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CONTENTS

Page

FOR A SOCIALIST INTERVENTION IN GAY LIBERATION , by Dave Chamberlin, Los Angeles Branch; Casey, Oakland-Berkeley Branch; Ninure Saunders and Art Gursch, Chicago Branch	3
SOME CRITICISMS OF THE MEMO ON GAY LIBERATION , by Lee Artz, Detroit Branch	15
REPUDIATION OF THE BACHOFEN-MORGAN- ENGELS MATRIARCHAL THEORY OF SOCIAL ORIGINS , by R. Vernon, Brooklyn Branch, New York Local	17
THE FEMINIST PARTY PERSPECTIVE — 1973 , by Sudie, Los Angeles Branch; and Geb, San Francisco Branch	25

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FOR A SOCIALIST INTERVENTION IN GAY LIBERATION

by Dave Chamberlin, Los Angeles Branch;
Casey, Oakland-Berkeley Branch;
Ninure Saunders and Art Gursch, Chicago Branch

Introduction

The present radicalization, because of its unprecedented depth, has posed and continues to pose a whole number of important questions for revolutionaries. The question of gay liberation is one of the most difficult because the Marxist movement in general has dealt with it only in passing, never developing an entire analysis.

This contribution is intended to help our movement in developing its understanding of gay oppression and the movement for gay liberation. A fuller, more complete understanding will come through our experience in and observation of the gay movement.

In it we review the relationship of gay oppression to the rise of class society, a history of gay oppression, and the form this oppression takes. We then present a brief history of the gay movement, as well as the present stage, and develop a scientific socialist perspective outlining some of the basic historic tasks the gay movement must take up, the relationship of the gay movement to the general movement for socialism, and an orientation for the Socialist Workers Party to take towards it.

We relied heavily upon the contributions contained in the 1971 and, especially, 1972 party literary discussions, and a good deal of credit is due to the comrades that participated in it, as well as on the literature of the gay movement.

Scientific Knowledge on Human Sexuality

If it were true that no reliable evidence could be found in the worldwide body of anthropological data to show the occurrence of homosexual behavior in preliterate human culture, or among our close relatives in the evolutionary pattern of primates—that would not in itself suggest that such activity is "unnatural." It is a widely accepted observation that ". . . human sexual responses are not instinctive in the sense of being determined exclusively by the action of genes or chromazomes. On the contrary, from the first years of life every child is taught about sex, either directly or indirectly. And most significant is the fact that different societies teach different lessons in this regard." (*Patterns of Sexual Behavior*, by C. S. Ford and F. A. Beach, Harper ed., 1972, p. 2.)

And, we might add, most significant for this discussion is the fact that cultures such as that of the United States are a *minority* in the world which historically has had rigid patterns of proscription and intense inculcation of mass phobia against persons of the same gender engaging in sexual activity, or even persons of one sex adapting appearance or behavior by definition exclusively reserved for the other sex. The results have affected every institution, group, and individual including our party and each member.

In spite of the extreme sexual repression we only have to look at Kinsey's study of the sexual behavior of U. S.

males and females to find that homosexual experience is downright rampant in this country, among all classes and social strata.

Kinsey and his associates interviewed more than 8,000 American males and more than 7,000 American females in their studies: *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953) using a study design of extreme sophistication. It is by no means complete or free from bias: only whites were studied to give the most serious example. In spite of this limitation, their results have great significance. Following is a summary of some of their findings:

MALES

- 1) Fifty percent of all males are conscious of erotic responses to other males.
- 2) Thirty-seven percent of the total male population (2 out of every 5) has had at least one homosexual experience to the point of orgasm between adolescence and old age.
- 3) Eighteen percent have at least as much homosexual experience as heterosexual for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55.
- 4) Ten percent are more or less exclusively homosexual for at least three years between these ages.
- 5) Four percent are exclusively homosexual throughout their lives after adolescence.
- 6) Ten percent of *married* males between the ages of 16 and 25 are involved in some homosexual activity.

FEMALES

- 7) Twenty-eight percent of the female population is conscious of erotic responses to other females.
- 8) Thirteen percent reach orgasm through homosexual contact by their mid-forties.
- 9) Between 2 and 6 percent are more or less exclusively homosexual.

These scientists concluded that their data require thinking in terms of a gradual continuum between those who exhibit exclusively heterosexual and those who exhibit exclusively homosexual behavior. This data, repeatedly affirmed as basically accurate by independent analysts, alone establishes that:

- 1) There is a very strong human need for homosexual activity among the broad masses of Americans.
- 2) It is completely natural, like heterosexuality, since such a large proportion of the population wants it and engages in gay sex because they like it—it brings so much mutual pleasure that it is often worth the strongest social stigma and oppression that society has to offer.

The capitalist state has its entire social structure and ideology permanently mobilized to deny an important human *need* that has been *proven* to exist in spite of all the prejudice, fear, and violent oppression for a couple decades now.

By far the most common form of antigay prejudice is started on the belief that homosexuality is unnatural. So let us consider some facts.

As all of us know who had the chance to read the party literary discussion on gay liberation in 1971 and especially 1972, there is a significant amount of fact which shows convincingly that not only is gayness natural in the U.S. at least since the workers at the Indiana Sex Research Institute proved it, but it's been natural from the git. Equally as important such facts provide for other than a purely assertive basis for understanding the origins of sexual oppression and specifically gay oppression concurrent with the rise of the patriarchy and its monogamous nuclear family, and with it class society and resulting bourgeois ideology and sex morality. Ford and Beach, in the book quoted above, present anthropological data and analysis based on the cross-cultural study of 191 cultures all observed at first hand from Oceania, Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, and South America. They also examined the data on sexual behavior of 11 subclasses of mammals, from insectivoria through Rodentia to Primates (human, ape, monkey). Although the books and articles studied in this work number in the several thousands, making it unusually thorough, two decades have elapsed since its original publication and the gay liberation movement has since arisen, serving to emphasize that the task of objective study of the problem is in a relatively prenatal state (denial and distortion of facts and history of all oppressed sectors being necessary for bourgeois ideology). In spite of these limitations, their findings are considered valid and significant in the bourgeois academic community and the radical community alike. Here is a sample of their findings:

1) Societies in addition to the U.S. that disapprove of homosexuality. Out of 76 societies for which data on homosexual behavior was available, 28 (or 37 percent) reported homosexual activities for adults absent, rare, or secret: "Among all the societies in which adult homosexual activities are said to be very rare, definite and specific social pressure is directed against such behavior. The penalties run from the lighter sanction of ridicule to the severe threat of death" (page 129). Of course, the estimates of such activities would run considerably below actual incidence in light of the repression.

2) Societies that approve of some forms of homosexuality: "In 49 (64 percent) of the 76 societies other than our own for which information is available, homosexual activities of one sort or another are considered normal and socially acceptable and for certain members institutionalized homosexuality is that of the *berdachè* or *transvestite*" (page 130).

"In a few societies, however, this kind of sexual behavior, males engaging in anal intercourse instead of being confined to a relatively small number of individuals, is practiced by a large part of the population, and the relationship is more properly classified as a *liaison*" (page 131).

Sexism in the profession of anthropology, not surprisingly, is reflected in the disproportionate concentration on the data for males, putting into question the widely agreed upon conclusion that female homosexuality in mammals happens far less often. Almost all cultures studied are in transition toward patriarchy, or have essentially made it. Data directly dealing with female homo-

sexuality was available for only 17 of the 191 cultures, compared with all 76 for males.

3) Homosexuality in sub-human primates: "Inversion of the sexual role is common among animals of several species other than *homo sapiens*, and it is particularly frequent in infrahuman (apes and monkeys) primates" (page 134).

Ford and Beach summarize their findings on the nature of homosexuality as follows: ". . . we may say on the basis of the zoological evidence that human homosexual tendencies have a definite biological basis. Furthermore, and most important, there is little indication that these tendencies are restricted to a few deviant individuals. Instead they appear to exist in a large majority of both sexes, although overt homosexual behavior may not occur."

The Repression of Sexuality and the Rise of the Patriarchy

Scores of anthropological studies have shown that not only is homosexuality completely natural, but in societies where it is not repressed, sexuality in many forms and at a high frequency of occurrence is an important part of social experience from early childhood. In fact, childhood sex play is almost impossible to squelch, even in the most sex-repressive cultures, including our own.

Most important for our understanding of the material forces at work in the historical development of sexual repression is the fact that the degree of sexual freedom is directly related to the role of women in the majority of cases. Malinowski's studies of the Trobriand Islanders of Melanesia offers one example, as recorded in his book *The Sexual Life of Savages* (1929), Harvest Books, ed., 1969. This culture was matriarchal in the accepted sense, i.e., the maternal line of heredity succession and maternal clan arrangements. Malinowski describes the sexual activity of the children as beginning in early years with unregulated occurrence of capricious intercourse: frequent play with the genitals, oral stimulation being a "typical form of amusement" and so on. He neglects to indicate whether these amusements were practiced by children of the same sex, although his emphasis on the autonomy of their sexual and general behavior makes it hard to envision otherwise. He takes care to quote the Trobrianders' hostility to the "perversions" of anal intercourse and masturbation, often demonstrating his anti-gayness.

In Wilhelm Reich's *The Imposition of Sexual Morality*, which is largely devoted to quotes from and analysis of Malinowski's work, he points out that the attitudes toward sexuality of the youth is not simply tolerance, but institutionalized affirmation. This took the forms of: Bukumatula — the bachelors' and single women's houses used exclusively for sexual liaisons between adolescents; various traditional sexual rituals, including large groups containing adults engaging in open copulation.

The matriarchal social structure and relative sexual freedom of expression of the youth was confronted with the beginning development of patriarch characterized by: attendant monogamous patrilocal (wife follows husband to his village) marriages, incipient ownership by males of the means of production (canoes), and the emerging development of economic paternal right. Women were barred from positions of power in the tribe, land ownership, etc. For both male and female, marriage introduced

serious sexual inhibitions, but for the male, all was not so grim;

"Marriage brings with it a considerable yearly tribute in staple food, given to the husband by the wife's family. This obligation is perhaps the most important factor in the whole social mechanism of Trobriand society." (Malinowski, op. cit., p. 81, as quoted in Sex-Pol.)

Before we leave the Trobrianders to the fate of the encroaching missionaries (whose social function served to stamp out evidence of human evolution) we should take note of one more phenomenon which serves to complete the characterization of this society at the crossroads of matriarchy vs. patriarchy at one level of social organization, and primitive communism vs. an emerging class system based at the economic level. Only the chief is allowed to be polygamous, and since the traditional yearly tributes given by the wives' clans to the husband's clan applies for each of his wives, he thereby enriches his clan at the expense of other clans and also provides a basis for a hierarchy of clans.

The works of Briffault, Morgan, Malinowski, Ford and Beach, Kinsey and other researchers provide an adequate body of historical data. The works cited are meant only to be a representative sample, to enable the Marxist movement to extend its materialist analysis of the dialectical interrelationships governing the:

- 1) Development of the means of production.
- 2) The displacement of matriarchal social organization with the patriarchy, its attendant monogamous nuclear family, and the resultant oppression of women as a sex.
- 3) The elimination of primitive communalism and the rise of economic classes, and class exploitation, to include
- 4) The repression of human sexuality, especially in the most severe form, gay oppression.

