

**WORKSHOPS·DISCUSSIONS·FILMS·BOOKS·TALL·SOCIAL EVENTS**

**NATIONAL**

# **FEZ**

**CONFERENCE  
JUNE 18-20  
TRINITY COLLEGE  
DUBLIN**

**REPORT** ::::



## STEERING COLLECTIVE REPORT

AT THE RECALL MEETING IN FEBRUARY 1982 , IT WAS DECIDED TO HAVE A RADICALLY DIFFERENT STRUCTURE FROM THE CORK CONFERENCE IN 1981 .

WE AGREED :

1. TO HAVE BOTH BLOCK WORKSHOPS , ON SPECIFIC THEMES RELEVANT TO BOTH LESBIANS AND GAY MEN , AND OPEN WORKSHOPS - RATHER THAN A PROLIFERATION OF SMALL WORKSHOPS , CULMINATING IN A MULTITUDE OF MOTIONS AT A FINAL PLENARY SESSION .
2. IN VIEW OF THE SMALL NUMBER OF LESBIANS AT THE CORK CONFERENCE, THE DUBLIN CONFERENCE SHOULD BE STRUCTURED SO AS TO ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN .
3. IT WAS AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A CORE OF 4 MAIN WORKSHOPS :
  - A. COMING OUT/PERSONAL LIBERATION/FEAR OF POLITICS.
  - B. GAYS IN A PATRIARCHIAL SOCIETY
  - C. GAYS AT WORK/TRADE UNIONS.
  - D. STRUCTURES FOR DEVELOPEMENT/A UNITED GAY MOVEMENT

IN OUR CHOICE OF WORKSHOPS, FILM, VIDEOS , AND ADVERTISING WE TRIED TO DRAW IN AS MANY WOMEN AS POSSIBLE ; EMPHESING THE LINKS BETWEEN LESBIANS AND GAY MEN IN OUR STRUGGLE FOR GAY LIBERATION , BUT ALSO POINTING OUT TO GAY MEN THE FACT OF WOMEN'S OPPRESSION IN SOCIETY GENERALLY .

IN PREPARATION FOR THE BLOCK WORKSHOPS WE PRODUCED, AFTER DISCUSSION AMONG THE GROUP , A SERIES OF GUIDELINES . THESE WERE INTENDED AS LEAD-OFF POINTS TO STIMULATE, RATHER THAN DICTATE , THE DISCUSSIONS.

WE ALSO SET ASIDE TIME AND SPACE FOR PEOPLE TO CALL WORKSHOPS ON ANY TOPIC OF THEIR CHOICE .

THE CONFERENCE CONCLUDED WITH A PLENARY SESSION , AT WHICH WE HEARD A REPORT BACK FROM EVERY WORKSHOP AND ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE VARIOUS NEW GROUPS FORMED ( ACTION FOR LESBIAN MOTHERS , GAYS AT WORK GROUP , DUBLIN GAY COLLECTIVE , GAY ALCOHOLICS GROUP ) .

A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS WERE ALSO PASSED AT THE PLENARY SESSION (SEE PRESS RELEASE FOR LIST).

A PRESS RELEASE WAS ISSUED FOLLOWING THE FINAL SESSION .



## PUBLICITY

IN DEALING WITH PUBLICITY WE IDENTIFIED FOUR SEPERATE AREAS :

1. MEDIA
2. PROGRESSIVE GROUPS
3. INDIVIDUALS
4. LEAFLETS AND POSTERS

### 1. MEDIA

THIS HEADING INCLUDES NATIONAL , LOCAL AND COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS, NATIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE MAGASINES ; TELEVISION AND RADIO STATIONS.

WE FEEL IT IS VITAL TO MAKE CONTACT WITH JOURNALISTS/REPORTERS WELL IN ADVANCE , SENDING INFORMATION TO THE NEWS , FEATURES AND WOMENS SECTIONS ; AND TO LOCATE INDIVIDUAL JOURNALISTS WHO MAY BE SYMPATHETIC. A CONTACT NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER SHOULD BE INCLUDED WITH ALL INFORMATION . CONSTANT CONTACT WITH JOURNALISTS AND PERHAPS A PRESS RECEPTION IN THE WEEKS PRECEEDING THE CONFERENCE WOULD IMPROVE THE POSSIBILITY OF WIDESPREAD COVERAGE .

IN OUR EXPERIENCE , JOURNALISTS WILL NOT BE INTERESTED SIMPLY IN INFORMATION ON THE CONFERENCE, BUT WILL WANT AN 'ANGLE' ON WHICH TO BASE AN ARTICLE (THE STORY WILL NEED TO BE VIRTUALLY WRITTEN FOR THEM) . IN THE CASE OF LAST YEAR'S CONFERENCE THE ISSUES WHICH INTERESTED THEM WERE THE KINCORA AFFAIR , THE CHARLES SELF MURDER AND SUBSEQUENT POLICE HARRASSMENT ; AND THE L.G.P.S.U. MOTION IN FAVOUR OF LEGAL PROTECTION FOR GAY WORKERS..

ALSO, SHORTLY BEFORE THE CONFERENCE IT IS WORTHWHILE TO A LETTER TO THE LETTERS PAGE OF ALL THE NEWSPAPERS , INSERT AN ADVERTISEMENT IN THE PERSONAL/CLASSIFIED COLUMN OF THE DAILY AND EVENING PAPERS ; AND TO GIVE THE CONFERENCE DETAILS TO THE 'WHAT'S ON' COLUMN OF PAPERS , MAGAZINES ETC..

### 2. PROGRESSIVE GROUPS

BY PROGRESSIVE GROUPS WE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING : GAY GROUPS (BOTH HERE AND ABROAD ) ; WOMEN'S GROUPS ; TRADE UNION PAPERS AND NEWSLETTERS ; STUDENT UNION MAGAZINES AND MISC. GROUPS SUCH AS THE I.C.C.L. , C.N.D. ETC.

