S.B.'s operations. According to the B.G.E.'s annual report (1982) the E.S.B. paid 85 million pounds for natural gas, whereas the E.S.B. estimated that it saved 140 million in imported fuel costs as a result of using natural gas. The difference of 55 million is the "rent" captured by the E.S.B.

It is clear from the above that the E.S.B. does not need Kinsale gas to meet its energy needs. However, the availability of the E.S.B. as a customer for natural gas in the development of the Kinsale gas field did provide an incentive to bring the gas ashore. The position of N.E.T. is analogous to that of the E.S.B.

Whatever about the short term faults of the government's energy policy, plans regarding long term energy sourcing and usage are of the utmost importance to the economy and the country.

In regard to Kinsale gas, its pricing structure and customers need to be changed. Clearly the B.G.E. will have to ensure that the current and future customers, do not use more than their quota of the rate of extraction if it is to be maintained over the life of the Field. B.G.E. have been successful in encouraging industries to switch to natural gas as a basic energy feed stock. Furthermore in 1978 the Minister for Industry and Power issued revised guidelines in pricing which specify that natural gas should be allocated on the basis of market prices and that the existing price arrangement with the E.S.B. should be reviewed to arrive at a more energy related price for Kinsale gas.

There is little doubt that the events over the last 15 years have sharpened public awareness of the necessity and importance of having a government policy to deal with Kinsale gas and energy related matters in general.

In assessing the impact of Kinsale gas on the economy, worthy of mention are the following points,

1. In 1984 it was estimated that the use of Kinsale gas saved about 300 million in oil imports.

2. The argument concerning the most efficient use for natural gas has not been resolved. The preferential trading terms offered to the E.S.B. and N.E.T. remain a contentious issue within the energy industry.

3. The Kinsale Gas field is expected to be depleted by 2000 A.D. Unless an alternative discovery is made in the interim supplies will have to be imported via ship, or by linking up with the already extensive gas grids in mainland Europe and Britain which are supplied from abundant resources in the North Sea, North Africa and Russia.

4. B.G.E. is pursuing a successful policy of encouraging industries to switch to natural gas as a basic feedstock for their energy needs. This policy may lead to confrontation with the E.S.B. as both organisations bid to supply the energy needs of prospective customers.

5. The development of the Kinsale gas field has given the government first-hand experience in dealing with Multi-National corporations and in the complexities and problems associated with the development of off-shore resources.

6. Natural gas is our only primary indigenous energy-efficient fuel, and in the event of disruption of foreign based supplies it provides us with an alternative energy source.

7. It is estimated that 600 new jobs were created as a result of the development of the natural gas industry in Ireland. A further 600 jobs in spin-off industries were created.

The inability of the government to establish adequate down-stream industries on foot of Kinsale gas has greatly restricted the options available for the utilisation of the gas. What is now needed is a comprehensive energy policy which will chart the utilisation of all energy resources for the foreseeable future. In particular attention will have to be focused on the pricing and taxation policies adapted in relation to energy, whether indigenous or imported. Regarding indigenous sources of energy, a mechanism to capture "rent" for the State will have to be devised.

Despite these problems the future of natural gas in Ireland is full of promise. The history of off-shore exploration is that oil or gas finds rarely occur in isolation. Therefore given the history of Irish off-shore exploration and the nature of the sea beds surrounding the country, the probability of a major gas-oil find is encouraging.

SHANE MC GUIRE.

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In the 1830's the US was beginning to expand across its own territory westwards. The small newly independent central American nations were trying to recover from the revolutionary upheaval that removed Spanish control. According to John Quincy Adams the US did not feel that these nations had free and liberal governments. The US did not want revolutionary change but had used politics to constantly interfere in the internal governments of central America.

In 1904 the US announced that they would play a policing role in Central America. In 1911 American troops landed in Nicaragua to help overthrow President Zalaya because he had used force to increase his influence over Central America in order to make it an anti-US block. From an economic aspect Zalaya was not willing to co-operate with North American commercial ventures as were other Central American leaders. Zalaya was replaced by a US supported regime.

In 1925 US marines withdrew from Nicaragua but because of the outbreak of civil war they were returned to fight the great guerilla leader, Sandino. The US left in 1933 yet put Somoza in charge along with the National Guard.

Between 1977 and 1979 the Sandinistas were moving closer to overthrowing the Somoza regime. President Carter sent arms to Somoza and pressurised him to stop the torture and numerous human rights violations taking place under the National Guard. When Somoza did this his power weakened. In the end Somoza broke off links with President Carter and tried to fight an all out war against the Sandinistas.

The Nicaraguan revolution was victorious and the Somocutia regime was overthrown on July 19, 1979. Later Juane Wheelock (Minister for agricultural development) commented, "the Somoza dictatorship was a classical, typical form, a model of imperialistic domination in the situation of Latin America and especially in the Caribbean".

THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

The U.S. occupied Nicaragua in 1909 with the landing of the marines in Bluefields. This was part of a familiar pattern. Cuba and Puerto Rica were occupied in 1898, Honduras in 1905, and Panama in 1908.

In Nicaragua this was the beginning of 25 years of continuous invasion from the U.S. until Sandino defeated them. When the U.S. withdrew they left behind them a local army and National Guard to ensure political and economic domination and the Somoza dynasty became securely rooted. In the Somoza family the U.S. found a local

instrument for neo-colonial domination. The bourgeoisie in Nicaragua were undermined by the U.S. overthrow of President Zalaya and could not resist the rise of Somoza. At the same time the working class were very rebellious but badly organised. In 1934 Somoza ordered the murder and annihilation of Sandino and his followers. Thus for the following forty years the dictatorship remained aided by continuous support from the U.S.. The longevity of this dictatorship was therefore a product of foreign domination. Wheelock said " a social system of a capitalist nature in which the bourgeoisie was putatively the dominant class"(1) arose in Nicaragua. But in reality they never dominated because such a system was in the hands of imperialism and its local expression - Somocismo. Because the bourgeoisie were in the hands of imperialism they could not exist without them, that is, the U.S.. And seeing that the U.S. supported the Somoza dynasty the bourgeoisie had to, out of necessity, support Somoza and the regime. Therefore the overthrow of Somoza potentially threatened the destruction of the bourgeoisie as a class. If the bourgeoisie disintegrated the Sandinistas knew that a divided class would never lead the revolution. Therefore the Sandinistas aligned themselves with the bourgeoisie. After the victory of the revolution this alliance was continued in order to construct a new society and new forms of democracy.