Fortunately, an understanding of the first three which is already part of Marxist analysis is a prerequisite necessity for understanding the fourth. All four are necessary components of class consciousness. They embody what must be understood and acted upon in order to have a successful socialist revolution and the establishment of a *healthy* workers state.

It is an axiom of historical materialism that in general, social organization and ideology are utilitarian—they have a material basis and a functional, necessary purpose; that is, they are part of the political economy that governs the relations of production in the realm of consciousness, on the one hand, and commodities on the other.

The integration of sexual repression into the materialist analysis of history has been substantially carried forward from the foundations laid by Marx and Engels. The rise of the women's liberation movement enabled revolutionary Marxists to enrich their theory and program of action on the question of sexual oppression, just as the rise of the colonial revolution and the Black liberation movement contributed to a similar process on the question of national oppression. In each, a major part of our analysis dwelt on the institutional forms built by class society and especially capitalism, and the racist, sexist ideology practiced by these institutions.

We therefore want to take a look at the historical development of these institutions and the ideology of gay

oppression which accompanies the oppression of the broader continuum of human sexuality. From these we can begin to develop an understanding of the nature of gay oppression and its relation to class rule. Only then can we proceed to an understanding of the revolutionary dynamic of the gay liberation movement. Such an analysis of course is not based solely on anthropological data about human sexuality. Once it is recognized and understood that homosexuality was both a natural and frequent part of human sexual experience for a large part of the population of both sexes during that era of history when there was no *necessity* to repress it, then we can examine the patriarchal, class, and social structure to determine in what respects its characteristics are in contradiction with the free expression of sexuality, especially gay sexuality.

Reich described the transition from matriarchal to patriarchal social organization as follows: (from *The Imposition of Sexual Morality*)

- 1) The transfer of power from the woman to the man.
- 2) The transition from sexual freedom to marital ties.
- 3) The transition from sexual affirmation to sexual negation; from affirmation of premarital sexual activity to the demand of premarital chastity.
- 4) Finally, the most important point, the progressive division of society into exploitative upper groups and exploited lower groups.

The example of the Trobrianders cited above clearly demonstrates that the patriarchy *requires* the imposition of restrictions on sexuality in order for it to work. Premarital sexual freedom was in obvious contradiction with the sex morality imposed by marriage. The empirical evidence is abundant that homosexuality posed a serious threat since it is the most severely repressed form of sexual behavior outside of the contexts of the monogamous patriarchal family. Some aspects of sexuality were retained, depending on their utility—their economic necessity—their capacity, therefore for direct exploitation. All other forms and modes of sexuality not compatible with narrow, repressive goals of this institution were gradually repressed to one extent or another. It was to be expected within such a dialectic that those aspects which had no *direct* exploitative utility, engaged in purely for pleasure, were doomed by the rise of exploitation through the beginnings of consciously affected social structure for that purpose (at first occurring along the ragged edge of a scarcity economy). It was not only because homosexuality had no directly exploitable economic content that it was subjected to regulation, persecution and fought against to the point of attempted elimination, where possible. It was also because the free practice of gay sexuality could not coexist with the imposition of compulsory sex morality designed to, among other things, enslave women.

We already hold to the view that women were the first target of social organization for the purpose of the exploitation of labor through possession. The primary institution mechanism for doing it was the paternal family. We must add to this analysis that the repression of sexuality was necessary to the consolidation of male dominance and female oppression as a general tendency. The increasing level of productivity and the resulting drive for the private appropriation of social wealth that flowed from it provided the foundation for this development.

The rise of gay oppression therefore coincides with the historical stage of the patriarchy and its monogamous family, many of whose primary social functions are incompatible with or in direct conflict with homosexuality. The most important of these functions (as pointed out in the party literary discussion) are:

1) The social unit for the self-perpetuation of male dominance through the patriarchy and its unequal distribution of property. This is accomplished through transference of the heredity line from the mother to the father, then focusing on the production of males as the most important officially recognized function of the family. Males are offered the powerful material incentive in a general scarcity situation of property inheritance, to adhere to the principles of paternal authority and the family as the fathers' *private property*. Hence the imposition of chastity and monogamy on women to ensure orderly hereditary paternal control through the male offspring. Homosexuality conflicts with this function because it does not conform to and reinforce it. Thus it tends to be considered an evasion of responsibility to the entire society, since the dominant social group finds it necessary to make an identity between sex and reproduction for its own ends.

2) Maximum reproduction as an important economic function was imposed as a social duty. This flowed from the necessity to qualitatively increase production, and was limited only by the level of production itself. The recognition of copulation as the starting point of human reproduction was probably roughly coincident with the material need to show how to reproduce. It was objectively posed by the advancing level of productivity (female labor being largely responsible for those productive advances). The depreciation of the female role in reproduction and the assertion of the primacy of the male role often comes wrapped in the mysticism of male gods and glorification of the penis (complete with huge phallic monuments). This, in combination with paternal ancestry pressures not only for perpetuation of the family line but its extension.

It can be mentioned here that the development of religious mysticism to the point of institutionalization was also in its early stages in this historical epoch (run by the males, of course). The need to impose a compulsive sex morality upon a sex-free historical experience anchored in distant millenia was a task large enough to require a powerful ideological bludgeon in addition to the training/conditioning going on in the family. It dovetailed with the need to justify the rise of private property and classes, as had been long pointed out by historical materialism. More will be said about this institution later.

Homosexuality being a non-reproductive form of sex, and providing an important means of sexual fulfillment for many, it could not be corralled into, or even *next* to the monogamous nuclear family. It was thus branded as antisocial and pushed in the direction of the taboo (whose enforcement is one of the main functions of religious mysticism), a very handy category for behavior which threatened the desired social structure.

3) As the primary source of ideological training/conditioning, authoritarian paternal sex-role conditioning was necessary for the development of a class system of exploitation, and, as the case of the Trobrianders makes

graphically clear, the paternalization of the family was an important mechanism through which the unequal distribution of collectively produced goods was begun. The social acceptance of paternal ideology was essential for the successful utilization of the family as a means of acquiring property, and it is at the same time through the paternal family system that the ideology is instilled in children and reinforced in everyone.

Everyone with the first-hand experience of being raised in a nuclear family knows what a pervasive impact sex-role conditioning has. It's an important part of one's basic self-concept and limits the ability to perceive its oppressive social content.

The most basic, widely experienced, oldest primeval source of pleasure is direct, senses-stimulated pleasure-relieving hunger, and tactile stimuli and responses of the body and their mutual interaction, originating by oneself and by interacting physically with others. The complete repression of sexual expression in the very young begins to establish an anti-pleasure morality that in turn becomes a pillar of compulsive sex morality and the work ethic.

For both sexes it is built upon the alienation from one's own body that is pounded into each family member via the feces phobia, punishment for auto-erotic play, and erotic play with others especially of the same sex, general denial of knowledge of one's body, the irrational hiding of the genitals, and so on. These practices run so completely counter to human need that the restrictions are impossible to follow; their violation and constant police action of the parents ensures the establishment of a guilt syndrome that provides self-punishment, and an acquiescence to paternal authority.

The individual sex roles imposed within this context delineate rigid limitations of thought and behavior, capped off with sex uniforms, not leaving a hair untouched. Many years of role conditioning through rewards and punishment are applied to anchor self-identity to the mutually dependent real-man/real-woman images.

There are many aspects of social reality that women are not even supposed to *think* about; they are reserved for people with penii. The family ensures that female interests are crammed into the narrow canyons of service to males, reproduction, and child-rearing. Female self-worth in *dependent* on, in fact *defined* by a successful (child-producing) monogamous *heterosexual* love relationship. This is best accomplished in the framework of docility, self-effacement, chastity, dependency, and of course, exclusive heterosexuality. Expressions of strong emotions and affection compatible with the function of child-rearing are largely reserved for this role—for the male, of course, they are considered a weakness. As the new wave of feminism has graphically pointed out, female sexuality ended up at the bottom of the paternal family heap.

The real man is tough, aggressive, independent of all others, knowledgeable of worldly ways, and responsible for seeing that they continue as is. This requires that he engage in the ultimate paternal organization for the "protection" of "his" society and prove his manhood—the armed forces. The concrete ability of the ruling class to get workers to engage in the most extreme act of alienation—their

own destruction—hinges on successful male sex-role conditioning. Some of the last battles fought in Vietnam were almost wholly dependent on manhood role identity, since all of the other lies had been exposed by the men. Males who refuse to accommodate themselves to this role are sissies, cowards—in a word, they are queer. The rigid imposition of sex roles identifies any significant mode of behavior by one sex that is reserved for the other as queer. Lesbian-baiting of the women's liberation movement provides another example of this process at work.

Competition and the authoritarian mode of male behavior towards females becomes imbedded in the imposed sex morality, to the point where many of the surviving forms of heterosexuality are distorted in such a way that they themselves serve to reinforce competitiveness and the acceptance of male authority. The surviving element of pleasure is largely appropriated by males, one example being through the imposition of acceptable and unacceptable positions for copulation. The distortion and denial of both female and gay sexuality is the inevitable—because necessary—result of the complete consolidation of the patriarchy and the maximum application of exploitation it makes possible—as represented by the culture of capitalism.

Reich was correct and certainly not the first materialist to point out that economic relationships necessitate the promulgation of self-justifying and reinforcing ideology, which operates in parallel with the economic process and thereby becomes a material force itself, complete with institutionalization—a "material social power," in his words. It would fly in the face of the evidence on human sexuality, and the rise of patriarchal class society and likewise negate the dialectical materialist theory and method of history to assert or imply that such powerful, pervasive institutionalized oppression of gay sexuality and anti-gay prejudice (ideology) has anything other than a fundamentally economic origin and necessity from the viewpoint of the perpetuation of class society.

If anti-gay, anti-sexual-pleasure morality was only episodic in highly developed patriarchal societies, it might be argued that the above analysis tends toward economic determinism, but in light of the fact that the opposite is the case, and that there is an ample body of historical knowledge to be able to trace the course of its development, such a contention has no justification.

In order for the patriarchal family to fulfill these economic and ideological functions, it must prevent the free expression of sexuality. The rigid delineation of sex roles can only be accomplished by denying the expression of normal gay impulses—there can be no real sexual democracy in an authoritarian institution.

What is finally accomplished in the societies like ours that repress all gay sexuality is the definition; monogamous adult heterosexuality equals sexuality, period. All else is abnormal, bad, etc. Obviously, this patriarchal family institution has no room for gay love. Such love is, in fact, openly declared as an obstacle, a threat, anti-social, etc.—you might even say counterposed to several of the basic functions of the family—i.e., when the process goes far enough, it becomes criminal.

Traditional sexual morality, based on the rigid heterosexual norm, established by sex-role conditioning, constitutes a necessary part of the emotional and ideological

glue helping to hold the nuclear family together. Without it, the institution could not be relied upon to perform the functions described above.