THESE SHOULD BE CONTACTED WELL IN ADVANCE , AND WE FOUND IT USEFUL TO ADOPT PARTICULAR LETTER FORMATS FOR THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS . (SEE THE APPENDIX FOR SAMPLE LETTERS)

WE ALSO USED , WHERE POSSIBLE , THE INFORMATION NETWORK OF THESE ORGANISATIONS E.G. U.S.I. COOPERATED BY SENDING OUT LEAFLETS , POSTERS ETC. TO OVER 50 COLLEGES IN THEIR MAIN-MAILING .

### 3. INDIVIDUALS

WE CONTACTED ALL THOSE WHO HAD ATTENDED PREVIOUS CONFERENCES , MEETING ETC. ; ANY ACTIVISTS WE KNEW OF AND REQUESTED THE GAY ORGANISATIONS TO INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR MAIL-OUT TO THEIR MEMBERSHIP .



4.

#### LEAFLETS AND POSTERS

POSTERS SHOULD BE PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. FLY POSTERING IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT IN SOME AREAS AND IT WOULD BE UP TO LOCAL GROUPS TO DECIDE HOW FEASIBLE THIS IS. POSTERING CAN ALSO BE DONE IN SUPPORTIVE BOOKSHOPS, ARTS CENTRES, THEATRES, STUDENT CENTRES, WOMEN'S CENTRES, GAY PUBS AND ANY WHERE ELSE POSSIBLE.

WHERE IT IS DIFFICULT TO POSTER WE SUGGEST STICKERS (E.G. LESBIAN CONFERENCE STICKERS). THESE ARE CHEAP TO MASS PRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE; AND CAN BE EASILY PLACED IN ALMOST ANY LOCATION.

IT IS ALSO USEFUL TO PRODUCE A CHEAP LEAFLET, WHICH GIVES THE BASIC INFORMATION ON THE CONFERENCE AND CAN BE DISTRIBUTED IN GAY PUBS, DISCOS ETC.

#### \* RE ADVANCE PUBLICITY :

1. INVITE PEOPLE FROM SPARE RIB, GAY NEWS ETC. TO CARRY ARTICLES ON THE CONFERENCE.
2. ASK PEOPLE TO WRITE ARTICLES FOR THEIR LOCAL MAGAZINES, GROUP NEWS-LETTERS, GAY NEWSPAPERS ETC.
3. HAVE YOUR OWN PHOTOGRAPHER PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE.
4. HAVE AT LEAST ONE PERSON WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEALING WITH THE PRESS AT THE CONFERENCE AND/OR SOME FACILITY FOR BRIEFING ANY JOURNALISTS WHO TURN UP.



## WOMEN'S REPORT .

80 WOMEN REGISTERED AT THE START OF THE CONFERENCE , AN EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE NUMBER FOR A MIXED EVENT SUCH AS THIS . THIS STRONG LESBIAN ATTEND-  
-ENCE , AND THE ENJOYMENT OF THE FILM ('TOWN BLOODY HALL') AND DISCO ,  
CREATED AN AIR OF OPTIMISM FOR THE CONFERENCE AS A WHOLE .

THIS WAS QUICKLY DISPELLED BY THE SECOND WORKSHOP ON 'PATRIARCHY' . IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN PRESUMED THAT MOST OF THE MEN THERE WOULD HAVE SOME BASIC GRASP OF SEXUAL POLITICS - THIS PROVED WRONG . APART FROM A MINORITY OF GAY MEN WHO HAD MADE SOME EFFORT TO TACKLE THEIR OWN SEXISM , THE BULK WERE EITHER AGGRESSIVELY DEFENSIVE , OR BLISSFULLY UNAWARE OF THEIR OWN OPPRESSIVE ROLE IN A PATRIARCHIAL SOCIETY . THE ANALYSIS OF MANY OF THESE MEN WAS THE MOST SIMPLISTIC POSSIBLE - SINCE THEY WERE OPPRESSED BY A HETEROSEXUAL SOCIETY , ALL SEXUAL OPPRESSION WAS HETEROSEXUAL . PUT EVEN SIMPLER, IF THEY DID NOT RELATE SEXUALLY TO WOMEN , THEY COULD NOT OPPRESS THEM ! MANY APPEARED DISCONCERTED AT THE LARGE NUMBER OF WOMEN PRESENT , PERPLEXED BY THE INCLUSION OF A BLOCK WORKSHOP ON PATRIARCHY AND INCREASINGLY RESENTFUL AT THE CHALLENGE TO THEIR IDEAS . MOST OF THE WOMEN , IN TURN , WERE RED-  
-UCED TO FRUSTRATED FURY BY THE IGNORANCE AND/OR MISOGYNY THEY ENCOUNTERED IN THE WORKSHOP .

THOSE WOMEN WHO HAD ALREADY BEEN DUBIOUS ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN A MIXED CONFERENCE HAD THEIR WORST SUSPICIONS CONFIRMED . FROM THIS POINT ON , MOST OF THE SESSIONS , WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE WORKSHOP ON 'WORK' AND THE PLENARY , WERE DIVIDED INTO SEPERATE WOMEN ONLY AND ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY , MEN ONLY WORKSHOPS .

DISCUSSION IN THE WOMEN'S WORKSHOP LED TO THE FORMATION OF AN 'ACTION FOR LESBIAN MOTHERS' GROUP - A MUCH NEEDED DEVELOPEMENT . THE OVERALL MOOD WAS ONE OF ANGER , AND THIS MEANT THAT MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GAY MEN AND WOMEN , AND THE UNDESIRABILITY OF WORKING IN A MIXED MOVEMENT . THERE WAS , HOWEVER, NO DISCUSSION OF THE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES AMONG LESBIANS THEMSELVES E.G. THE VERY DIFFERENT APPROACHES OF LESBIAN SEPERATISTS AND SOCIALIST LESBIANS.