The U.S. favours reform but dreads revolution. For the past 150 years she has used her power to prevent revolution. Yet all this intervention in the past 30 years has led to polarization of stable societies and accelerated revolutionary conditions.

Why has the U.S. such an intense interest in Central America? -

In the Somoza family the U.S. found an instrument for neo-colonial domination. When the Sandinistas won the day and declared themselves to be left wing President Reagan decided to back the Contras (who were remnants of Somozas National Guard). The Contras wanted a re-establishment of the Somoza state. The U.S. came to realise that authoritarian governments such as Somozas are "friendlier" regardless of principles of human rights.

Two outstanding geographical features have given Nicaragua a much greater potential than other Central American countries - (a) the natural passway across the Isthmus through the Nicaraguan rift, and (b) the highly fertile volcanic soils on the Pacific sides of the country. Nonetheless because of Nicaragua's colonial past she is finding difficulty in getting off the ground both socially and economically.

Perhaps more than any other Central American country, excluding Panama, Nicaragua has felt the direct influence of the U.S. in its politics and economy. American interests utilized the Nicaraguan rift as a trans-isthmian route in the mid-nineteenth century. During the same period activities of an American William Walker in Nicaragua engendered a lasting resentment of a large segment of Central American people against the U.S.. Between 1911 and 1932 the U.S. employed actual military intervention in Nicaragua under the guise of protecting American lives and investments. The U.S. managed customs houses and supervised elections.

During this period Nicaragua was a virtual protectorate of the U.S.. Although they introduced much needed health services, and investment and trade in Nicaragua greatly increased; Central Americans often point to this period of intervention as an example of U.S. imperialism. Therefore the Nicaraguan rift and its' strategic value as a canal route has been one of the significant geographical factors that has maintained the interests of the U.S. in Nicaragua for the last 100 years.

Communism and its threat to the U.S.:

It is unrealistic to discuss Central America and Nicaragua without discussing Cuba. It 1961 and 1962 the Cold War started between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The Russians built a naval base in Cuba, agreed to buy her leader Fidel Castro. The U.S. felt very threatened by having the Russians too close for comfort. Economic sanctions were directed against Cuba by the U.S.. But today Cuban assisted subversion is making no visible headway towards Communism in the other Central American countries. But the U.S. is constantly intervening to make positively sure that no Communist headway takes place in any Central American country, including Nicaragua. The U.S. will not tolerate a "Second Cuba"(2) in Central America.

Economic Aspect

Nicaragua is a Third World Country and is therefore exploited by the semi-periphery and core countries.

Nicaragua has become one of the leading producers of rubber. Today, chilled beef, shipped mainly to the U.S. is the country's third most valuable export with coffee in second place. Since 1962 cotton has been Nicaragua's most valuable export and the most recent estate crop to emerge in Nicaraguas fertile Pacific zone is bananas.

It is very likely that these crops are another reason why the U.S. are so interested in Central America. Also, Third World countries are very suitable for setting up multi-national companies due to the availability of cheap labour and raw materials coming from the receptor country. They usually receive a great welcome from the governments of Third World countries because they are setting up industry and providing employment. Between 1911 and 1912 U.S. troops landed in Honduras to intervene in a fight between two U.S. banana companies located there.

The U.S. also intervened in Costa Rica over economic matters when the Costa Ricans wanted to give oil concessions to a British oil company. The U.S. would not hear of it and termed it "foreign exploitation". President Zalaya was overthrown by U.S. power because he would not co-operate with North American commercial ventures. From these facts it is crystal clear that the U.S. are very interested in Central American countries for economic reasons as well as the threat of Communism.

To go back to present day in Nicaragua the F.S.L.N. which are the ruling party since the revolution six years ago. They were started by a rebel Sandino who led a small ragged band of armed followers rampaging through the mountains of Nicaragua during the 1920's and 1930's in a guerilla war against the American marines who occupied the country. It was the U.S. ambassador who appointed Anastasio Somoza as Commander in Chief of the National Guard in Nicaragua. For the next 40 years Somoza's name would be synonymous with repression, brutality, poverty, murder and torture of every kind.

Following the earthquake of 1972 in Managua, Nicaragua's capital city, Somoza pocketed most of the money which had been sent as international aid.

When the Sandinistas were victorious the Contras emerged - the Contras want the re-establishment of the Somoza state. It is very important to remember that these are trained and armed by the U.S. government. President Reagan says that these men are "freedom fighters" and that they are "the moral equivalent of the founding fathers of the American Republic, and that support for the Contras is the transcendent moral issue of our day"(3). But President Reagan is only using moral issues to justify his involvement in this country, that maybe he should leave to its own devices. He is interested in Nicaragua purely for political and economic reasons.