The Religious Heritage of Capitalism

The Hebrew Tradition

It devolved on the patriarchal religious institution to formalize and propagate myths that were appropriate in magnitude to the need for consolidation of strict paternal authority. The Hebrew cultural tradition played second fiddle to none other in mythologizing the oppression of women and gays, in the process of glorifying the male. Frequent references to neighboring cultures being steeped in homosexuality, especially when its practice was incorporated in religious rituals, gave way to using the names of these aliens as pseudonyms for gay sex ("the ways of the Canaanite-Chaldean-heathen," etc.). The introduction of monotheism in the form of a jealous, vindictive, male brute of a god was a signal contribution of the Hebrews. For one thing, it made it easier to differentiate this religion from so many of the X-rated polytheistic versions in the religion, hence providing a basis for designating homosexuality as unnatural. The biblical legend of the Garden of Eden, and the story that follows it in Genesis, has the very obvious purpose of destroying all vestiges of the matriarchy and replacing them with the absolute rule of the male. That the matriarchy *did* exist and the scribes bungled the job of covering it up, is revealed in Adam's big slip: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." This is a recitation of matriarchal law, pure and simple. (Gen., ch. 11.) The story of creation based on Eve coming from Adam's rib (the great rib trick) attempts to rewrite the account of the observable source of life in order to justify the rigid Hebrew patriarchy that was evidently in the process of being set up. The curse of Eve to "greatly multiply her sorrow and conception" indicates the demand for increasing the rate of reproduction over what had existed before, that was discussed previously. That legitimate sex for females was derived of pleasure could not be made clearer. The official ban on nakedness reemphasized the incompatibility of sexuality and the newly emerging social set-up.

Sodom And Gomorrah

The wasting of two whole cities with fire and brimstone as retribution for their succumbing to the sin of pederasty stands as the most prominent of all the religious assertions of the biggest slaughters conducted by Jehovah in the entire Old Testament, the immorality and unnaturalness of homosexuality, and has provided for the barbaric and sadistic torture, and execution of gays for 2000 years. From it, derives the term "sodomy" which is often cited as the authority for all the major anti-gay laws. Half of the entire Mosak law that proscribed the death penalty (obviously God's own choice on the matter) was concerned with "unnatural acts."

Christianity Takes Over

With the victory of Christianity over the Roman Empire, homosexuality was made an official state crime by the Emperor Constantius in 342 A.D. During the sixth

century, Justinean codified the laws against sodomy, citing the legend that homosexuality causes natural catastrophes and therefore endangers the state. This justified not only burning gays alive, a practice several hundred years old by then, but torture, mutilation, and castration as well.

The laws established during this period held sway throughout Europe during the entire medieval period, through the renaissance, and into the early capitalist era, constantly propped up by the Catholic Church. The intensity of the persecution of gay people has gone up and down over the centuries, but the basic fact of gay oppression has remained constant in Western civilization going back to its Hebrew roots. During the Inquisition, thousands upon thousands of people were burned at the stake for homosexuality and heresy, the two considered to go hand in hand.

The need for a religious ideology to justify the needs of the emerging capitalist class in opposition to Catholic feudalism, gave rise to Puritan Protestantism and the Calvinist ethic. Central to the ideology is the complete denial of pleasure, except that which comes from hard work—the more backbreaking it is, the more compatible it is with God's perfect plan. The hardest work yields the biggest rewards; hence the nearness of the wealthy to god. The homosexuality taboo is basic to Puritan morality, which, in turn is a vital part of the social and cultural structure of capitalism, especially in its formative stage. It lies at the center of bourgeois ideology as a whole, which requires mass acceptance of the exploitation, oppression, and misery of all but the god-blessed rich, and their paid sycophants.

The entrenchment in bourgeois ideology of heterosexual-its as the exclusive sexual norm, objectively necessary for the establishment and maintenance of paternal authority and class society, has relied upon the systematic, sadistic oppression of open gays with the goal of *preventing* the expression of homosexuality for everyone. This has resulted in the inculcation of two of the deepest social prejudices—*phobia against homosexuality and heterosexual chauvinism*. This chauvinism and phobia are expressed through most of the institutions of capitalist society, one of whose purposes is to reinforce compulsory sex morality through the oppression of gays and promulgation of anti-gay ideology.

Institutionalized Forms of Gay Oppression

Since gay oppression is rooted in sexual repression which is rooted in the origins of the development of class society, gay people suffer a wide variety of discrimination perpetuated by the institutions of class society.

Job Discrimination

Only a few professions—hairdresser, artist, musician—are open to known gays, and very few are employed in these professions. Many job categories are closed by law to gays, such as teaching. Thus, the fear of exposure that most gays feel is due, in large part, to the risk involved in losing their jobs.

The U.S. government, as the largest employer in the country, sets the example by refusing to hire known gays in any capacity. For example, during the McCarthyite

witchhunt, hundreds of alleged gays were fired from the state department alone every year. Even since the McCarthy era, an average of 30 persons annually are fired from their state department jobs. In all government jobs in Washington, D.C. including the military, an average of 1500 people were fired per 18 months from 1953-1959 for being gay.

Military

Open gays are not allowed in the armed forces. They generally receive draft status 4F, which most employers will question. Additionally, 2-3 percent of all servicewomen and servicemen per year receive dishonorable discharges for their gayness.

The Laws

Gay sexuality is illegal in nearly every state in the U.S. Gays are harassed, threatened, and even imprisoned for committing "unnatural" sex acts or performing "crimes against nature" which is usually seen as any form of sex that does not involve a penis into a vagina with the man on top and the woman on the bottom. These laws include crimes of sodomy, solicitation, and impersonation. In most states, homosexual acts are felonies (punishable by more than one year in prison), while in others they are misdemeanors. In some states the court has the option of using either the felony or misdemeanor charges. In most states the punishments are severe, for example: California and Nevada provide for indeterminate sentence—one year to life. In Georgia, the life sentence is mandatory for sodomy unless clemency has been recommended. More than thirty states provide for a maximum imprisonment of at least 10 years. In North Carolina it is 60 years. In some states, payment of a fine is enough to pay for the "crime."

Most often, gays are not prosecuted under these sodomy laws, but rather under misdemeanor laws forbidding sexual solicitation, vagrancy, loitering, cross-dancing and dressing, "outrageous conduct," and "lewd behavior." Sometimes a judge will allow gays to plead guilty to lesser charges like loitering. Misdemeanor punishments range from \$10 to \$10,000 fine and from three months to a year in jail, sometimes suspended.

In addition, some twenty states have "sex psychopath" laws by which homosexuals can be detained and registries kept on them. Pennsylvania's Barr-Walker Act allows for indeterminate detention of "sex psychopaths" in mental hospitals. In California, a similar law permits detention of gays in mental institutions from one year to life. In some cases, the price they pay to get out of these is "voluntary" castration or sterilization.

Also there are laws which prohibit gays from adopting children, and lesbian mothers are denied custody of their children when they divorce or separate from their husbands. Inheritance and tax laws further discriminate against gays in that special privileges and legal status are given to heterosexual couples, that are denied gays, especially in filing joint tax returns and in recognition of kin for inheritance.

It is clear that gays need not only the repeal of all the archaic sex laws, but the enactment of positive anti-discrimination legislation that gets enforced.

Police Brutality

It is the role of the police to enforce these repressive laws. However, the anti-gay zeal of the police often leads them to extralegal measures such as so-called blackmail, physical attack, and entrapment of gays. Gay prisoners are separated out from the rest of the prison population for special discrimination. They are beaten, sometimes killed, and often denied parole, exercise, and work assignments in an attempt to isolate them. Prison guards often use the gayness of a prisoner in an attempt to break prisoners solidarity.

Housing

Most rental housing units discriminate against known gays, both in refusing to rent and through evictions. This serves to drive gays together into the gay ghettos where the rents are much higher and the conditions much worse. But at the same time this serves to increase the solidarity and rage of gay people.

Psychiatry

Psychiatry defines "normal" male and female sexuality as heterosexual, thus pushing onto gays the notion that they are sick and abnormal, because you see their sexuality is contrary to nature. A psychiatrist's attitude toward a gay patient is generally one of attributing the problems the patient may have to their gayness, rather than to the sick society which oppresses them. In order to help them lead a "normal" and "adjusted" life as a person, the psychiatrist will attempt to "cure" the patient's gayness. This practice reaches its logical conclusion in shock treatment, lobotomies, sterilization, castration, and incarceration of gays in mental institutions.

Education

The purpose of education in bourgeois society is to properly train the minds of young people and to instill in them all the prejudices that the ruling class finds useful and necessary. It is therefore not surprising that the textbooks either ignore the contributions of gays to society or, if that is not possible, ignore the gayness of historic figures. The hard-fought-for sex education classes in the high schools present a distorted view of gay sexuality. Gay student organizations are refused recognition on many campuses, and gay teachers are not hired, then fired if discovered. Gay studies departments, because of their role in exposing the sexism of the educational system, are having difficulties emerging, the only one we're aware of presently being at Sacramento State College. The educational system, along with the mass media, plays a central role in propagating sexism in general, and anti-gay propaganda in particular, helping to mold people to fit into the sex-role stereotyped norms of class society.

The Church

The church continues to put forward the myth of Sodom and Gomorrah through the centuries, that gayness is unnatural, a crime against god, etc. The clergy, to whom some gays turn for help, instead fill them with guilt and fear by prophecying "God's Judgment." The new "Jesus Freak" movement also propagandizes against the "curse of homosexuality"—in the Bay area, they have put out a special pamphlet dealing with the subject.

As the gay movement takes on a more massive charac-

ter, the church can be expected to launch anti-gay campaigns, similar to their campaigns against women around the abortion laws, since safeguarding the nuclear family includes upholding exclusive heterosexual monogamy as well as male supremacy.

The Family

It is the nuclear family which is the first and primary teacher of sex roles. As previously explained, by its very existence it propagates only those narrow restrictive sex roles necessary for the maintenance of reproduction as the sole function of sex, and the social roles which shape young people to fit the accepted male and female norms of class society. Along with the school and church, the family trains children in bourgeois morality, including anti-gay prejudice and phobia.

The family is a necessary institution in bourgeois society, not only for the reproduction of the population, but also for the creation, in that population, of the authoritarian character most responsive to class rule and class exploitation.

Brief History of the Gay Movement

The first known signs of the developing gay rights movement can be traced to the 1860s, with the developing concept of gays being a "third sex." This trend was prevalent throughout much of the early movement. One of the earliest attempts, which received wide distribution, to propagandize for gay rights was the publication of Edward Carpenter's book, *Loves Coming of Age*, in England. The book dealt with woman's emancipation, Engels' theory of the family, homosexuality, and a view of what love would be like in a free society. As a repercussion of the recent 1895 conviction of author Oscar Wilde for sodomy, the bourgeois press refused to publish it. So Carpenter, a leading member of a socialist workers organization, turned to the Manchester Labour Press which published it in 1896 (by 1912 the book had sold 50,000 copies and had been translated into seven different languages).

In 1897, the first known gay liberation organization was formed by Magnus Hirschfeld in Germany. The Scientific Humanitarian Committee had three basic aims: (1) to abolish the anti-gay paragraph in the German penal code; (2) to bring this injustice to the attention of the public; and (3) to involve gays in struggle against their oppression. To this end, it hosted forums, organized a public speakers bureau, and launched a massive petition campaign, gaining the support of such major figures as August Bebel, Edward Bernstein, Karl Kautsky, and Albert Einstein.

In 1919, they set up the Institute for Sexual Science, which became an international center not only for the study of sexual science, but also for the homosexual rights movement. The Bolsheviks based much of their understanding on the institute's work, often sending official delegations to study there.

Out of these organizations developed the World League for Sexual Reform, which held a series of international congresses from 1921 through 1932. In 1928, at its second world congress, there was presented the famous "Appeal on Behalf of an Oppressed Variety of Human Being," more widely known as "Kurt Hiller's Appeal" (reprinted

in the May 1971 *ISR*).