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE , MANY OTHERWISE ISOLATED WOMEN ESTABLISHED CONTACT WITH OTHER LESBIANS , THE CONFERENCE GAVE A GRANT TOWARDS THE LESBIAN CONFERENCE , AND THE PLENARY VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY TO AFFILIATE TO THE ANTI-AMENDMENT CAMPAIGN AND THE WOMEN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE CAMPAIGN . HOWEVER THE 1983 CONFERENCE ORGANISERS WILL HAVE AN UPHILL STRUGGLE TO PERSUADE MANY OF THE WOMEN TO ATTEND ANOTHER MIXED CONFERENCE .



## REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP : "STRUCTURES FOR DEVELOPEMENT "

INITIALLY , DETAILED ATTENTION WAS GIVEN TO THE PRESENT STRUCTURES , PARTICULARLY THE TWO DUBLIN-BASED 'NATIONAL' ORGANISATIONS . THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT , WHATEVER THEIR ORIGINAL INTENTIONS , THE ORGANISATIONS HAD GRAVE 'IN-BUILT' DEFECTS , AND HAD ALSO DEVELOPED OTHERS . SPECIFICALLY , IT WAS AGREED THAT :-

- : THEIR HIERARCHIAL RIGID STRUCTURES ARE ALIENATING BOTH TO THE CASUAL AND THE COMMITTED MEMBERS.
- : THEY HAD DONE LITTLE OR NOTHING TO RAISE THE VERY LOW GAY AWARENESS OF MOST OF THEIR MEMBERS.
- : THEY HAD DONE NOTHING OBSERVABLE TO OVERCOME THE FREQUENTLY APPALLING SEXISM OF A GREAT MANY OF THEIR MEMBERS.
- : THEY HAD GREATLY OVER-FOCUSSED THEIR ENERGIES IN PROPERTY ACQUISITION AND EMBELLISHMENT .
- : IN BOTH , THE DISCO WAS THE ONLY CONSTANT FACTOR - OTHER ACTIVITIES SEEMED EPHEMERAL .
- : VERY LITTLE SENSE OF SUPPORTIVENESS WAS GENERATED BETWEEN THE MEMBERS .

DESPITE THIS GENERAL AGREEMENT , THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT ON WHETHER OR NOT THESE ORGANISATIONS COULD REALLY COME TO SERVE THE GAY COMMUNITY . MANY FELT THAT THE STRUCTURAL FAULTS WERE IRREDEEMABLE AND THAT THE ORGANISATIONS SHOULD BE IGNORED . OTHERS FELT THAT VERY CONSIDERABLE EXPERTISE AND RESOURCES COULD BE REDIRECTED , AND THAT IT WOULD BE VALUABLE IF PEOPLE WORKED WITHIN THE ORGANISATIONS AIMING SPECIFICALLY TO ELIMINATE THE ABOVE DEFECTS .

DURING THE DISCUSSION IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT THE 'SPLIT' BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONAL GROUPS WAS UNIMPORTANT , AND THAT IT WAS IRRELEVANT WHETHER OR NOT THEY REJOINED . IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT THE OVERALL NATIONAL 'UMBRELLA' GROUP (PROPOSED AT LAST YEAR'S CONFERENCE ) WOULD JUST ADD ANOTHER LEVEL TO THE HIERARCHY AND THAT THE PROPOSAL SHOULD BE IGNORED .

THERE WAS MUCH DISCUSSION ABOUT , AND ADMIRATION FOR , THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND STRUCTURE OF THE CORK GAY COLLECTIVE . IT WAS GENERALLY FELT THAT THE COLLECTIVE MODEL OFFERED THE MOST PROMISING WAY FORWARD . THE MODEL INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING ATTRIBUTES :-

- : AN OPEN NON-HIERARCHIAL , UN BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURE .
- : AN INHERENT FLEXIBILITY IN THE GROUP'S METHODS AND AIMS .
- : A STRUCTURE THAT IS INHERENTLY EQUAL AND ALSO NON-SEXIST .
- : A COMMITMENT TO THE GROWTH IN GAY AWARENESS FOR ALL MEMBERS .
- : AN EFFECTIVE SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORK FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL .

IT WAS ALSO NOTED THAT PERMANENCE WAS NOT AN ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTE OF SUCH A GROUP , AND ALSO THAT SEVERAL COLLECTIVES , FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES , OR FOR SPECIFIC INTEREST GROUPS , MIGHT BE THE MOST VALUABLE OUTCOME .

IT WAS FINALLY NOTED WITH APPROVAL THAT 4 GROUPS WERE ALREADY BEING FORMED AS THE CONFERENCE PROCEEDED ; THE DUBLIN GAY COLLECTIVE ; THE GAYS AND ALCOHOLISM GROUP ; THE GAYS AND TRADE UNION GROUP AND THE ACTION FOR LESBIAN MOTHERS GROUP .



WORKSHOP REPORT :

GAYS AND WORK

THIS WORKSHOP WAS ATTENDED BY ABOUT 25 LESBIANS AND GAY MEN.

WE STARTED BY INTRODUCING OURSELVES AND GIVING SOME DETAILS OF OUR SITUATION AT WORK.

WE THEN TALKED ABOUT COMING OUT AT WORK AND WHETHER OR NOT EACH OF US WAS OUT AT WORK. QUITE A FEW OF US ARE OUT, WHILE OTHERS FELT THAT THEY COULD NOT COME OUT BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS IT COULD LEAD TO.

THERE WERE CLEAR DIFFERENCES AMONG US IN OUR FEELINGS ABOUT COMING OUT AT WORK. IT WAS CLEAR THAT PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS, OTHER THAN TEACHERS, FELT MORE SECURE ABOUT COMING OUT. THEY COULD NOT SO EASILY BE SACKED AND THIS LEADS TO A GREATER SENSE OF SECURITY AT WORK. NONE HAD ANY ILLUSIONS THAT COMING OUT WOULD NOT AFFECT THEM AT WORK. IF IT DID NOT LEAD TO A CLEAR ATTACK ON JOB SECURITY, IT COULD LEAD TO DISCRIMINATION IN PROMOTION OR JOB PROSPECTS, WHICH COULD BE DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY AND FIGHT AGAINST.