Michelle Higgins

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Central America: The Nicaraguan Revolution
- (2) Patterns of foreign influence in the Caribbean
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- (3) Magill magazine December 1985

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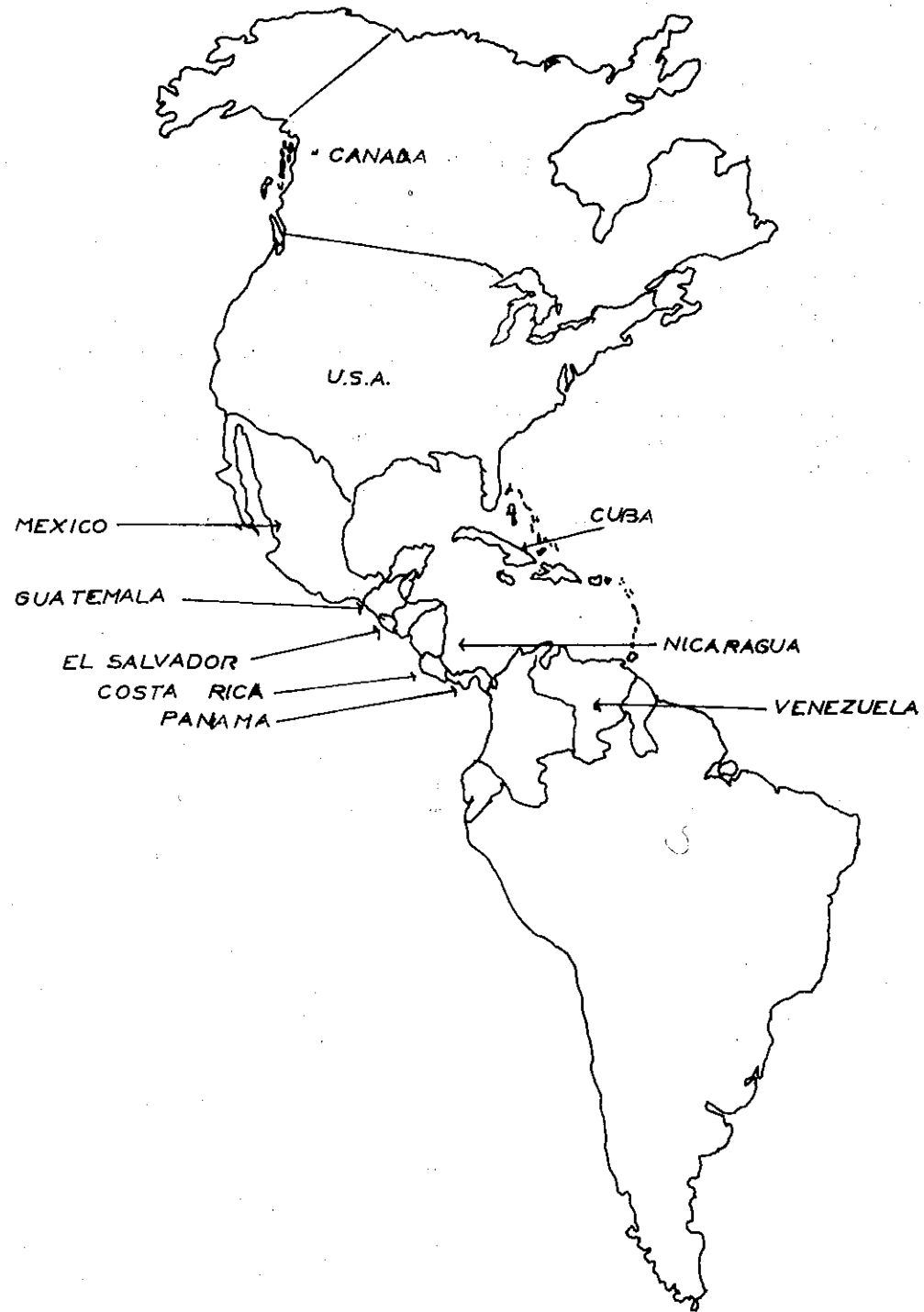
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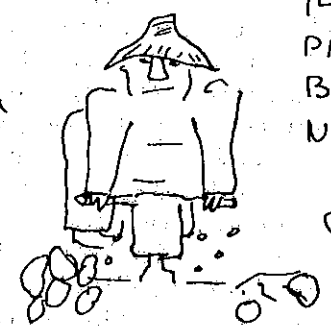
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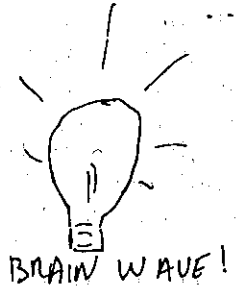
I was hungry and you
 Blamed the Communists,
 I was hungry and you
 Went to the moon,
 I was hungry and you
 built a shuttle,
 I was hungry and you
 set up a Commission,
 I was hungry and you
 sent in the Multi-nationals,
 I was hungry and you
 planted coffee beans,
 I was hungry and you
 told me machines do
 that work now,
 I was hungry but you
 had nuclear arms
 to buy,
 I was hungry but you
 said God Bless the
 free world,
 O; Lord I hope you
 are never hungry!
 "Gospel According to Central America"



YEA; I'M
 PROUD TO
 BUILD THIS
 NEW AIRPORT
 FOR MY
 COUNTRY...



... AND I'M
 HAPPY TO
 HAVE A JOB,
 TO EARN A
 REGULAR
 WAGE



NEVERTHELESS...
 I'M NOT AN EXPERT
 BUT WOULDN'T IT
 BE BETTER IF ALL
 THE MONEY BEING
 BURIED HERE TO
 BUILD SOMETHING
 THAT WILL ONLY
 BENEFIT 0.2% OF
 MY COUNTRYMEN WAS
 PUT INTO SOMETHING
 THAT WOULD BENEFIT
 US ALL INTO
 SOMETHING REALLY
 PRODUCTIVE...



... THEN MAYBE
 WE COULD AFFORD
 AN AIRPORT
 LATER, USEFUL TO
 EVERYBODY...
 ...NOW WHY IS THAT
 UNDEMOCRATIC.

IT'S A LONG WAY FROM HERE TO CLARE (BEGORRAH)
(TO AIR OF "ARE YOU RIGHT THERE MICHAEL?")

We left Maynooth early one mornin'
With the sun blazin' out of the sky
We were headin' for far Ballyvaughan
With rations and spirits so high.
The bus belted westwards through Enfield,
Edenderry and through Tullamore,
Fran spoofed all the way to Portumna
And so on and on and so forth.