The rise of Freud's theory of human bisexuality came to be more widely accepted than the "third sex" theory, as a more accurate appraisal of human sexuality by the homosexual rights movement.

In 1931 there was established the German Association for Proletarian Sexual Politics, with the aid of Wilhelm Reich, at the time a member of the German CP. This organization quickly reached a membership of 40,000. Influenced by the Bolsheviks' removal of the tsarist anti-gay laws and Hershfield's movement, it established as one of its purposes the abolition of the anti-gay law in Germany. By the end of 1932, the CP decided (under Stalin's leadership, which foreshadowed the 1934 reenactment of anti-gay laws in the Soviet Union) this to be un-Marxian. In February 1933 Reich was formally expelled. This organization, as were all organizations that presented a threat to fascism, was crushed with the onslaught of Nazism. Reich himself was hostile to homosexuality and proposed heterosexuality for adolescents to prevent it, but the precedent was set of a mass sexual freedom movement within the working class. In spite of his anti-gay prejudice, he made a significant contribution to a Marxist analysis of the relationships between sexual oppression and class society.

In the United States, gay organizations before 1950 tended to be secret or semisecret and almost exclusively male. Some reached a membership of several hundred, but all were short-lived. The first long-lasting national gay organizations were founded in the 1950s. There was the mainly male Mattachine Society, founded in 1950, and the Daughters of Bilitis in 1953. It appears that Mattachine grew out of the Bachelors for Wallace, which was a campaign support group for the 1948 Progressive Party campaign running Henry Wallace for president. Each group reached a membership of well over one thousand, and still exists nationally. They were largely inspired by the work of Dr. Kinsey, which gave them scientific evidence on which to base their struggle. The gay movement of this time—which was still limited to a homosexual rights orientation—was prevented by the intense repression against gays in the 1950s from taking part in any real outward orientation, and was able to take part only in limited struggles concerned with job security and social activities. Together, these two groups formed the North American Congress of Homophile Organizations (NACHO), which was mainly oriented toward lobbying and legislative reform.

In 1964 Mattachine organized a picket line of a federal building in Philadelphia, demanding an end to employment discrimination and legal harassment. The next year they organized one in San Francisco with the same demands, as well as the demand for the right to be drafted. Again in San Francisco, in 1968, there were organized two militant and successful picket line struggles involving job discrimination.

The Gay Liberation Movement

Early in 1969, Gay Liberation Fronts rose out of the new left milieu inspired by the recent rebirth of the women's liberation movement. On June 27, 1969, the event occurred which is generally acknowledged as the birth

of the modern gay liberation movement. A routine police raid on a New York gay bar, the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street, was met with active self-defense. The police were temporarily routed in an action that had little material effect but which gave tremendous inspiration to gays internationally, and paved the way for the new militancy that surged into the movement.

In the context of a vacuum, in terms of a radical critique of gay oppression and liberation, a number of developments occurred. Carl Wittman's "A Gay Manifesto" is probably the widest circulated attempt in this direction, appearing throughout the gay press, anthologies, and in pamphlet form, and had a significant effect on those attempting to fill that vacuum. The formation of the Red Butterfly, a socialist gay organization in New York, was also significant in this regard. They published pamphlets dealing with the nature of gay oppression, anthropological evidence of gayness through the ages, a history of the movement, etc., contributing to the development of an historical-materialist analysis. At the 1969 NACHO conference following the Christopher Street events, the NACHO youth committee introduced a resolution entitled "A Radical Manifesto—The Homophile Movement Must Be Radicalized." Although the resolution did not pass, it reflected the new, radical mood of young gays.

The women's movement influenced the formation of consciousness-raising groups as a means of ending the isolation of gays from themselves. Slogans such as "Come Out," "Gay Is Good," and "I'm Gay and Proud" became widespread.

Gay is good because gay love brings physical pleasure, emotional comfort, companionship, and human warmth to gay people. The nature and value of homosexuality is not dependent upon comparisons with other forms of human sexuality. It is determined solely by its ability to satisfy human social needs. Homosexual love is good for the same reasons that heterosexual love is good, which do not at all depend upon making babies.

The "closet" represents total forced social conformity for gays. The first stage of gays moving massively against their oppression, then, must be a rejection of secrecy, society's sex-role norms, and society's right to govern sexuality.

"Gay Is Good," along with "Sisterhood Is Powerful" and "Black Is Beautiful," are assertions of the humanity, dignity, and solidarity of oppressed social groups. This assertion encourages gays to fight their oppression as gays, as well as increasing the militancy of gay workers, etc.

Gay Liberation Fronts and other militant gay groups began to spring up nationally and internationally in the next few years, numbering in the hundreds. They saw the need for direct action by gays in their own interests to combat their oppression. They built mass actions in their own names, as well as significantly increasing their participation in the antiwar movement, for example. (In response to this, we were instrumental in the formation of Gay Task Forces in the antiwar and abortion law repeal campaigns.) They also organized "zaps" of psychiatric, religious, and academic conventions. Since Christopher St. there have been demonstrations yearly, the first drawing 5,000 in 1970 in New York City. In 1971 50,000 participated in demonstrations, conferences and rallies in several cities across the country. In addition, an exten-

sive gay press has grown up alongside of the other movement press.

Based on the experience mainly of the antiwar, Black, and women's movements with students in the vanguard of those movements, gay organizations spread first to the campuses, where radical gays had already been involved in or observed existing organizations such as the SMC, SDS, etc. Therefore, they were able to, in many cases, learn lessons from them and to apply those to the new gay groups.

Closely following the developing militant gay consciousness, Gay Liberation Fronts were on the rise nationally and expanded significantly. During this period, democratic decision making began to erode. Tendencies toward exclusion and, for some, an exclusive counter-institutionalist and/or anti-leadership approach began to develop, which, coupled with their inability to involve lesbians, lead to the demise of the GLF.

An extreme form of counter-institutionalism, but one which clarifies the development, took place in the Los Angeles GLF. They attempted colonization of a community of 300 in Alpine, California, with intentions of taking over the town and discovering a shortcut to liberation. Nor surprisingly, they sharpened the hostility of the residents and the project failed.

The Gay Activists Alliance split from the New York GLF. It agreed to a structured, single-issue approach, and geared itself into law reform such as Intro 475. GAA's perspective was one of reaching out and involving the masses of gay people in action around specific demands.

There were splits in almost every GLF between the women and men. Although some of the lesbian groups which arose out of these splits learned the lessons, others simply adopted a female GLF approach.

Lesbian organizations have been increasing in number throughout the country. Lesbians who have struggled consistently alongside of their sisters in the women's movement and alongside of their gay brothers in the gay movement, have found it necessary to establish their own independent organizations. Lesbians are recognizing the nature of their special oppression and the dual character of their struggle against sexism; the struggle of a homosexually oriented minority against a heterosexual supremacist society and that of an oppressed sex against a male supremacist society. Lesbians are seeking a new definition of self. Different trends as to the nature of lesbian oppression and their struggle for liberation have been put forward, from the concept of lesbian-feminism to lesbian- or dyke-separatism.

One of the most healthy lesbian-feminist organizations that has emerged thus far is Lesbian Activist Women in Los Angeles, a formation born out of a collective that publishes the *Lesbian Tide*. L.A.W. defines itself as a political, action-oriented group of women organized to bring about full civil and human rights for gays and women. They call for an "End to Forced Sex Role Stereotyping" ("Anatomy is destiny"), for "Decriminalization of Our Loving" and "Full Civil and Human Rights for Women and Gays." In calling for an action perspective for social change, they say, "We call for broadbased, visible, independent, issue-oriented actions directed toward attainable ends" (from L.A.W. position paper).

Two years ago, the women who now call themselves

L.A.W. intervened in the Los Angeles Gay Pride Coalition and were instrumental in changing the character of the Christopher Street West action from a parade to a political demonstration around four gay liberation demands. In fall of 1972, at a gay activists conference in Sacramento, they set up a Lesbian Assembly to deal with the special oppression of lesbians. This year they sponsored the West Coast Lesbian Conference, which drew 1500 women from 26 states, 202 cities, and four countries other than the United States (Sweden, Denmark, France and Canada). It is estimated that approximately 129 organizations—including lesbian, gay, and feminist formations—were represented. They included: N.O.W., Daughters of Bilitis, Gay Student Unions from different parts of the country, G.A.A., in New York City, Female Liberation—Boston, women's centers, and lesbian mothers unions.

The conference brought forth a variety of ideas and differences of opinion on a number of questions including: reform vs. revolution, lesbian nationhood, transexualism, and the relationship of the lesbian movement to the women's liberation and gay liberation movements. This conference was truly an historic event, being the first national conference for the lesbian movement in this period with an international dynamic. Because lesbians are extremely isolated from one another, this gathering also represented a coming together of new ideas, lesbian pride, and rage at a common oppression.

For National Intervention Into the Gay Liberation Movement

We should intervene nationally in the gay movement, that is with a national strategy with clear guidelines, national coordination, and appropriate use of our press. We should apply the same revolutionary method to this movement that we apply in all other areas of work. That is, we should advance a general strategy of mobilizing the masses of the oppressed in struggle against the state and the main institutions of capitalism, around democratic and transitional slogans rooted in the needs of the masses. These slogans must be formulated in such a way so as to reach gay people at their present level of consciousness, while at the same time advancing it to the point of revolutionary class consciousness. Also, we should fight for the principle of nonexclusion within the movement and independence from the capitalist parties.

Character Of Our Intervention

Intervening in existing gay groups which are centered around gay issues should be the initial focus for our participation in the gay movement. This includes activist formations involved in doing work around the sex laws, fighting for equal rights for gays, and providing educational forums and teach-ins, etc., such as the Gay Activists Alliance in New York and Lesbian Activist Women in Los Angeles. Also this means building and at times initiating college and high school gay groups, which could play the same activist and educational role as the city-wide formations, with the added perspective of fighting to expose and eliminate the sexism in the textbooks, for the hiring of openly gay teachers and counselors, and for the establishment of gay studies departments. Opportunities

are rich for establishing gay groups and building struggles in the colleges and high schools. Hundreds of gay organizations already exist on most of the major campuses in the country. Taking a serious attitude toward advancing gay struggles in the colleges and high schools would add an important dimension of work to the party.

Also, we should intervene, where possible, in united front formations for the building of specific campaigns. An example is the Gay Pride Week coalitions organized annually in commemoration of the Christopher St. events. In some areas of the country the character of the commemorations has taken the form of celebrations or parades. Our intervention into these should take up the question of raising specific demands against the state, thereby changing the character of the actions from a parade atmosphere to a political demonstration with a clearly political focus. We should advocate a year-round program of activities on a national and local level including demonstrations, conferences, teach-ins, forums, etc., with frequent national focuses.

In addition, we should intervene in formations around such developments as the McConnell defense case, the legal fight around Intro 475, incidents of police brutality, etc.