THOSE WORKING IN PRIVATE BUSINESS FELT MUCH LESS WILLING TO COME OUT AT WORK. IT WAS SAID THAT IT COULD LEAD TO BEING SACKED AND MANY WERE UNSURE TO WHAT EXTENT THOSE WORKING WITH THEM WOULD FIGHT ON THEIR BEHALF.

THE TEACHER AMONG US EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TO COME OUT AT WORK, BOTH BECAUSE THE MANAGEMENT IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, AND BECAUSE MANY WOULD SHOUT THE HOARY OLD MYTHS OF 'CHILD MOLESTER' AND SO ON. HE WASN'T SURE HIS UNION WOULD BE SYMPATHETIC IN SUCH A SITUATION. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THIS SITUATION FACES MANY WORKERS IN SERVICES EFFECTIVELY CONTROLLED BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, SUCH AS EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES.

THE WOMEN AMONG US FELT SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES AT WORK. ONE WOMAN SAID THAT SHE FELT SURE COMING OUT WOULD LEAD TO GREATER SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON THE , TO PUT IT CRUDELY, 'ALL A LESBIAN WOMAN NEEDS IS A GOOD MAN TO CURE HER' VIEW. THE WOMEN GENERALLY FELT A GREAT DEAL OF PRESSURE AND DISCRIMINATION AT WORK AS WOMEN AND MOST HAD DECIDED THAT THEY COULD NOT AFFORD TO COME OUT.

WE THEN WENT ON TO DISCUSS WHETHER OR NOT IT WAS A GOOD THING TO COME OUT AT WORK. ALL AGREED IT WAS AND THOSE NOT OUT AT WORK WOULD BE IF THEY FELT MORE SUPPORT.

IT WAS SAID THAT NOT COMING OUT AT WORK LEADS TO GREAT STRAIN IN TRYING TO KEEP UP A 'STRAIGHT IMAGE'. FICTITIOUS HETEROSEXUAL PARTNERS HAD TO BE INVENTED, YOU HAD TO GRIN AND BEAR WITH ANTI-GAY JOKES AND COMMENTS; YOU COULDN'T EASILY COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS AT WORK ON LIFE ON LIFE OUTSIDE WORK.

IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT WE ALL NEEDED SMALL SUPPORT GROUPS OF OTHER GAY WOMEN AND MEN TO HELP US AND GIVE US SUPPORT IN OUR LIVES GENERALLY, BUT PARTICULARLY AT WORK. BEING OPEN AND OUT AS GAY COULD NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED ALONE. COMING OUT AT WORK INVOLVED NOT ONLY THE STATEMENT "I AM GAY", BUT ALSO THE BRINGING OF OUR GAY LIVES OUTSIDE WORK INTO THE WORKPLACE. THIS MEANS, FOR EXAMPLE, TALKING ABOUT WHAT WE DO DURING THE WEEKEND WHEN OUR STRAIGHT COLLEAGUES TALK ABOUT THEIR WEEKEND ACTIVITIES. TALKING ABOUT OUR LOVERS AND PARTNERS WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT THEIR PARTNERS.



IN A NUTSHELL , BEING BLATANTLY GAY AT WORK IN THE WAY THEY ARE BLATANTLY HETERSEXUAL . TO BE OUT IN THIS WAY WE NEED FIRSTLY , THE HELP OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS , TO TALK ABOUT HOW WE FEEL , THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED , TO BUILD STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE , AS A REFUGE IN WEAKNESS. SECONDLY WE NEED TO MAKE OUR LEGAL SITUATION STRONGER AND THIS BROUGHT US ONTO THE ISSUE OF TRADE UNIONS AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

A SHORT HISTORY WAS GIVEN OF TRADE UNION ACTIVITY TO DATE , THE RESPON RESPONSES SENT BY UNIONS IN REPLY TO THE NGF QUESTIONNAIRE , THE STRUGGLE TO HAVE THE IRISH FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS ADOPT A PRO-GAY POSITION , BACKED BY THE MEMBERSHIP IN THE FACE OF OPPOSITION FROM THE EXECUTIVE , AND THE PROCESS OF HAVING A PRO-GAY POSITION ADOPTED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICES UNION (LGPSU) .

THE POSITION AT THAT TIME WAS THAT EITHER OR BOTH IFUT AND LGPSU WOULD BE FORWARDING RESOLUTIONS TO THE FORTHCOMING IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS CONFERENCE IN BELFAST , CALLING ON THE ICTU TO BACK THE RIGHTS OF GAY WORKERS. THE IMMEDIATE TASK WAS TO ORGANISE LOBBYING OF DELEGATES ATTENDING THE WORKSHOP TO BACK IT .

IT WAS AGREED THAT THE CORK GAY COLLECTIVE WOULD PRODUCE A LEAFLET IN FAVOUR OF THE MOTION , THAT NIGRA WOULD ORGANISE A FRINGE MEETING ON THE ISSUE IF IT WAS FELT NECESSARY , AND THAT SOME OF US WOULD TRAVEL TO BELFAST TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE .

THE ICTU CONFERENCE OVERWHELMINGLY PASSED THE RESOLUTION . ALTHOUGH THIS ADVANCE SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED , THE BRITISH TUC HAS NOT YET ADOPTED A CLEARLY PRO-GAY POSITION. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THIS WOULD BE ONLY THE FIRST , LARGE STEP ON THE ROAD . IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO MAKE THIS RESOLUTION WORK IN PRACTICE.