And as we bumped on into Clare
We heard a voice in deep despair...
Is there any chance we'll see the National
Will we get to see the bloody race at all,
Will we even get a looksie
Or a bet on with a bookie?
We just might now Daly we just might.

We drove the bus throughout the Burren
To view the landscape of limestone,
And we saw tower houses unfurlin'
And ring forts and stoney wedge tombs.
And Moher's seminar was spectacular
On rural community change,
We saw loads of houses vernacular
Snuggled into the hills on the range.

And as we trundled in the bus
Proinnsias kept shouting back at us...
There's a clint now, there's another grike,
There's pediments to left and to the right.
There's bedding planes begorrah
And lots of lovely poljes
And there's spaghetti bolognese at home tonight.
(Is there any butter left? Three carrots for No.6
A sack of spuds for No.1)

A bus-based field trip is deficient
Without any field exercise
So to get the troops into condition
They were all dumped along the roadside.
Therese was struck speechless with horror
Mad dogs made Perpetua sore,
But Olivia met a fine fluter
Who impressed her no end in Fanore.
Patsy searched Ballyvaughan for stockings
Ann Webster was wearing his best
Niall Cussen was in Kilnamona
In the middle of nowhere, he says.
And as they wandered up and down

They pestered people that they found...
We are geographers from far away Maynooth
We are desparate to get from you the truth
Is your status marital
Have you any kids at all,
Tell the truth now, we don't want no spoof.

For the twenty best souls on the field trip
Who climbed to Slieve Elva to risk all,
They'll pass their exams without hitches -
The shower who stayed at home can all piss off.
Three cheers for Barton's fine buses
We hope they get us safely home
And Peadar's not one to make fusses
When Fran says turn left up this.....lane.
And as the bus comes down the line
Niall Cussen rallies in behind...
Hard right there, Peadar, go hard right
There's a kinky korner coming up quite tight,
Whip us round the Corkscrew
I'll drive if you don't want to,
Outa sight man, I'll be outa sight.

In house One there was a last hooley,
With music by House No.8 (on tape),
And Helene and Deirdre were groovy-
As they got in the groove they were grrreat.
And Karen and Butler Fiona
Were Justin and John for a strip,
But Patricia delicia did'nt go far
So they all went at four for a kip.
As they were carried home to bed
Their voices carried overhead...
Where's the clints now, where's the bleeding
grikes,
Where's the bedding planes for us to sleep
tonight?
Can we even find a wedge tomb
To lay our heavy heads down
We'd soon sleep now, brother we'd soon sleep!

Some good friends were made in the first few days
Paul Daly was swept off his feet
Mary was got into trouble, he says-
Such boasting is so hard to beat.
And Harry and Helen hypnotic
On surveys they were just good friends,
But in seat No.4 they were at it,
Again and again and again.
And as they walked around in pairs
A voice was heard with festive airs...

Did we get a chance to see the National?
Sure we did'nt see the bloody race at all,
But I think I backed a winner
Up in Hylands after dinner
Ten to one I'll be in Ballyvaughan again.

On Thursday we finished in Shannon
To see the Industrial Zone,
And buildings all built without planning
And factories all lined up in rows.
- They make invasive pediatric facilities
And hundreds of large hand-held tools,
To Bunratty we went with rapidity
To check out the Castle and roofs.
And as we wander to Kildare
- it's a long long way from here to there
We all sing:
Are ye right there, Peadar, are ye right,
Will we get a chance to sleep at home tonight,
Will you turn the bloody mike off
We'll take today and night off
So goodnight now, Peadar, say goodnight.

(The Bard of Batterstown, April 1986)

* Any resemblance to anybody, living, dead or
mythological, is completely accidental.

THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHY IN EXPLAINING GENDER DIFFERENCES IN HEALTH

Twentieth century Western society has seen a sharp increase in life expectancy, which has been more marked for women than for men. In all developed countries sex differences in morbidity show similar differences as mortality, with one exception - the pattern is reversed, with adult women having, or appearing to have, higher rates of physical illness (Verbrugge, 1976; p387; Gore & Hughes, 1979; p126; Nathanson, 1977; p14). Research has tended to focus on biological and sociological explanations of the causes of morbidity and mortality differences with little attention being placed on economic and geographical factors. In this essay the hypothesis that capitalism has produced a gender division of labour under which clear morbidity and mortality differences have become accentuated will be studied in an attempt to investigate possible spatial variation in sex differences in health.

"The main focus of a capitalist state must be to establish conditions for the survival and expansion of the economic system. The economic system is dependent upon an adequate supply of resources, cost-trimming practices by management, technological innovation, and sales and profits". (Felker p8)

If a consideration of Felker's listed dependents is taken into account, then health differences between males and females might be seen in three ways, all of which are products of the capitalist mode of production.

(a) "Adequate resources" include a supply of labour. Capitalism's selection of such a workforce, as well as its paying off of certain members of it may account for health differences.

(b) "Cost-trimming practices" may include least possible expenditure by management on occupational safety and health. ("Technological innovations" may also lead to an increase in disease e.g. coal mines and industries which use chemicals.)

(c) "Sales" are dependent on society's eagerness to purchase. Perhaps drug industries and the medical industry are able to take advantage of the female to make profits.

1. Marxists suggest that a level of unemployment (the "reserve army of labour") has an economic role to play in capitalism i.e. workers have to accept low wages, knowing there are others who would willingly do their work. Concerning women in the workforce, Lesley Doyal writes "Because women are still encouraged to view themselves primarily as wives and mothers, they continue to accept lower pay, worse conditions and more job insecurity than men and are less likely to join unions. As a result they have formed an increasingly useful "reserve army" which can be moved in and out of work in accordance with the changing

demand for labour"(p216).