We should carry out an aggressive propaganda campaign through our press, forums, and election campaigns. The Los Angeles municipal campaign, our running of Sally Anderson, provides a concrete example of how the latter tactic can be effectively applied to build the party and the gay liberation movement. Our articles and speeches should discuss and explain our position on gay liberation, the nature of gay oppression, the history of the gay movement, the oppression of gays in Cuba and the Stalinist states, the need for an independent mass movement, etc. We should use our press to build the activities of the gay movement and involve ourselves in the debates. We should answer red-baiting attacks within the gay movement and attacks on the gay movement by others in the radical movement. Leading comrades should be sent on speaking tours representing the party speaking on these issues. Pathfinder Press should begin publishing a series of books and pamphlets about the gay liberation movement. Examples of such pamphlets include; *Gay Is Good: An Anthropological Perspective*, *Religion: Its Role In The Persecution Of Gay People*, *Homosexual Freedom; From Bolshevism To Stalinism*, *the Politics Of Gay Oppression*, and *The Gay Heritage*.

Also, we should have internal educationals on the history of the gay movement, the relationship of gay liberation to the class struggle, theories of sexual revolution, etc. We must increase the general understanding and knowledge of the gay movement within the party, so we can increase the number of comrades who feel comfortable with the political and theoretical problems of the movement. Straight comrades should be encouraged to learn about the movement by attending meetings, reading the press and literature of the gay liberation movement, selling our press to and recruiting gay activists.

The carrying out of these tasks will lay the foundation for consistent participation in and advancement of the gay movement. To facilitate the above outlined tasks, every branch should assign comrades to gay work. Regular reports should be presented to the executive commit-

tees and the branch meetings. The national office should assign forces to provide national organizational and political direction for the intervention and to coordinate our overall work in the gay movement.

Demands

REPEAL ALL ANTI-GAY LAWS—This is a broad umbrella slogan which focuses in on the special guilt of the state. The laws are used as rationalizations for the entire spectrum of discrimination that gays face.

REPEAL ALL SODOMY LAWS—

REPEAL ALL SOLICITATION LAWS—

REPEAL ALL IMPERSONATION LAWS—

REPEAL ALL AGE-OF-CONSENT LAWS — and all laws that discriminate against young people.

END POLICE ENTRAPMENT AND ENTICEMENT—AMNESTY FOR GAY PRISONERS CONVICTED OF VICTIMLESS 'CRIMES'—The state has no right to legislate morality. People have a right to live their lives the way they so desire, where no one else's rights are being infringed upon.

ABOLISH GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP—For gay rights to publish periodicals, books, films, etc., without state interference.

FOR GAY RIGHTS AS PARENTS—Gays are denied equal rights to adopt children. Also, lesbian mothers are denied in particular, in divorcing or separating their husbands, the right of custody of their children.

ABOLISH INHERITANCE AND TAX LAWS — Gays are discriminated against in that special privileges and legal status are given to heterosexual couples, especially in filing joint tax returns, and in recognition of kin for inheritance.

SEPARATE THE CHURCH AND STATE—To read the laws against homosexual behavior is like reading phrases from the Bible. The state has no right to support such religious attitudes, much less writing them into law.

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR GAYS — This slogan goes beyond the bounds of legal equality, to also include the more generalized social discrimination. Again this is a broad umbrella slogan which encompasses many demands.

OUTLAW DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GAYS IN JOBS, HOUSING AND PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS—END SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING IN EDUCATION AND THE MASS MEDIA—

WRITE GAYS BACK INTO HISTORY — Textbooks and histories must reflect the real contributions of gay people. The gayness of the Shakespeares and Emily Dickens throughout history is not an embarrassing fault which should be hidden; it is an important aspect of the development of a very large number of historical figures. Also, this demands the writing of gay oppression into history, from the extermination of gays by the Pope, Puritans, and Nazis, through to the daily police brutality today.

FOR GAY STUDIES DEPARTMENTS—

FOR THE RIGHT OF GAYS TO ORGANIZE—in the elementary, high school, and college campuses without victimization.

END UNEMPLOYMENT — 30 for 40 — Unemployment is a special problem for gays as well as for all sectors who face discrimination. The more unemployment there is,

the harder it is for such groups to fight economic discrimination. A thirty-hour work week for forty hours pay points to the way to end unemployment and attain jobs for all.

FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTION—Capitalism has oppressed gays since its birth. Gay oppression is a direct result of class society. To achieve gay liberation, it will be necessary to eliminate class society with the victory of international socialist revolution through the mobilization of the revolutionary proletariat and its allies.

The Historical Role of Gay Liberation

The major task of the gay liberation movement is to win liberation for gay people. The gay liberation movement has the potential for bringing more and more gays into action against this system. This will serve to reinforce the radicalization as a whole and add an additional arena of anticapitalist struggle against the ruling class. Capitalism has lost the ability to completely end any of the forms of oppression upon which it is built, although certain concessions may be granted to buy off the movement. As the movement continues to broaden, and take on a more massive character, it enables more gays to enter the struggle, not only for the needs of gays as gays, but also against the other forms of oppression and exploitation that gays face as workers, women, oppressed nationalities, etc.

Gay liberation is a struggle for basic democratic rights, the right to control one's own body and to control one's life. Women who want to control their own reproduction, Spanish-speaking people who want bilingual schools, workers who want control over their working conditions, and anyone else who is struggling for control over their lives are in objective alliance with the gay liberation struggle. Our task is to make it conscious, thereby increasing the power of the combined anticapitalist struggles.

Since the gay struggle is aimed at the very heart of bourgeois culture, its implications go much further than the consciousness and living conditions of the minority which considers itself gay.

As struggles against sexism and the bourgeois family structure and sexual morality, the gay liberation movement is a sister to the women's liberation movement. The links between the gay and feminist movements are especially close: both have to struggle against the artificial sex-roles of modern class society. The birth of the gay movement was most directly inspired by the rise of the women's movement about a year earlier. In turn, the women's movement moved to a new stage of militancy when it began to reject lesbian-baiting and to support gay rights.

Gay liberation is a struggle against the reactionary role of the church. Because the ultimate justification for the oppression of gays is in sacred texts, the gay movement is forced at every stage to combat organized religion. For one section of the gay population, this has meant organizing gay churches, for another section it meant seeking reforms within the existing religions, but for the main part, the gay movement has learned the necessity for breaking with their original oppressors.

On the one hand, the gay movement needs to struggle for the separation of the church and state, against the

right of any religion to force its views on others. But on the other hand, the gay movement needs to go further, meeting the anti-gay propaganda of organized religion head on. This struggle is in the interest of all those who are oppressed by the church.

Gay Economic Exploitation

It is well known that job discrimination against gays riddles this economy under the direct leadership of the state. What is usually not recognized is the cumulative effects of the many forms of prejudice that gets translated into concrete economic exploitation. The result is that the large majority of gays are especially exploited as an oppressed sexual minority, primarily of the working class.

This runs counter to the long-standing bourgeois-propagated myth that gays are mostly found in the visible professions. Kinsey's data proves that the opposite is the truth, and a brief examination of some of the forms of gay economic exploitation explains why.

1. Any gay person not completely successful in acting straight and hiding their past will not be hired by federal, state, or local governments, or fired when they are discovered. Countless employers follow their lead.

2. Many employers use detectives to check on the sexual orientation of applicants, especially for managerial positions.

3. Credit reference files are maintained on 45 million Americans by the Retail Credit Company alone—they serve as a vortex to collect information on homosexuality from other investigative sources.

4. Gays arrested for violations of the anti-gay laws are barred from a host of jobs which proscribe anyone with a record. This is true for 4F classifications, dishonorable discharges, or any investigators report. Thus gays can be branded for the very act that makes them gay—a sort of double jeopardy.

5. Insurance companies investigate clients and often refuse policies or charge exorbitant fees for gays, and forward their findings to the cops, credit files, the applicant's employer, etc. Loan applicants are subjected to the same process. Likewise for all jobs involving security clearance.

6. So-called blackmail by employers result in the lowest paying, worst jobs with no job security. This is a widespread trend that pays off in dollars and cents for the boss.

7. Social gathering places for gays pay bribes to the police, politicians, government officials, and the mafia, and charge gays for it.

Add to all this the severe employment limitations for blatant gays, and the result is that all of these factors push gays into the factories and other low-paying menial jobs where personal life is not investigated.

Kinsey's studies show that those with some college education had the lowest incidence of homosexual behavior; those with only a high school education have a 5-fold higher level of homosexual activity. Gay oppression results in economic exploitation somewhat similar to that faced by women and the oppressed nationalities, although their oppression differs in many respects.

The struggle for gay liberation is a struggle against job and housing discrimination, unemployment, sexism, the legislation of morality, the invasion of privacy, police brutality and entrapment; for the right to control one's

own body, the right to freedom of speech, and the right to organize. These are all important elements of the class struggle.

Gay liberation will not be a reality this side of the socialist revolution because bourgeois society can find no way to positively integrate homosexual behavior. Due to its effect in undermining institutions basic to capitalism, the struggle takes on a revolutionary dynamic, given the role played by most gays in production, that of wage earners. The working masses, especially the most downtrodden, generally live not only in relative poverty, but sexually miserable lives as well, which is in their interests to reverse.

The importance of molding each individual according to the exclusive heterosexual norm in preparation for their role in the nuclear family, necessitates the suppression of sexuality in youth, outside the marriage bond, and suppression of gay sexuality in general. So, what is involved is not only the oppression of gay people, but also the attempted suppression of homosexual behavior in everyone. Gay oppression is rooted, then, in sexual repression which is firmly rooted at the origins of the development of class society.

Honest, open sexuality exists only as a potential. Sexuality is generally aberrative in class society. The forcing of human beings into tiny, sexually-segregated units, rife with sexual temptation and taboos, intrafamily rivalries, steeped with undercurrents of guilt, violence, and fear readies human beings for entry into a society which is a macrocosm of that irrationality. Emotions, attraction, and pleasure are produced on production lines, forced and regurgitated in schools, churches, jobs, and families; and this is what passes for sexuality in decadent capitalist culture. Similarly, the classifications of sexual taste, of heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality, exist in the context of sex oppression, in the context of healthy sexuality, stuffed and compressed into the box of exclusive monogamous heterosexuality, dominated and compelled by male supremacy and compulsive procreation. This noose-like definition of sexuality is the ideological glue necessary for the maintenance of the nuclear family, the basic economic unit of class society. The struggle for gay

liberation helps dissolve that glue, thus undermining one of the institutions fundamental to class society. The struggle against sexual oppression has a role to play in the elimination of class exploitation. The fact that the effects of thousands of years of the suppression of the freedom of sexual expression will be totally eliminated only with the elimination of class society does not diminish the relevance of the sexual liberation struggle today to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for socialism. On the contrary, it enhances that relationship and enriches the struggle for socialism.

The essential thrust of gay liberation is not only to win from the ruling class the democratic right for gays to express their sexual orientation without being ridiculed, beat up, and murdered, but it also involves a struggle for sexual liberation as a whole. It ultimately aims at liberating the sexuality of everyone from the restrictions and puritanism of American capitalist society.

The gay liberation movement has a special contribution to make in developing an awareness amongst the working population as to the nature of sexual repression, and its role in subjugating the class and propping up the key institutions of the capitalist order.

The struggle for gay liberation and sexual liberation in general is the struggle against social backwardness, which the ruling class will have no hesitation in using to mobilize the conservative, backward elements of the class against revolution.

The entrance of the gay liberation movement into the class struggle speeds the process of radicalization: it forcefully raises the outlook of sexual revolution, of social revolution, each bound together inextricably.