IT WAS SAID THAT THIS WOULD REQUIRE THE PASSING OF RESOLUTIONS AT SECTION , BRANCH AND NATIONAL LEVEL BY MORE INDIVIDUAL UNIONS. IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO CONVINCE UNION OFFICERS TO FIGHT FOR THE INCLUSION OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSES IN WORKPLACE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS . IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO KEEP PUSHING THE ICTU TO DEMAND AMENDMENT OF THE UNFAIR DISMISSALS ACT ETC. TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF GAY WORKERS.

THIS IS A TASK FOR ACTIVE TRADE UNIONISTS , CLEARLY COMMITTED TO THE HEALTH AND STRENGTH OF THEIR UNIONS . IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT TRADE UNIONS HAVE A BUREAUCRACY , THAT THERE ARE DEBATING RULES ETC. TO BE MASTERED , THAT THEY ARE NOT ALWAYS AS DEMOCRATIC AS WE WOULD LIKE THEM TO BE . IT WAS SAID THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO PRESENT THE SITUATION OF GAYS AT WORK AS AN ISSUE OF WORKERS' RIGHTS IN LANGUAGE THAT TRADE UNIONISTS COULD UNDERSTAND.

THERE WAS AN APPEAL TO ALL LESBIANS AND AGY MEN TO JOIN THEIR UNION AND BECOME INVOLVED NOT SIMPLY FOR WHAT WE COULD ACCOMPLISHED BUT BECAUSE THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE COLLECTIVE STRENGTH OF WORKING PEOPLE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE POWER AND ARBITRARY DECISIONS OF MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYERS.

IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT WE AS INDIVIDUALS NEED NOT NECESSARILY BE THE PERSONS PROPOSING THE RESOLUTIONS AT UNION MEETINGS ; THOUGHTS BEST THAT WE SHOULD BE . SYMPATHETIC MEMBERS E.G. WOMEN ACTIVE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AT WORK COULD BE APPROACHED AND ASKED TO PUT FORWARD RESOLUTIONS.



GAYS AT WORK CONTD..

FINALLY WE SPOKE ABOUT UNEMPLOYMENT AFFECTING MANY GAY PEOPLE .  
WE AGREED TO PROPOSE TO THE PLENARY SESSION THAT THE NATIONAL GAY  
CONFERENCE SHOULD SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S MARCH FOR DECENT JOBS.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS PASSED.

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WORKSHOP REPORT : GAYS AND THE POLICE

THE WORKSHOP WAS , TO SAY THE LEAST , QUITE ANGRY THOUGH THE ANGER WAS DIRECTED AT EACH OTHER RATHER THAN THE POLICE . THE N.G.F. TOOK A HAMMERING FROM MOST PRESENT ON HOW THEY LET DOWN GAY PEOPLE OVER THE CHARLES SELF MURDER INVESTIGATION . I SHOULD'NT WONDER WHEN THE N.G.F. LOOK ON THE COPS AS FRIENDS - A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF WHAT HAPPENS TO GAY LIBERALS SO EAGER TO BE ACCEPTED BY THE STATUS QUO .

THE SORRY FACT IS THAT THE COPS ARE STILL BUILDING UP THEIR FILES IN THE 26 COUNTIES SINCE THE CHARLES SELF MURDER , AND IN THE 6 COUNTIES SINCE KINCORA . PEOPLE ON THE GAY SCENE WILL TELL YOU THIS HAPPENS APPROX. EVERY 5 OR 10 YEARS .

MOST OF THE PEOPLE AT THE WORKSHOP WERE WELL UP ON THEIR RIGHTS AND QUITEUSED TO COPS HARRASSING THEM . BUT WHAT CAME OUT WAS THE NEED TO EDUCATE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS ON THEIR RIGHTS AND TO REALISE THAT THE COPS ARE NOT DEMI-GODS .

THE ATTITUDE OF THE ESTABLISHED GAY GROUPS PROVED THE NEED FOR A GAY GROUP NOT INFLUENCED BY MATERIAL NEEDS .



WORKSHOP REPORT : GAYS AND THE MEDIA

THE WORKSHOP ON GAYS AND THE MEDIA CONSISTED OF A DISCUSSION ON THE GENERAL ASPECTS AND WAS INCONCLUSIVE AS A RESULT . DUE TO A LARGE WOMEN'S WORKSHOP AND THE GAYS AND THE POLICE WORKSHOP, ONLY A SMALL NUMBER ATTENDED THIS WORKSHOP .

THERE WAS A DISCUSSION ON THE BASIC PROBLEM OF THE MEDIA IN IRELAND - THAT IT IS CONTROLLED BY A SMALL NUMBER OF ULTRA - CONSERVATIVE INDIVIDUALS WHICH MAKES ACCESS DIFFICULT . THE ABSENCE OF ANY RADICAL PRESS OR TELEVISION/RADIO MEANS THAT UNTIL SUCH OUTLETS EXIST , THE GAY COMMUNITY WILL CONTINUE TO FIND ACCESS TO THE CONSERVATIVE MEDIA VERY DIFFICULT . THERE WERE SUGGESTIONS THAT WE SHOULD DELIBERATELY TONE DOWN OUR VIEWS AND LIVES IN ORDER TO GET SOME COVERAGE BUT THIS SUGGESTION WAS LARGELY REJECTED .

THERE WAS GENERAL FRUSTRATION ABOUT THIS WHOLE ISSUE . SOME EXPERIENCES OF GAYS AND THE BRITISH MEDIA WERE RECOUNTED , BUT THESE WERE UNFORTUNATELY LARGELY INAPPLICABLE TO THE IRISH SITUATION .