Marcia Felker in her paper "The Political Economy of Sexism in Industrial Health" writes - "In the last several years, increasing numbers of American women have lost their industrial jobs or have been refused jobs because they are of child-bearing age. Industrial physicians and management in manufacturing plants using various chemicals have decided that the risk their women workers take of having deformed children as a result of workplace hazards is such that the women must be protected. This has meant that many of these women must give proof of sterilization in order to maintain jobs"(p3). Such chemicals however, also affect male sex organs.

Finally, Trevor Weston in "Doctors Answers" answering the question "Shouldn't women go back to the home now that unemployment is so high?" writes - "Women have always worked. They need social contact, status and financial security just as much as men. As our society is now, this is largely achieved through work" (p2748).

Perhaps, therefore, job insecurity, lower pay, combined with the traditional view that women should be in the home add up to produce more stress in females than in males; this stress in a number of cases resulting in increased rates of chronic illness in females, as well as psychosomatic illnesses, tension headaches, digestive disorders and skin disease. Stress can also lead to cerebrovascular diseases, and may be the reason for higher mortality rates due to strokes in women than in men e.g. in Ireland in 1979 10.5% of male deaths were due to strokes, compared with 15.7% of female deaths (Pringle). Such stress may be of decreased importance in rural areas, where perhaps traditional sex roles are more acceptable.

According to Kressler and Mc Rae - "Over the past two decades, women have increasingly attempted to combine paid employment with family roles. There is some evidence that this change has resulted in their better mental health" (p266).

2. Under the capitalist mode of production industries may consider a low level of occupational safety and health to be economically beneficial. Money which would be needed to eliminate hazards and health risks could be invested in production or taken in profits. Fines for violation of health standards and compensation to the occasional injured or diseased worker costs industry very little. It therefore appears that industrial capitalism condones conditions leading directly to unhealthy workers. Maybe maintaining reduced health in the workforce is a fundamental destruction of working class power. The US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has estimated that in 1972 alone there were 390,000 cases of

job-related illnesses and 100,000 deaths from industrial diseases.

In Ireland in 1979, 7% of male deaths were due to injuries and accidents, compared with only 3.7% of female deaths. Although these figures do not specifically refer to fatal injuries and accidents at work, the above statistics from the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health would suggest gender differences in mortality due to industry. It could also be supposed that such fatalities would be concentrated in urban, industrial areas, more so than in agricultural rural areas. Possible contradiction might be accounted for by dormitory, rural settlements.

3. "Medicine is just one more public service converted into a commodity to be bought and sold in the market place" (Stacy p16).

Since female morbidity rates are higher than those of males, the drug and medical industries are dependent to a very large extent on female use of drugs and the medical system. When medicine is considered as a commodity then surely capitalism takes advantage of the female to make profits, both in prescribing drugs, selling products and convincing of the necessity of certain forms of medical treatment e.g. surgery; when in fact none of these may be needed at all. Also, capitalism, in the form of medicine and bourgeois professions of the drug and medicine industries may be the partial reason for high female morbidity rates: i.e. in their desire to make profits.

M.Hern in his paper "The Illness Parameters of Pregnancy" (Social Science and Medicine, 1975, p365) presented pregnancy as an illness, a "pathogenic condition....for which Western society has already devised an elaborate system of prevention and treatment. Contraceptives can have serious side effects on women, e.g. Depo-Provera, a contraceptive developed by the US drug company "Upjohn" has been proven to cause intermittent bleeding. Although this injectable birth control method was taken off the American market it is still widely used in developing countries. A study in Bangladesh showed that 60% of women were still using this contraceptive after 1 year, and at least half of these were experiencing "menstrual chaos" (Doyal,p283). It has been indicated also that this contraceptive may induce permanent sterility.

The influence of capitalism in the Third World, where public outcry to controversial drugs and surgery methods is much less compared with that in Western society, may be one important factor in explaining morbidity patterns in less developed countries.

Abortion has become an important medical industry, an industry which often lacks competence and respect for the female body - often producing sterility or damage to the reproductive system of the female leading to stress and thus physical illness unrelating to the sex organs. Stacy also suggests that abortion clinics have persuaded women that they are pregnant and have carried out supposed abortions on women who were not pregnant at all (p18).