The struggle for gay liberation is ultimately for a society in which there will no longer be "homosexuals" and "heterosexuals," but simply human beings expressing their natural sexual inclinations. It is a struggle for a society that will ensure and protect the free development and expression of sexuality. It is a struggle for a society that not only tolerates gay sexuality, but provides for a positive institutional integration of gay sexuality. Such a society will not be a capitalist society.

July 9, 1973

SOME CRITICISMS OF THE MEMO ON GAY LIBERATION

by Lee Artz, Detroit Branch

It is necessary for all party members to seriously consider the direction and orientation of the party's policy on gay liberation. They must study the discussion and participate in it to whatever extent possible. What is needed is a serious assessment of the oppression and struggle of gays. Unfortunately the Memorandum does not do this.

Gays are proudly and angrily saying that homosexuality is not a sickness. They are saying that they will no longer passively allow themselves to be discriminated against. They want legal and social equality. They are fighting against job discrimination, for equal educational opportunities and fair housing, for an end to the legal and illegal persecution. They are fighting for their liberation in every corner.

In explaining the rise of the current gay movement, the memo totally misses the most important factor, the primary cause of the rise of the gay liberation struggle. It is an undeniable fact that gays are oppressed as gays economically, politically, and socially. Even in the midst of the current radicalization and the loosening of bourgeois moral standards among the youth there would be no gay movement unless homosexuals were oppressed in this society. The Memorandum does not speak to how and why gays are oppressed. Consequently it can only take a civil libertarian approach, agreeing with bourgeois politicians that even gays deserve equal rights under the law. It is absolutely correct that we do not want to discuss and take a position on the relative merits of different sexual preferences, but as materialists we can reject all forms of prejudice against homosexuality and accept it as a natural human variant like we accept heterosexuality as a natural human variant. It is our political duty to take a political position that recognizes the equality of gays and non-gays economically, politically and socially. In that respect we support gay pride as an affirmation that homosexuality is not a sickness as class society and Stalinist ideology would have us believe, but a natural human phenomenon that does not detract from human rights. An individual has the right to control her/his own body; to do so conflicts with class society. The gay struggle has a material basis flowing from the oppression of homosexuality. It is not the purpose of this contribution to analyze the oppression of gays, that was done quite well in the literary discussion by Comrades Thorstad and Green, among others.

Another criticism of the Memorandum is its contention that "the gay movement directly relates to a relatively narrow sector of the population." This needs considerable explanation. Kinsey's figures suggest that millions of men and women in the U. S. are gay. Are we to assume that the gay movement does not have the potential to reach out to other gays? Apparently it is more than a numerically narrow sector. In most demonstrations and other actions non-gays have participated. Doesn't the gay movement have the ability to win allies? The majority of gays are women, are part of the working class, and the Phila-

delphia Christopher Street demonstration in 1972 was close to 50 percent Black. What makes the gay movement narrow? Perhaps because it is essentially a struggle for democratic rights. Can gays achieve their liberation under capitalism? The removal of certain legal injustices will not give them their liberation. Doesn't this struggle tend in an anticapitalist direction challenging the right of the state to run an individual's body and life both socially and economically? The attacks upon bourgeois institutions and ideology raises the fundamental question of how society is run.

"More peripheral." To who? No one would argue that the gay movement has the importance or social weight of the working class, oppressed nationalities, or women. This does not speak to the question. Do we counterpose campus work to the Black struggle and its decisive role in the American socialist revolution? Or do we counterpose women's liberation activity to that of the working class? No. The question involves the potential to struggle against capitalist rule, which again raises the question of the nature of gay oppression, the ability of that layer of the oppressed to go into action, by winning and being allies with the working class.

All the facts support the position that the gay movement is an important part of the current radicalization, having the power and potential to mobilize and educate millions against capitalist rule. Unfortunately, the Memorandum does not come to grips with this aspect of the gay movement either. After a national probe and a three-month literary discussion on the gay movement, the Memorandum does not present us with the lessons or an analysis of the movement based on what we have learned. There is no balance sheet on the current state of the gay movement.

A balance sheet would outline the growth of a national movement, encompassing thousands of men and women, young and not so young, Black, Chicano, high school and college students; a movement that is developing politically. Campus gay groups have been among the most active student organizations across the country in the past year. For four years in a row there have been nationwide Christopher Street demonstrations. Gay groups have been actively fighting against job discrimination and firings, educational restrictions, harassment by legal and illegal means, etc. How can we make a decision on the worth of this movement without fully knowing the size, scope and strength of it?

Besides the notable exception of the GAA in New York there are many others. The Black president of the Gay Liberation Front at Wayne State in Detroit ran on the YSA ticket for student government, and later introduced the SWP candidate for Common Council of Detroit as "our candidate." The *Gay Liberator* in Michigan recently defended the SWP and the gay movement against red-baiting, commending the party's position and the activity of an ex-comrade in building Christopher Street '72. An-

other notable exception is the two gays who were recruited to the YSA by a YSJP team in Indiana, Pa. They hitchhiked to the YSA convention and then recruited three more YSAers on the assumption that activity in the gay movement was compatible with membership in the YSA. Is gay work peripheral to this local? Yes, there are other exceptions that would give a different perspective of the gay movement than that implied by the Memorandum. Factual information reveals a gay movement from Africa to Australia, and even breaking the Stalinist curtain of silence in the USSR and China. The balance sheet would point all this out and more. It would discuss the significant layer of gay activists receptive to our ideas. They are especially receptive to our tenet that only through struggle can the oppressed win their liberation: only by gays fighting as gays can they end their oppression, by linking up with the working class and helping to make a socialist revolution. And as gays, help to restructure society ensuring their liberation after the seizure of state power.

The most glaring inadequacy in the Memorandum is that nowhere does it discuss recruitment. Do we want to win the best of the gay activists to socialist ideas and recruit them to the party? If so, and I hope we do, isn't the best way by explaining the necessity of building their own movement independent of the capitalist institutions, explaining the need to link their struggle with that of the working class? By being seen as the best builders of that movement? How can we recruit gays if we say, "Yes, we oppose your oppression, think you deserve democratic rights like everyone else, but, you see, you are peripheral and we have other things to do. Besides after the revolution you will be liberated, so you should be willing to join with us, even though we cannot join with you." Again, I hope we want to recruit gays out of the gay liberation movement.

Instead of ending with the important opportunities before us in recruitment, the Memorandum spends several paragraphs, close to one-third of the entire memo, on exposing the threat of counter-culturalism. Why? Does the gay movement threaten the party with counter-culturalism more than cultural nationalism of the Black struggle? More than youth culture? If so what is the analysis of the gay movement that came up with that assessment? Where is that analysis? Then, more importantly, what does that mean for party recruitment? Do we avoid recruiting students because of their petty-bourgeois attitudes and prejudices? No. The party is strong enough to politically educate them. Isn't the party strong enough to politically educate radical gays that are assumed to be prone to counter-culturalism? It is a useless, wasted argument that doesn't belong unless it has a legitimate premise as proof: again we notice the lack of any balance sheet or analysis of the roots of gay oppression and the state of the gay movement.

It is necessary for us first to see the material basis of the oppression of gays, discover the size and scope of the movement, and then make our decision. Doing that we will find the gay movement is a real, not a passing, movement which can rally support to its struggle from both gays and non-gays and is objectively anticapitalist.

Its development depends naturally on its leadership. We know that without the leadership of the SWP the anti-war movement would not be what it is. We made the decisive difference. In the gay movement we can make the decisive difference.

A movement that rose to fight the oppressor, challenging the norms of society, the right of a minority to decide values for a majority, a movement that in its fight for job security and economic equality joins the working class in the struggle for power, a movement that in its fight against police harassment joins the oppressed nationalities in their fight against police terror, a movement that in its fight for sexual freedom joins with masses of women in demanding the right to control their bodies and their lives: Is this a movement that we will only support with our propaganda and press? Is *The Militant* of June 29, the issue to be sold on Christopher Street days around the country, an example of the weight we should give the gay movement in our press (a short quip in "In Brief")? No. The party should intervene and give political leadership. We should intervene to the degree the gay movement merits — not on the level of the working class, oppressed nationalities, or women, but realizing it is a movement not an issue like marijuana or ecology — a movement of a uniquely oppressed sector of society that directly and indirectly relates to everyone.

It is incumbent upon us to champion the struggles of the oppressed in word and in deed with political leadership. We cannot give the gay movement leadership without intervening. We must take our responsibility and support fully the gay struggle, as we do others.

We must do this even if it goes against the grain of the working class; whether that be fighting against the oppression of Blacks in the face of a racist white working class, or supporting women's liberation in the face of chauvinist males, or in the fight for equality for gays against a miseducated, backward, sexist working class and society. We should politically intervene on a local and national level, not artificially setting up a national coalition or substituting ourselves. We should give political leadership to the movement as it grows — explaining the importance of taking a national orientation against the government. In this way we fulfill our role as being the party in action of the working class, add new forces to the continuing radicalization, and increase the potential recruitment to the party.

The party should have a point on the gay movement at the convention and support the resolution by Thorstad and Green entitled "For an Intervention Into the Gay Liberation Struggle."

July 9, 1973

REPUDIATION OF THE BACHOFEN-MORGAN-ENGELS MATRIARCHAL THEORY OF SOCIAL ORIGINS

by R. Vernon, Brooklyn Branch, New York Local

1. *Lewis H. Morgan's Most Serious Errors*

L. H. Morgan was far superior to any and all of the students of primitive peoples of the past century, in methodology, in theoretical approach, and in the collection of ethnographic data. But the errors in his data and work are so extensive that reliance on his writings, and on the reworking of his material by Engels, without examining the mountains of ethnographic data that disprove many of Morgan's contentions conclusively in the past sixty to seventy years, is misleading and does discredit to Marxist methodology.

The strong points of Morgan's work and methodology are: 1) he was among the first to do any reasonable amount of fieldwork in his study of primitive peoples (Iroquois, later other Native Americans out west); 2) he provided a cogent explanation of the clan, as part of a system of exogamous kinship-based institutions, which retains its validity today; 3) he attempted to reconstruct prehistory coherently from the ethnographic data of the present; 4) he attempted the collection of worldwide ethnographic data on which to base his studies and conclusions, in addition to the data he collected directly in his own field studies; 5) he attempted a periodization of human prehistory, by his own admission a tentative one; 6) while philosophically eclectic and an idealist and white-racist, he developed a quasi-materialist approach in his studies, tending to emphasize the role of production of means of subsistence in his conjectures of how human society must have evolved.

In the immediate decades following Morgan, comparatively modest advances took place in ethnographic science until Boas, Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski, Lowie, etc., ushered in two qualitative changes for the better: 1) emphasis was placed on formulation of unambiguous hypotheses that are testable (verifiable or refutable) against empirical evidence, while sweeping unproven and unprovable conjectures and wild generalizations were anathematized, and special pleading for pet conjectures and hypotheses backed up by selective collections of data or unconfirmed travelers' tales patched together by the scissors-and-paste "method" were deprecated; 2) programs of fieldwork were instituted, resulting in an improvement of several orders of magnitude in the volume and reliability of ethnographic data, and ethnographic scholars could not be taken seriously in the science unless they had themselves spent some time gathering data from, and studying at first hand, some particular primitive people, in addition to their book studies and "armchair" theorizing.