THE OTHER MAIN TOPIC OF DISCUSSION CENTRED AROUND WHAT REFERENCE THERE WAS TO GAY ISSUES IN THE MEDIA IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR . THESE WERE LARGELY UNFAVOURABLE AND REACTIONARY . THE COVERAGE OF THE KINCORA AFFAIR WAS PARTICULARLY BIASED WITH NORMALLY UNBIGOTED JOURNALISTS JUMPING ON THE BAND WAGON OF SENSATIONALISM . THIS WHOLE AFFAIR AND ITS MEDIA COVERAGE HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY DAMAGING FOR AGYS IN NORTHERN IRELAND . THE OTHER MAIN ISSUE WHICH AFFECTED GAYS WAS THE COVERAGE OF THE MURDER OF CHARLES SELF , THOUGH THE HOMOPHOBIA WAS LESS BLATANT . A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF COVERAGE HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE GAY DEFENCE COMMITTEE'S PUBLIC MEETING AND PICKETS , BUT THIS ACTION HAD BEEN LARGELY IGNORED . THE SMALL COVERAGE GIVEN TO THE CONFERENCE ITSELF , DESPITE COMPREHENSIVE PUBLICITY FROM THE ORGANISERS , WAS ALSO DEPLORED . FINALLY , THE BANNING OF GAY NEWS BY THE IRISH CENSORSHIP BOARD WAS CONDEMNED AND A GENERAL MOTION ON THIS WAS UNANIMOUSLY PASSED AT THE CLOSING SESSION .

THERE WAS A GENERAL FEELING OF ANGER AND FRUSTRATION TOWARDS THE MEDIA FROM THOSE AT THIS WORKSHOP , PARTICULARLY AS CHANGING THE EXISTING SITUATION IS VERY DIFFICULT AS LONG AS THE MEDIA REMAINS CONTROLLED BY CONSERVATIVE IDEOLOGIES .



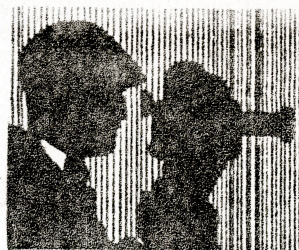
# FINANCIAL REPORT

<u>CASH IN</u>		<u>CASH OUT</u>	
BALANCE FROM		POSTERS	£150
CORK CONFERENCE	£150	POSTAGE	£105
		MUSIC EQUIPMENT	£ 50
BENEFITS	£245	BENEFITS : WINE,	
		COFFEE, FOOD	£ 60
REGISTRATION	£335	FILM/VIDEOS	£ 95
		REGISTRATION	£ 20
FILM RECEIPTS	£75	BODY POLITIC &	
		LESBIAN INCITER	
MISC.	£13.22	(POSTAGE ONLY)	£ 32
		LESBIAN CONFERENCE	
		GRANT	£100
		AFFILIATION FEES :	
		ANTI-AMENDMENT	
		CAMPAIGN	£ 10
		RIGHT TO CHOOSE	
		CAMPAIGN	£ 10
		REPORT AND MISC.	£ 46
	<u>£818.22</u>		<u>£678</u>
		BANK CHARGES	£ 15.05
BALANCE	£124.95	TOTAL	<u>£693.05</u>
STERLING TRANSFER	<u>£111.97</u>		

- \* WE SUGGEST APPROACHING THE NGF AND OTHER GAY ORGANISATIONS FOR DONATIONS TOWARDS THE 1983 CONFERENCE
- \* IT IS ADVISABLE TO HOLD FUND-RAISING BENEFITS AS SOO AS POSSIBLE ..
- \* WE RECOMMEND A DEPOSIT ACCOUNT INSTEAD OF A CURRENT ACCOUNT IN ORDER TO SAVE ON BANK CHARGES AND GAIN INTEREST.



# G. A. A.



## REVIEW

A workshop on gays and alcoholism was held in Trinity College on Saturday, 19th July '82, as part of the National Gay Conference. Those who attended included eight members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Aspects of the links between homosexuality and the disease of alcoholism were discussed.

It was generally agreed that alcoholism and drug addiction penetrate deeply into gay society throughout the world, Ireland being no exception. It was felt too that the facilities for dealing with same were heterosexually orientated and had an unfortunate lack of understanding with respect to homosexuality. All commentators agreed that there was a great need for co-operation between all sections of the gay community to root out this disease and to help those affected to recover.

Statistics quoted showed that 30% of gays were probably alcoholic. The disease itself is now officially regarded as being the third greatest killer in the world.

The recovering alcoholics present felt that while the present availability of Alcoholics Anonymous meetings served the primary purpose of helping people to stay 'off the drink', there was room for a gay orientated meeting, which could be held on a weekly basis, at which gays could speak openly and honestly about themselves without fear of retaliation.

A decision was taken to form a Gay A.A. group, which has already made efforts to provide a venue for meetings. It was also announced that the LONDON G.A.A. groups were willing to give any support they could.

At this stage there would seem to be a great prospect of success for such a venture and those involved wish to express their thanks to the Organising Committee of the NGC. Further information on the GAA meetings may be had from TAF at 710608 during their hours of work.

In a recent 'In Dublin' review of the film 'The Wall' the reviewer opened by saying "There are three kinds of shit....". I wonder if that reviewer had seen 'Partners' before he wrote that? 'Partners' would very definitely fit into the last and worst kind of shit. Were I to mimick that writers style I might say that there are three kinds of cliché: bad cliché, misdirected cliché and poisonous cliché. 'Partners' again receives the third prize.

The film really only has one cliché which lasts its entire length. That is "gay men are effeminate and therefore weak, brainless, depressive and objects (not participants) in sex. The plot, such as it is, centres on two police detectives, one gay (John Hurt) and one who is not (Ryan O'Neill). Together they pose as a gay couple in a gay area to investigate a gay murder. You can tell it's gay because almost everyone wears lavender something or other and suffers from acute broken wrist. This effeminacy is depicted throughout the film as a joke and those 'suffering' from it (every gay in this case) are 'dumb women in mens bodies'.

Once settled in their cover Ryan O'Neill (the real man) sets about investigation of the murder. John Hurt (having no sense at all) is left at home to cook dinners, clean clothes and iron underpants. At no point in the film does the gay character show any signs of being a real person outside his mannerisms or kitchen.