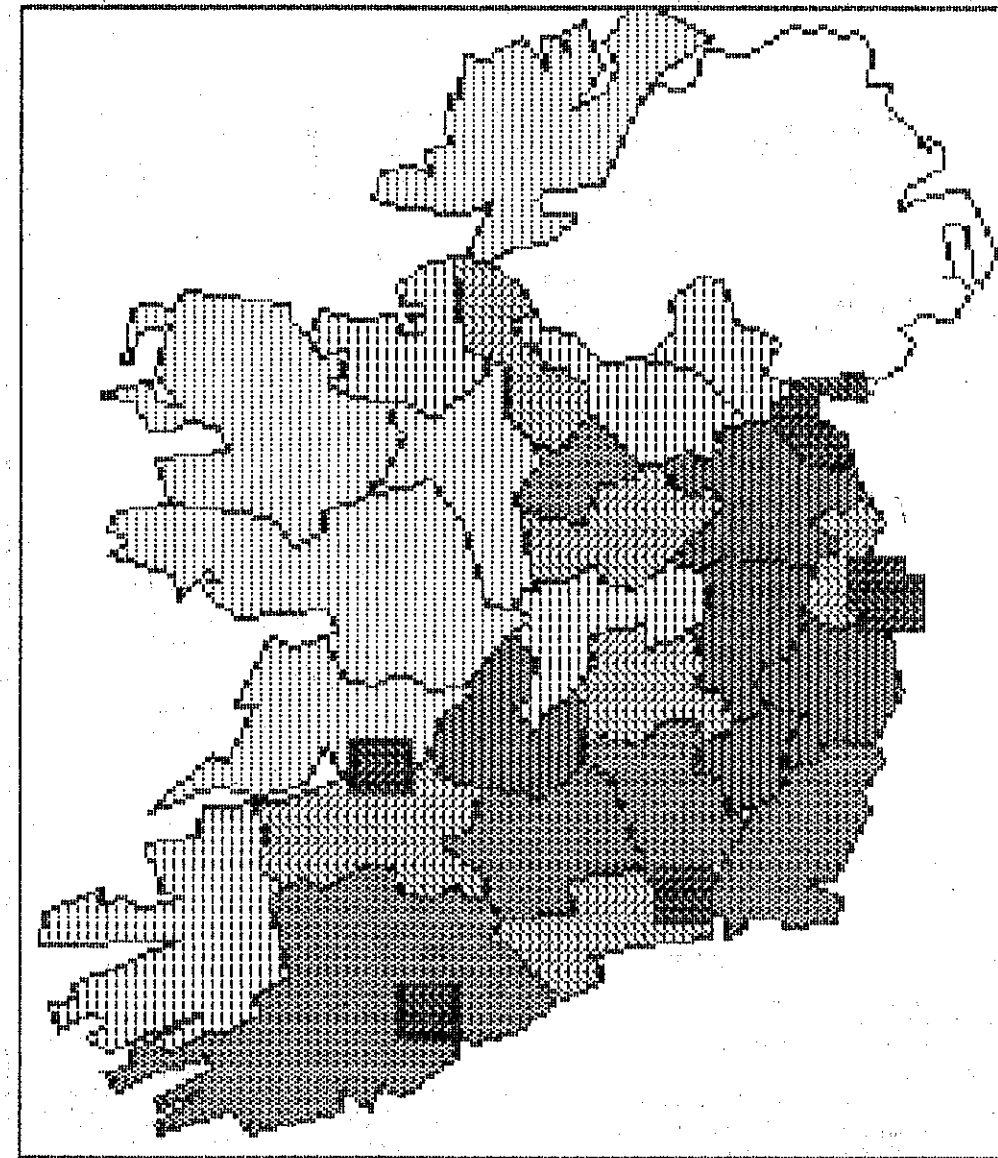
The drug and medical industries' other cures for pregnancy include non-essential drugs which apparently make pregnancy more comfortable. Products such as cosmetics may produce allergies which, until the cause is discovered, may have cost the sufferer a small fortune in various apparent remedies.

Sales techniques of drug companies which use women most often as the most common subjects to advertise tranquilisers and anti-depressants may as well as their medical education cause doctors to assume a "neurotic" basis for many of the medical problems presented by women patients (Doyal, p226-227). In 1972, tranquillisers hypnotics and anti-depressants accounted for about 17% of general practitioner's pharmaceutical expenditure and twice as many women than men were receiving prescriptions of this kind (ib id).

Finally, mastectomy is common as a cure for breast cancer. Although such an operation is unimportant in explaining gender health differences, it does highlight the fact that a lot of surgery and drugs could be replaced by simpler techniques of curative medicine, which may have less severe or no side effects. The fact also that medicine in the capitalist mode of production emphasises curative and not preventative medicine might be an important consideration in accounting for gender differences in health.

Although the direct role of capitalism has been described in relation to a few diseases and illnesses e.g. occupational hazards, stress and associated physical illnesses caused to females due to unemployment and instability in the workforce. Indirectly capitalism may well be a factor important in accounting for other mortality and morbidity differences between males and females.

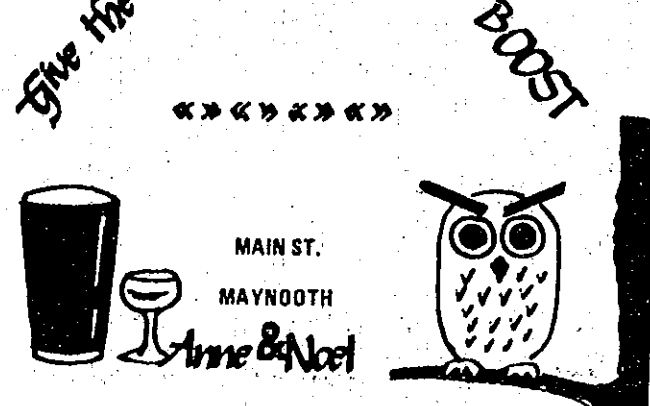
In outlining the importance of capitalism, however, I am not suggesting its supremacy above biological, sociological or other possible causes of health differences between males and females. The capitalist mode of production as already suggested however tends to define social roles and even, to an extent, describes biological differences between men and women. In such a speculative study, capitalism, sociology, biology and other areas of



MALE DEATHS FROM MALIGNANT NEOPLASMS, 1971-1981.

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knowledge only help in our understanding of why men die younger than women, and why women are sick more often than men.

Capitalism has its weakness as a general indicator of sex differences in health. Lieban notes that Western trends apply to non-West countries (p853). I have attempted to show how capitalism affects the Third World, but little emphasis has been placed on socialist countries. Perhaps capitalism invariably affects the Eastern Socialist countries and thus helps to account for sex differences in health there. Or perhaps flaws in socialism also have influences on health.

Martin Mc Alinden.

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THE EFFECTS OF WIVES EMPLOYMENT ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF

MARRIED MEN AND WOMEN

Felker M.

"THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SEXISM IN INDUSTRIAL HEALTH"

THE IRRELEVANCE OF POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Political boundaries have, in the past few decades, come under pressure from two major sources. The more obvious source of pressure is from within, and this is a problem that is associated with states where there are movements for separation. But practically all nations are affected by the less obvious, but no less significant pressure from without. This external pressure comes especially in the form of a deliberate playing-down of the force of those borders for different kinds of reasons. However, in spite of these pressures which are gradually breaking down political boundaries as barriers against the free movement of people around the world, it remains a fundamental political belief that these borders are important, and must be maintained at all costs. In this essay we shall examine some of the major processes that are trivialising these boundaries. We shall then examine the grounds on which these boundaries are set up and maintained. In conclusion we shall see which of these contradictory trends is likely to dominate.