By 1920, the science of the study of primitive peoples (termed "anthropology" or "social anthropology" in the U. S. and in Britain, "ethnography" or "ethnology" elsewhere while the term "anthropology" applies to what is termed "physical anthropology" in the U. S. and Britain) had been swept free of wild speculators (Perry, Elliot

Smith), amateurs and dilettantish folklorists (Frazer), unashamed racists like McGee, Brinton, Powell [except for Germany and Austria, where an antiscientific and mystical school under the influence of the Vatican (Pater Wm. Schmidt) and based on the Catholic missionary network managed to hold its own for a while]. Morgan's work came under severe scrutiny, and many of his errors were exposed. Interest in universal history, in origins and evolution, were deprecated, and speculations and inferences in that area deemed fruitless since not subject to verification or refutation on the basis of ethnographic data.

At this point we have to review the specific errors exposed in Morgan's work and constructs. Aside from the very elementary distinction between food-procuring (hunting and gathering) and food-producing (simplest agriculture and pastoralism and all subsequent developments up to civilization) [Morgan's stage-epochs of "savagery" and "barbarism"], the fine structure of Morgan's mechanical stages, with their correlations of kinship terms, filiation (first matrilineal and later patrilineal), technology, tools and implements, conjectured "stages" in the development of the family, has been shattered beyond recovery.

The ethnographic data compiled during this century offer no support or proof for Morgan's view that there was a universal "stage" of human history typified by matrilineal clans which later somehow metamorphosed into patrilineal clans, with every set of patrilineal clans necessarily derived from a prior set of matrilineal clans. No ethnographically reliable instance of such a metamorphosis has ever been described. The correlation between matrilineal filiation plus matrilocal postmarital residence and supposed gynocracy (women exercising most or all of the political power) was refuted — there is not a single ethnographically reliable account of any culture in which women as a sex wielded decisive political power. The hypothesis that paternity, monogamy and the nuclear family are only relatively recent inventions is thoroughly refuted, and finds no support in the ethnographic evidence.

The problem of the metamorphosis of a functional matrilineal system into a system of functional patrilineal clans, as envisaged by Morgan, is too easily confused with a breakdown in transmission of descent or inheritance of kin-group (lineage) membership and attendant rights and obligations through a matrilineage to transmission through a patrilineage or through individual families. A clan is not just any kin-group, but a unit in a system of exogamous corporate descent groups linking members of the particular society or tribe residing in different communities (camps, bands, villages). Metamorphosis of a whole system of functioning matrilineal clans into an image system of functioning viable patrilineal clans would be a grandiose event, and is nowhere clearly attested in ethnographic data. Note that the breakdown of matrilineal clans under the

impact of social differentiation is not in principle different from the breakdown of a system of patrilans, bilateral clans, double-descent clan systems, or any other complex kinship-based system that has difficulty surviving in a territorially-organized political system pervaded with social inequalities.

In a matrilineal system, each member is enmeshed in kinship relations through two matrilineages, his/her father's matrikin and his/her mother's matrikin. A breakdown in the matrilineal pattern could result in a temporary shift to patrilineages on both sides, with the consequent breakdown of the matrilineal system (without any possibility of a viable system of patrilans replacing it), or in immediate breakdown of the clan system altogether into individual and extended families and rump localized clans. In a bilateral-clan system, the shift would involve further emphasis on the patrikin and downgrading the matrikin connections. In a double-descent system, members are related (in group membership, privileges, rights, obligations, taboos) simultaneously to their mother's matrikin and father's patrikin (Australia, New Guinea, Melanesia, West Africa).

Reports of switches in filiation from "mother-right" to "father-right," for example in reference to the ancient Romans and Greeks, probably apply to transitions in the breakdown of a bilateral-clan or double-descent system, as happens in recent Polynesian and West-African societies which are comparable to the ancient Romans and Greeks in population density, social and political complexity, and level of culture and technology.

With advances in social inequality and acquisition of private property, patrilans tend to break down just as readily as matrilineal systems, so that property, titles, rights, ranks, duties and obligations previously passed along to all patrilineal agnatic kin (the father's sons, nephews, sons-in-law) become restricted to bequests to the father's immediate family (sons, and in many cases also daughters).

The influence exerted by encroaching patriarchal civilizations and by the enveloping world capitalist market does not automatically and undialectically favor patrilineal filiation. As the Tiwi (Melville Is., Australia) became affected by colonialism, their double-descent system was weakened on the patrilineal side, which was more concerned with economic kinship-based relations unviable in the face of onslaught by the outside world market, and was temporarily strengthened on the matrilineal side, which was less so affected (C. W. Hart, *Oceania*, vol. 1, 176 (1930)).

The most prevalent view of matri-patri-transitions among American ethnologists is that expressed by G. P. Murdock (*Social Structure*, 1949): "... since the ancestors of nearly all groups which have survived until today must have undergone many changes in social organization during the long course of human history, the fact that the last transition in a particular series has been from matrilineal to patrilineal or double descent by no means implies that the matrilineate came first in the entire series."

Most of Morgan's errors are due not to his method of examining the ethnographic present (data on primitive peoples as investigated today) in order to attempt to reconstruct prehistory, but due to *substantive ignorance*, i.e., ignorance of facts which were beyond the reach of

science at that level of technological development, facts (or organization of facts into coherent theories) which were not accessible to scientists at the time. Substantive ignorance is nothing for any scientist to be ashamed of, and is of course the reason for scientific inquiry in the first place. Archimedes cannot be blamed for his (substantive) ignorance of Newtonian mechanics and the calculus, nor can Newton be held to account for his (substantive) ignorance of Einstein's theory of general relativity. Nor can we be held to account for our (substantive) ignorance of great discoveries to be made in 1993 or in 2046. But we can be held to account for holding on to constructs, data, or theories demonstrated to be spurious or inadequate decades ago.

2. Nuclear Family

Morgan's errors and blunders in his conjectured reconstruction of the evolution of the family are among the most serious for us. In addition to his monumental and valid first-hand work on the Iroquois and other Native American tribes, Morgan undertook an ambitious program of worldwide data collection, enlisting the aid of the Smithsonian Institute and diverse travelers and missionaries, to collect data, emphasizing kinship terms and relations, from around the world. He managed to compile 48 schedules of kinship terms and relations which formed the basis of his *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity* (1870) and *Ancient Society* (1877). The recognition of the need to collect hard data attests to Morgan's credentials as a scientist in this area, but the reliability of the data that could be secured in those days is another matter.

Morgan's data on kinship terms and relations in Hawaii, and on the cultural level of the Hawaiians, led him to a colossal blunder. His racist missionary informants dismissed the Hawaiians as "savages," living on the "lowest level of human degradation, not to say of depravity," a phase of society where the "family was unknown," and among whom the prevailing form of family organization was the "punaluan family, with own brothers and sisters not entirely excluded, in which the males were living in polygyny, and the females in polyandry." To this fantastic picture, at variance with Polynesian realities, Morgan added the "facts" that Hawaiians "had not attained to the gentile organization" [Hawaiians, and all Polynesians except the Tikopians, have no unilineal clans—R. V.], that the Hawaiians "lacked" metallurgy, pottery, and even the bow and arrow. On the basis of these "data," Morgan assigned the Hawaiians to the "middle status of savagery" in his rigid mechanical schedule of "stages." Examining the kinship terms of these occupants of the lower rungs in the "middle status of savagery," he deduced via a process of elegant mental gymnastics "vestiges" of a still earlier "consanguineal family" in which brothers habitually married sisters, correlated to his conjectured "lower status of savagery"—presumably the first step above the ape, or Darwin's missing link.

Morgan also worked forward, and deduced the origin of the matrilineal system from the female branch of the imaginary "Punaluan family," while the "Syndasmian family" or "pairing family" was seen as a transition stage from "group marriage" constituted by "vestiges" of the "Punaluan family" to the much later monogamic family.

This fantastic schema did not survive 1914, when it was refuted by W. H. R. Rivers (*Kinship and Social Organization*), who was among the first to make detailed field studies of Melanesia and Polynesia. But information which would have exploded the view that Polynesians, and Hawaiians specifically, were primitive "savages," when in fact they had attained a level of highly structured agricultural and maritime communities with pronounced social inequalities and political differentiation, was readily available in Morgan's time if it had been studied. The Tongans, Tahitians, Maoris, Hawaiians, and the Melanesian Fijians, with their high population density, intensive agriculture, and caste systems, were edging close to a level of class-stratified civilization comparable to Centromerica, West Africa, and archaic Greece and Rome. This is a case not so much of substantive ignorance, but informational ignorance—failure to make use of already available data.

The *punalua* or *punaru* is simply a Polynesian word for "bigamy" (the root "dua, rua, lua, dalawa" means "two" in the Malayan-Polynesian-Micronesian-Pilipino-Melanesian language family, the root "puna" means "root, tree, source," etc.), and applies either to bigamy or to non-kinship sexual arrangements between two distinct families, similar to those found among the Eskimo, Chukchi (the "warat") the "upanga" of the ovi-Herero in S.W. Africa, and among the Nivkh ["Gilyaks"], some Micronesians, some Australians. Metal wares and pottery would be exceedingly difficult to fabricate from the soil on Polynesian islands, but Polynesians' woodwork, bonework, and stonework dispel all illusions as to an alleged "savage" status. Except on Tonga and Fiji, Polynesians had no use for the bow and arrow except as toys for children, or to shoot rats for fun.

There is no known reliable way of finding out, at this time, whether the absence of unilineal clans among the Polynesians means that they already long since left a stage of unilineal clans behind in their history, or whether they have never been organized into unilineal clans at any time in their history. "Group marriage" is a spurious construct whether applied to Polynesians or anyone else, and lacks support in any ethnographic data.

Morgan's conjectured "stages" of the "consanguineal family" and "Punaluan family" are totally without validation, which faces us with the stark fact that neither we nor anyone else have the remotest scientifically supportable conception of what the origin of the family or the origin of the clan is. The evidence accumulated during this century shows conclusively that the nuclear family, understanding by that the unit of a mother and her children and the mother's husband (jurally and probably biologically the father of at least some of those children), recognized as a jural or legal unit by the culture in question, and almost invariably residing as a spatially distinct unit, is universal or near-universal. The only exceptions are the Nayar of Kerala (S. E. India) and the Tiwi of Melville Is., north of Australia, where the mother's husband is most certainly not the biological father of the mother's children—but these "exceptions" are still variants, not independent forms, and not "vestiges" of any primeval stage. Polygamic families are variants of nuclear families.

The most primitive ethnographically known societies, sufficiently isolated for millenia without being affected by more complex societies, are the Australians, among whom

monogamic or polygamic families, embedded in virilocal bands and interlinked by weak matrilineal clans, predominate (including the Tiwi variant). Hence, the ethnographic data do not rule out extending the nuclear family much further back into pre-history, past the Mesolithic (Australians and Tasmanians) into the Paleolithic. (The absolute cutoff point for the nuclear family would be the invention of language. Without conventionalized symbolic spoken language, it would be impossible to distinguish or conceptualize such cultural items as "father," "cross-cousin," etc., whereas "mother" is recognizable not only by apes, but by any mammals.)