This film is blatantly oppressive. Not just in its dehumanising of gays but also because of its implied disregard for women. The weakness and lack of intelligence in gay men is depicted as coming from their effeminate side. This womanly influence on their character makes them the way they are. Sexists and queer bashers unite. If you must find out for yourself what this film is really like I suggest you bring a sick bag.

BILL FOLEY.



# Destroy our dossiers demand gays in Self

IRISH gays plan to re-open the controversy over the brutal slaying last January of RTE set designer Charles Self.

Next week they will be writing to the Taoiseach, Mr Haughey, demanding the release or destruction of hundreds of personal photographs, files and fingerprint specimens collected by the Murder Squad during its four-month investigation into the crime.

For they claim that the files, compiled after interviews with well over 700 homosexuals, are being retained to build up a "Big Brother" style dossier on the gay community in Ireland.

And at their national conference in Dublin next weekend, the gays will also be demanding an end to what they describe as "a purge" of homosexual welfare workers in the North, following the Kinvara children's home scandal.

## Victimised

They claim that capable and responsible residential care workers are being "victimised" because of their sexual orientation.

But one of the main topics for discussion at the conference, which will be

the case as an excuse to compile a dossier on homosexuals.

The object of raising the matter at the conference, he explained, was to create a "united front" of gay groups and organisations to fight the case at the highest Government level - starting with letters to the Taoiseach and each of his Ministers.

Meanwhile, sources within the gay rights organisation claimed last week that homosexuals from north of the Border were being interviewed in Dublin by Gardai as part of the continuing investigation into the Self killing.

## Witch hunt

But detectives involved in the murder probe were unavailable for comment.

The National Gay Conference, which is being held at Trinity College Dublin, is also to debate what is described as a "witch hunt" of homosexuals.

campaign" in the wake of the Kinvara scandal, gays whose standard of work and behaviour were above reproach were now being victimised.

"We strongly object to

sexual orientation being taken into consideration at all in this matter," he said. "If this is to be the case, heterosexual males should not be allowed to work with girls or women."

He added: "Besides, if every gay involved in this type of work were to be withdrawn, the entire child care system would collapse."

He said the aim of the

DUBLIN, *Irish Press, Tue '82*  
**Gay conference**

MAY I take this opportunity of informing your readers that the second National Gay Conference will take place next weekend, June 18-20, in Trinity College and will continue the discussion on gay liberation in Ireland initiated at the first conference in Connolly Hall, Cork, last year and attended by 250 lesbians and gay men.

The weekend workshops, films, socials and bookshop are open to all interested in attending and accommodation will be provided for those people

necessary because of recent events such as, the Charles Self murder investigation; the implications of the media coverage in the Kinvara affair; the proposed Constitutional amendment and the effect such an amendment may have on efforts to change the present laws criminalising homosexual acts between consenting men; and finally, the decision by the 17,000 member local government and public services union to call for a repeal of the present laws and the amendment of the 1977 Unfair Dismissals Act to provide protection for gay workers.

PAT MCCARTHY  
National Gay Conference  
Committee,  
P.O. Box 1076.

• Charles Self - his murder led to files and fingerprints being kept on gays.

conference debate would be to press for legislation to protect the jobs of homosexuals in much the same way as the present laws protected the rights of women.





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The second National Gay Conference, which was held last weekend in Trinity College Dublin and attended by over 200 lesbians and gay men, concluded with the adoption of several resolutions. These included the passing, by an overwhelming majority, of a motion of support for and affiliation to, the Woman's Right To Choose Campaign and the Anti-Amendment Campaign. The conference also condemned the recent decision by the censorship board to ban Gay News, as another example of the institutionalised oppression of lesbians and gay men in this country.

Workshops were held on various topics of relevance to gays, including one on gays at work and in trade unions. This workshop decided to set up a 'Gays at Work' group, and called on the trade union movement to press for the extension of the Unfair Dismissals Act to cover sexual orientation. The conference also decided to support 'The People's March for Decent Jobs'. The women's workshop set up an 'Action for Lesbian Mothers' group, to support the many lesbian mothers who are struggling to retain custody of their children. It was decided to hold a Lesbian Conference in the Autumn and the conference voted to give £100 towards its organisation. The Conference also demanded that the Northern Irish Gay Rights Association (NIGRA) recognise the right of women to use their premises autonomously every Friday or Saturday night with sole control over the funds raised on that night.

Conference also noted the recent decision of the European Court of Human Rights, condemning the laws against male homosexual in Northern Ireland, (identical to the oppressive laws in the Republic) and the subsequent decision of the Westminster government to extend the English 1967 Sexual Offences Act to the North. It was demanded that the law be brought into line with those governing heterosexual relations, rather than with one which continued discrimination against gays by imposing a higher age of consent and other inequalities. It also demanded the extension of the 1967 Abortion act to Northern Ireland, and called on the government of the Irish Republic to provide the same facilities for its citizens.

The Conference ended with the decision to hold a Recall Meeting in three months time, for which the Steering Committee will prepare a report of this year's conference. This Meeting will consider the report and decide on the time, venue etc. of next year's conference. Further information can be obtained from the N.G.C.S.C., c/o p.o. box 1076, Dublin 1.



## NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE '82

TCD 18-20 JUNE

The Second NGC being held in Trinity College from Friday 18th June to Sunday 20th June hopes to continue the discussion initiated at the first conference. It will involve gay men and lesbians in discussion, film and social events over the weekend.

Workshops include gay identity and coming out; gay sexuality and health; gays and alcoholism, gays in a patriarchal society and a united gay movement. Film and videos over the weekend include "Town Bloody Hall", a filmed debate with Desmond Morris, Germaine Greer, Lil Thompson and others, and "Watch out, there's a queer about".

The video "Watch out there's a queer about" is a spoof on cadet training in Britain on identifying a homosexual. Made by a London group, it will be shown during

the Saturday open workshop as part of discussions on gays and the law in Ireland. Videos of the London Weekend TV series will also be shown including the much acclaimed BBC's "Coming Out" programme.