1. TRENDS THAT TEND TO UNDERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF POLITICAL BOUNDARIES.

There are a number of states that are threatened with break-up; for instance Spain, Ethiopia and India. In some cases the tension has developed into all out civil war, but in a majority of cases the separatists use "terrorism" and insurgency to try and force a change. The problem is that often the separatists are a minority within the state, and so tend to be vastly out-gunned and out-numbered by the government side. Good examples are the Basques in Spain, the Tamils in Sri Lanka and the Assamese in India. It is also rare to find these separatists winning their case. A notable exception is Bangladesh; and it succeeded only because India and the two Pakistans were in peculiar spatial configuration and it was in the interest of India to split up Pakistan. The general pattern is that these internal pressures take a huge toll in human life, but basically lead nowhere.

The more effective means of undermining political boundaries, which also operate on a large scale, are through political and military intervention by bigger powers in the affairs of smaller states, through military and economic alliance, through the activities of multinationals and great financial institutions and through the activities of the great news organisations and the T.V. business.

The principle of non-intervention in other states internal affairs is enshrined in the charter of the United Nations, and accepted by all member nations. But there is good reason to believe that member states only pay a lip service to this principle. The only states that may

actually maintain that right for themselves are increasingly the Great Powers, while of course reserving for themselves the privilege of involving themselves in other states internal affairs. For example, the United States uses all kinds of strong-arm tactics, covert and overt, sometimes even military invasion, to force changes in government or policies in many nations that do not agree with their own policies. But we have also seen that other states are capable of doing the same; hence India's role in the break-up of Pakistan. This sort of intervention is objectionable to many commentators, but on the other hand, most people perceive military and economic alliances as good because they are usually mutually beneficial. There is little doubt that were it not for the existence of the NATO alliance some West European nations would feel uneasy enough with their neighbours to the extent of engaging in an arms race with them. Under NATO, however, their arms race is of one unified block, sharing the costs among themselves, against another block. If nothing else, defence is much less expensive for each member state. Such alliances however, cost the states their sovereignty; for it means that the states do not always carry out policies because they are perceived to be in the national interest if those policies are unacceptable to their allies. For example, Ireland will not usually make a loan to Nigeria to enable that country to buy Irish butter, if as a result they will undersell the French. If the Irish were to do this it would be viewed as dangerous for the EEC. Another aspect of the impact of such alliances on the idea of national boundaries is that they may also allow for the considerable freedom of movement among the different peoples involved. Within the EEC and also between the United States and Canada such freedom of movement exists. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is experimenting on a similar regional inter-relationship.

It can be argued that under economic and military alliance the states involved act as equals, and that sacrifices on sovereignty are mutual. The same argument can not be made for the activities of the multinationals. These corporations need a global market for different kinds of savings: to side-step high labour costs at home, retain maximum flexibility for reacting to regional variations in demand and for intimidating restive labour at home, and of course in order to keep their profit margins high. The result of their activities in foreign countries is that the host countries make major sacrifices for the benefit of the corporation's home country. That home country is enriched in the process, but more importantly, it gradually gains a decisive voice in influencing political and economic developments within the host country. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the American government argues that multinational investment is the road to economic development in the host country, particularly in capital-starved Third World states. Part of the reason for

the hysteria in American political circles over developments in South America is simply that these developments endanger American multinational investment in the region. This is generally expressed in harmless political formulations like "US interests" in the region. Still every so often it filters through the press that the area is America's "backyard".

It actually begins to appear that there is a conspiracy among the major powers to undermine the political boundaries of other states, or at least make them irrelevant, when one considers the activities of the big television interests and the great news organisations. The political and strategic advantages of controlling the flow of information are universally recognised. The wealthier nations, however, are now managing to out-compete the smaller ones for the attention of their own citizens. Increasingly powerful communications satellites are being launched into space, which enable those media interests, that are wealthy enough, to buy some space in the system, so that they can beam their programmes virtually everywhere on the globe. These same news organisations are mass producing television programmes. Hence it is much cheaper for the national news services of smaller nations not to take the trouble of producing their own programmes. Today, charges of "cultural domination" are beginning to be levelled against some of these major powers. "Cultural domination" is probably an inadequate expression to represent what is happening. It is more like political and ideological domination, for it means that the official view points of the more powerful nations are pressed on people everywhere so as to directly influence the opinions of large sections of the populations of foreign nations.

It is obvious from what we have seen that the principle of integrity of boundaries is not an absolute one. It is a principle which should protect the weaker nations. Actually, it does not protect them. Still the principle is put forward as an ideal; which makes it necessary to raise the question about the desirability of political boundaries. If the integrity of political boundaries is a principle accepted in theory by all, it means that it must represent some value. What may that value be?

2. THE GROUNDS FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THESE BOUNDARIES

The vast majority of people take it for granted that political boundaries are natural. This may easily be understood in places like Ireland, where the spatial limits of the country are strictly controlled by geography. Interestingly, the natural region argument may also be put forward for Britain; but then nationalist sentiments continue to cause problems in Scotland and Wales. However, many recent historical events point to the fact that national boundaries are not necessarily natural

arrangements.

Two hundred years ago the United States consisted of thirteen ex-British colonies on the eastern seaboard of North America. Subsequently, that country has grown to cover the present-day continental US, but excluding Canada and Mexico. Rather it includes Alaska and Hawaii. There is no logic in this arrangement. Clearly, natural boundaries have not been the decisive factor. Human decision has been the decisive factor. Indeed the native Americans, who might have claimed that this is their natural region have been brushed aside. The old paradox of history, in which recognition is accorded to might rather than to right had been played out yet again. The American Indians have no right to claim the continent of America as their natural homeland. That right has shifted to the people who had won it because of their military superiority. The only way in which the situation can be justified is to accept the philosophy of might is right.

The arbitrariness of political boundaries is even more clearly dramatised in the carving up of Africa by the European powers in the nineteenth century. In this exercise, pre-existing loyalties and conflicts were rarely taken account of. Even within the newly created political entities, there are regions that might be regarded as natural, because they are divided off by major river channels, mountain ranges or swamps. Often the same ethnic group may be found on either side of the "natural" divide. When European partitioning followed these boundaries, situations similar to that existing in southern Nigeria may result. There, the lower Niger was regarded as a natural boundary between eastern and western Nigeria, with the Igbos on either side under different governments.