Registration begins on Friday evening at 7.00pm - 10.00pm in Room 6, Trinity College (entrance in the Archway as you enter the main gate in Dame Street). This will be followed by a reception and showing of the film "Town Bloody Hall" at 8.30pm. Registration forms (see end of this NGF Newsletter) should be completed with fee enclosed and returned as early as possible to NGC Steering Committee, PO Box 1076, GPO Dublin 1 or with NGF. A late night special is planned for Saturday evening and a picnic on Sunday lunchtime. Accommodation will be provided for everyone wishing to attend from outside Dublin.



# NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE

PRESS RELEASE.

WE WOULD LIKE TO NOTIFY YOUR READERS THAT A MAJOR CONFERENCE WILL TAKE PLACE ON THE WEEKEND OF FRIDAY 18TH-SUNDAY 20TH JUNE, IN TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN. AND IS OPEN TO GAY PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

IT WILL BE THE SECOND NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE, CONTINUING THE WORK AND DISCUSSION INITIATED AT LAST YEAR'S CONFERENCE IN

CONNOLLY HALL, CORK. WHICH WAS ADDRESSED BY PROMINENT SPEAKERS FROM IRELAND AND THE U.K., AND ATTENDED BY MORE THAN 250 LESBIANS AND GAY MEN.

THE WEEKEND EVENTS WILL CONSIST OF WORKSHOPS, DISCUSSION GROUPS, BOOKSTALL, FILM, VIDEO AND A LATE NIGHT SOCIAL.

ACCOMMODATION IS BEING PROVIDED FOR THOSE ATTENDING FROM OUTSIDE DUBLIN.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND A BOOKING FORM CAN BE OBTAINED FROM;

NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE,  
P.O. BOX. 1076,  
DUBLIN 1.



# NATIONAL

# GAY

# CONFERENCE

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN JUNE 18 - 20

The first National Gay Conference was held last year in Connolly Hall, Cork. This year's conference in Trinity College Dublin, which has been organised by independent lesbians and gay men, hopes to continue, rather than repeat, the discussion initiated at that conference.

In the past year there have been many events which directly affect us. These include the formation of new groups throughout the country, the continuing attempts to reform the present anti-gay laws, the opening of the Dublin Women's Centre, Liz Noonan's election campaigns, the formation of the Gay Defence Committee, and Gays Against Imperialism. These gains were more than balanced by the continued discrimination against lesbian mothers, the homophobic media coverage of the Kincora case, the murder of Charles Self and subsequent Garda harassment of gay men and finally the lack of a united approach from the gay movement.

These, and many other issues, will be discussed at the conference. It will be structured around four main workshops, and suggestions are welcome for the open workshop session.

Advance registration and details of accommodation requirements would be appreciated as early as possible.

## FRI.18

7-11pm.

Registration, Reception and Films.  
Building No. 6, Trinity College.

## SAT.19

10am.

Opening coffee session.

11am.-1pm.

Coming Out/Personal  
Liberation.

2-4pm.

Gays in a patriarchal  
society.

4.30-6.30pm.

Open Workshops.

Followed by Film/Video/  
Bookstall.

8pm.

Social Event.

## SUN.20

10am-12pm.

Gays at work/trade unions.

12-1.30pm.

Picnic.

1.30-3.30pm.

Structures for development.

3.30-5.30pm.

Closing session.

NAME

ADDRESS (OPTIONAL)

DO YOU NEED ACCOMMODATION?

DO YOU NEED A CRECHE?

REGISTRATION FEE £3 WAGED £2 UNWAGED

NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE



N.G.C.S.C. ,  
P.O.Box 1076 ,  
Dublin 1 .

Dear Friend ,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Gay Conference Steering Committee . The conference recall meeting will take place on Saturday , Dec.4th in the J.C.R. , Trinity College from 10-5pm . The purpose of this meeting is to discuss this years conference , and to decide on the structure , time and venue of next year's .

We are preparing a conference report for this meeting , and to this end we would welcome any (fairly brief) comments you may wish to be included in the report i.e. views , criticisms , suggestions etc. . In particular isolated gays may like to include some comments on their general situation . Please send your contribution to us as quickly as possible - within the next two weeks to be included in the report .

We hope to hear from you and also to see you at the meeting . There will be a social arranged for the Saturday evening !

In gay solidarity ,

*Maura Moller*



CONTACT ADDRESSES

NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE,  
P.O. BOX 1076,  
DUBLIN 1.

DUBLIN GAY COLLECTIVE,  
P.O. BOX 1076,  
DUBLIN 1.

CORK GAY COLLECTIVE,  
C/O QUAY CO-OP,  
SULLIVAN QUAY,  
CORK.

NATIONAL GAY FEDERATION,  
HIRSCHFELD CENTRE, 10 FOWNES STREET,  
DUBLIN 2.

LIBERATION FOR IRISH LESBIANS (LIL),  
WOMEN'S CENTRE,  
DAME STREET,  
DUBLIN 2.

NORTHERN IRELAND GAY RIGHTS ASSOCIATION,  
4 UNIVERSITY STREET,  
BELFAST.

LESBIAN MOTHERS' GROUP,  
WOMEN'S CENTRE,  
DAME STREET,  
DUBLIN 2.

GAY TRADE UNION GROUP,  
C/O HIRSCHFELD CENTRE,  
10 FOWNES STREET UPPER,  
DUBLIN 2.

GAY ALCOHOLICS GROUP,  
C/O HIRSCHFELD CENTRE,  
10 FOWNES STREET UPPER,  
DUBLIN 2.

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WORKING ON THE CONFERENCE:

Conference Design Work	-	Declan Buckley
Photographs/Exhibition	-	Clodagh Boyd
Bookshop	-	Mary K., Turlach ('Bookworm' Derry)
Film/Videos	-	Johnny McEvoy
Steering Committee	-	Maura Molloy, Pat McCarthy, John Meeney, Pat McGrath
Contributions to Report:		Tom McClean, Chris Robson, Mick, Jerry