What all this indicates is that although in some cases it is possible to speak of natural boundaries, most of them are essentially coincidental; others, especially in western Europe, mark the limits of the powers of centralising absolute monarchs during the later Middle Ages. The pattern was that the power that proved militarily superior determined the boundary. This was played out in recent history in the post World War Two experience of eastern Europe. For the domination of eastern Europe by the Soviet Union represents another form of political organisation preferred by the victorious power.

Clearly, political boundaries arise from the will of those who can maintain them by force; and they have always been created in the interest of victors, in some cases for strategic, in other for economic, reasons. Within the victorious nation, it is of course the ruling class that determines what is in the strategic or economic interests of the country. It is therefore paradoxical that nationalists, especially in states that became independent

in recent times, not only accept these boundaries but are also ready to use force to defend these emblems of the military power of another.

3. CONCLUSION

It is clear from what we have seen that there is no natural law instituting these boundaries. They are maintained basically because they create a well controlled form for the dominant class to operate freely and to manage the subservient class in such a way that the latter never poses a threat to their economic interests. It is usual that when the profit-making capacity of the ruling class is endangered, governments are quick to use the political boundary expedient as a protective mechanism for the interest of the dominant class. A good example is the constant threat to erect trade controls in America to protect US business interests from "unfair" competition from Japanese steel and auto makers. But then there are cases, as we saw, in which the profit motive makes it sensible to play down or undermine these political boundaries. Stress or de-emphasis on political boundaries is obviously a function of economic and ideological expediency. So the trend that dominates at any one time depends on what is perceived to be good for the political economy of the more powerful nations.

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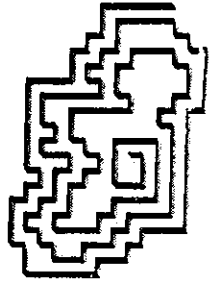
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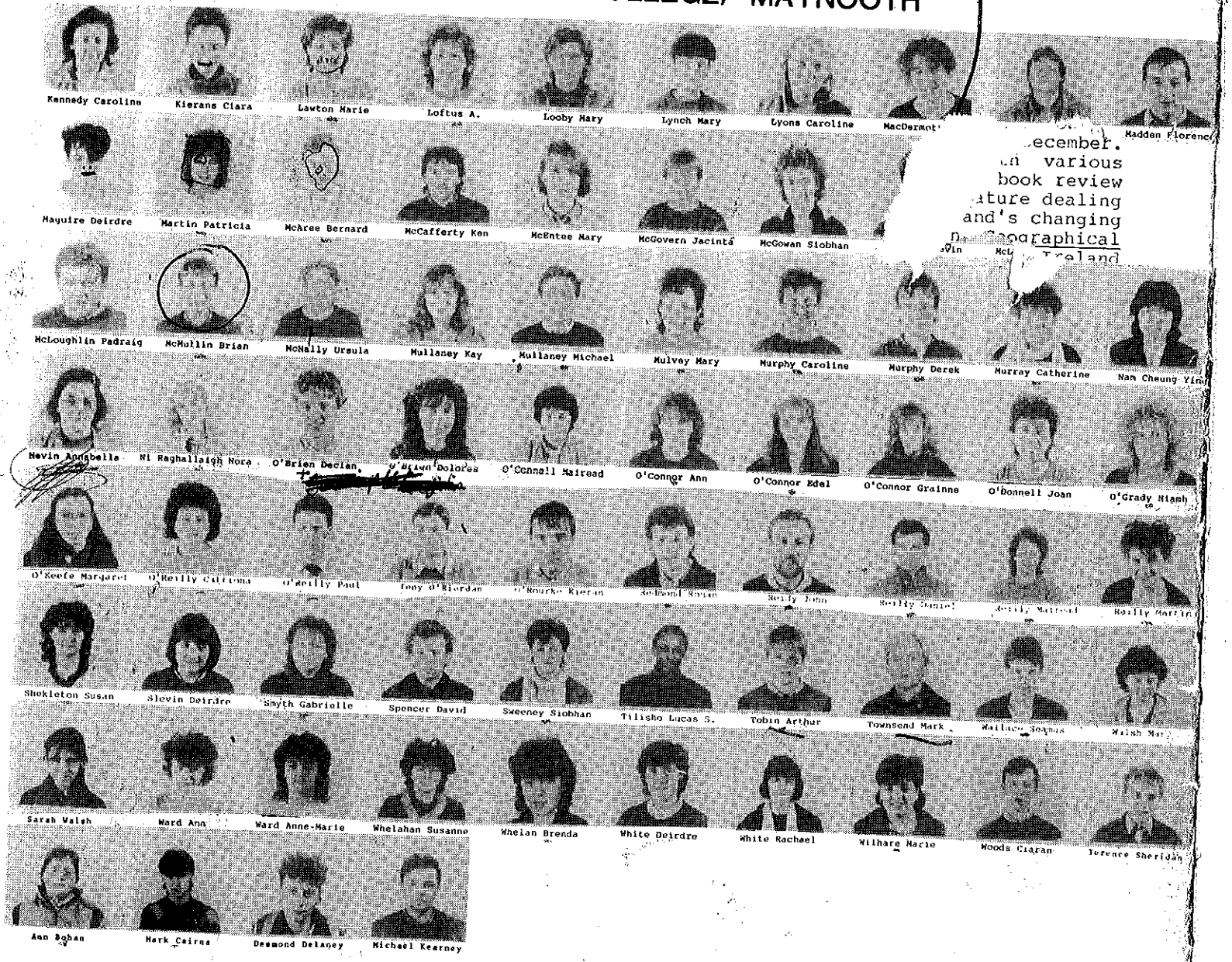
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