3. *Typology of the Nuclear Family*

The term *nuclear family* is used in this article as a generic term covering variants, synchronic and diachronic, of a basic human social unit comprising a mother and her offspring plus her recognized husband, who is the jural father (and in most cases also the biological father) of at least some of the mother's children. This unit cohabits as an aggregate jurally and spatially distinct from other such units in the community. The marital relations may be (relatively) permanent or temporary, spouses sometimes plural, children exchanged for adoption, and the matrix of other social institutions in which the family is wholly or partially embedded can vary, but these are variants of the *nuclear family*. The *patriarchal* nuclear family is a subset of the nuclear family; the "nuclear family as we know it" is patriarchal and *isolated*, left to its own meager resources in a class-stratified society with no support from clans and little support from close kin. The subset of *prepatriarchal* nuclear families includes the construct of *pairing family* visualized by Morgan, and *dislocal* families in which the husband-father and wife reside normally apart (extremely rare: agricultural Menangkabau in Sumatra, Nayar in S.E. India, formerly in Palau and Guam (Micronesia)).

In some typologies, the term *nuclear family* is equated to the *patriarchal nuclear family* while at the same time employed as the generic term defined above. This abuse of language leads to the confusion of projecting the patriarchal family too far back into early history on the basis of evidence of actually prepatriarchal nuclear families, as bourgeois sociologists and social-anthropologists are wont to do, or denying that any nuclear family existed until recently, as matriarchalists are wont to do.

Nuclear families do not exist in long-term isolation from communities anywhere. A typology of nuclear families cannot be complete or adequate without considering the social matrix (extended families, band, community, clan, localized subclan, subcommunity, tribe, state, networks of cooperating families) in which the nuclear family is embedded, and the rights and obligations of the kin of both spouses (mother's brother, father's sister, matriline and patriline, etc.) with respect to the adult and immature members of the family.

The isolated patriarchal family, the "nuclear family as we know it today," rests on and channelizes institutionalized oppression of women, but the earliest transitional forms of nuclear family in the remote paleolithic could well have been invented or evolved primarily on the initiative of the women for their own reasons and advantages

(further socialization of hominid males; imposing specific obligations, while conferring specific privileges, on the individual hunter and forming social ties with the hunters' kin).

All human societies exhibit some variant of nuclear family. All are formed as communities (nomadic or settled) functioning as residence units and economic units, and many but not all cultures feature communities interlinked through clans. The origin of the family and the origin of the clan are unknown. Communities and families, and clans or clan-like descent groups where they exist, are interdependent, performing independent functions (dialectically contradictory and interrelated), but cannot be derived from each other on the basis of logical deduction (though some scholars are rash enough to attempt that). Nowhere do clans function as economic or productive units.

Primatological evidence, reliable only from the last two decades (field studies on chimpanzees, mountain gorilla, baboons, macaques, gibbons, etc.), indicate that stable social groups normally including males and females are common to all Pongidae and higher primates, thus dating back to the Miocene. But the universally constant basic unit is the mother and her brood, or a troop of related mothers, in all cases. There is no social unit remotely comparable to a human family, with its kinship network (gibbons are reported to pair, but a kinship network, and hence a family, would be impossible without symbolization and speech).

Proto-hominids split off from a common stock with apes two to four million years ago or more, and since then developed culture, speech, and symbolizing, without which it would not be possible to invent such cultural entities as: father, mother-in-law, cousin, family, clan, paternity. There undoubtedly existed some intermediate forms of family-like organization bringing the prospective biological father and his kin into closer association with the specific female and her kin, in which the spouses and kin would be linked together into a socially recognized network of rights and obligations. But there exist no reliable ethnographic data or archeological data on which to base valid materialist inferences as to precisely what such intermediate forms might be.

4. Marx and Engels: Scientists, Not Special Pleaders

The fact that Marx and Engels, who themselves had undertaken no study of primitive peoples, endorsed Morgan's work as expressed in *Ancient Society* and bought Morgan's schemata lock, stock, and barrel is not to their discredit. Of all the great minds of the middle of the last century mulling over ethnological problems — Comte, Maine, Spencer, Morgan, Lubbock, McLennan, Tylor — Morgan was the only one who based his theorizing and conjectures on first-hand contact with at least some primitive peoples. Morgan also towered above contemporary ethnographers (Bastian, Miklukho-Maklai, Schoolcraft, Catlin) in the breadth of his studies and the depth and power of his theoretical probing and inferences.

Marx and Engels are no more wrong in accepting at face value the findings of the leading and most reliable scientist of the time in the field of ethnology than they were in accepting the findings of Darwin in biological evolution, or Faraday, Helmholtz, and Maxwell in phys-

ics. *The Role of Labor in the Transition from Ape to Human* reveals Engels embracing and arguing a now-discredited Lamarckian view on hereditary transmission of acquired physical traits, a view that has since been completely overthrown and superseded by Mendelian genetics. Georg Mendel (1822-1884) was a contemporary of Marx and Engels, but the importance of his studies and genetic theory was rediscovered, and hence made accessible to the scientific community, in 1900, five years after Engels' death. Engels is consequently "guilty" only of *substantive ignorance* in this matter, as was everyone else (except Mendel) prior to 1900.

The materialist method cannot be frozen at a particular level of acquisition of substantive scientific knowledge, and made to stand or fall on the basis of any current level of approximation to material reality. In *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, Lenin makes references to the "ether," a theoretical construct which has been displaced and discredited in physics, but which was still current and accepted among most physicists at the time Lenin was writing. His use of the term in no way invalidates Lenin's materialist methodology. The application of the materialist method, and also the application of the less adequate but still powerful empiricist (scientific positivist) method, to investigation of scientific problems is bound to confirm and deepen, correct and modify, or refute and overthrow, previously held views, constructs, and theories, despite occasional errors, blind allies, and detours.

Marx and Engels have to their credit the founding of the only coherent and viable body of theory and methodology in political economy or macroeconomics, and warranted predictions based on that theory have been confirmed spectacularly by the October Revolution and subsequent developments, more than meeting all the tests of scientific empiricism. The complaint by bourgeois critics that Marx and Engels predicted the "wrong" country for the first revolution overturning capitalism to take place in (Russia instead of Germany, England, or France as expected) is ludicrous. Scientifically testable predictions and hypotheses warranted by the underlying body of theory (in this case requiring that capitalism be replaced, through the action of the working class in a country where capitalist relations have been established and a working class has come into existence, by a collectivist society based on that working class) are not to be confused with theoretically unwarranted crystal-ball hunches (which country, of several suitable ones? in what month of what year? how come they didn't predict that Lenin would be bald in 1917?).

Though by no means myopic empiricists who narrow their research and theorizing to trivia that can be readily tested for verification or refutation in the quest for a Ph. D. thesis, Marx and Engels were not contemptuous of persistent attention to facts and verification. Rigorous searches for verified facts, testing of hypotheses, caution with respect to wild theorizing, characterize all of their work in economics, history, political economy. Engels wades into E. Dühring mercilessly for the latter's undisciplined and extravagant system-building free from restraints of attention to detail and empirical testability, a phenomenon only too common also in ethnology before Boas, Lowie, Radcliffe-Brown, and Malinowski got started "cleaning

out the rubbish." Even while accepting L. H. Morgan as authority, in *Origin . . .* Engels does not fail to take note of limitations in existing ethnographic knowledge, suggests that "Morgan went too far" on his punaluan hypothesis, states that "some of Morgan's particular hypotheses have been shaken, or have even become obsolete," and looks forward eagerly to the acquisition of new relevant data. This is clearly light-years removed from the stance and attitudes of the special pleader who hangs for dear life onto a pet exotic hypothesis, rejecting mounting evidence that tends to contradict and refute it, and keeps eyes and ears open only for corroborations and supporting auxiliary hypotheses, no matter how tenuous and specious.

In this context, Marxists have no cause for shame or apprehension in facing the fact that Engels' gambit in ethnology was deficient in many respects.

5. *British and American Empiricist Social-Anthropologists: Evolution, Racism, Status of Women*

Evolution. On the whole, the qualitative change brought about in the science after the turn of the century was a vast improvement, with crippling blows being dealt to dilettantism and racism, and scientific empiricism reigning triumphant as methodology and philosophy. From a historical-materialist standpoint, the way ethnographic studies and ethnological theory advanced in that period is a mixed bag, with the gain in solid hard empirical work and amassing of a bulk of far more reliable data partly paid for in an increased contempt for theory and deprecation of all nomothetic generalizations, and with interests in "origins" and long-term historical evolution written off as pointless pursuits incapable of leading to serious verifiable research.

Comrade Reed's assessment of this turnabout has been: ". . . a reaction set in against this materialist-historical approach to the prehistoric past of humankind. Around the turn of the century anthropology changed its course. New trends of thought, headed by Franz Boas in the United States and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown in England, asserted themselves against the methods and results of Morgan, Tylor, and other nineteenth century evolutionists. Anthropology suffered a severe setback in theory as the new currents acquired ascendancy in academic circles . . ." (*ISR*, April 1972). Again, "In the hands of these revisionists, anthropology fell from its lofty and promising beginnings . . ." (*Problems . . .*) I find this view untenable. The pre-Boas situation was not one of "lofty" theoretical advances or anything resembling historical materialism, but a morass of sloppy dilettantism, concoction of wild and exotic theories and mechanical-stage evolutionary schemata not based on any reliable findings or research (Frobenius, Frazer, Perry, Elliot Smith, Robertson-Smith), mystical idealism (Frobenius, Schebesta, Lang, Schmidt), racist biological reductionism (Spencer, Brinton, Powell, McGee), with sporadic useful fieldwork (Codrington, Junod, B. Spencer, F. Gillen, Rivers, Fison and Howitt), and occasional limited insights from Tylor, H. Spencer, Rivers, Westermarck, Cunow, Starcke and Durkheim, none of whom were capable of leading the way out of the swamp.

The Boas historical-particularist school (Kroeber, Lowie, Swanton, Goldenweiser, Sapir, Ashley, Montagu, Benedict,

Hoebel, Radin, Henry, Herskovits) and the British synchronic-functionalists (Radcliffe-Brown, Haddon, Malinowski, Evans-Pritchard, Fortes, Mair, Schapera), despite their many defects, laid a solid empirical scientific basis in ethnographic studies in the only way possible at that time in history.

One of the disadvantages inherited from Morgan is his reliance on secondary or tertiary noncausal factors such as kinship terms and filiation patterns as criteria for retrodicting levels or stages of evolution, while de-emphasizing material causal factors such as level of technology, productivity, social inequalities, and primary material criteria such as complexity of social structure, population density, political organization. Antievolutionists point out that Euro-Americans have the "same social structure" as Eskimos, meaning by "social structure" the pattern of kinship terminology currently arrived at by (non-Siberian) Eskimos and most European languages, particularly terms used to describe or address cousins, and ignoring such trivial facets of "social structure" as large cities, political parties, jails, standing armies, capitalist class, etc., which industrial peoples have, and polygamy, hunting groups, migratory camps, shamans, arrangements where two men join in a work partnership extending to sharing their wives (with appropriate pseudo-kinship terms), such as Eskimos have had.

Thus, G. P. Murdock writes triumphantly: "an objective classification of societies in terms of their similarities of social structure [kinship terms for cousins—R. V.] results in grouping together under the same specific type and subtype such dissimilar peoples as the New England Yankees and the forest-dwelling Negroes of the Andaman Islands, the imperialistic Incas . . . the lowly Yaghan of Tierra del Fuego, the Chinese . . . Nowhere does even a revised evolutionism find a shred of support" (*Social Structure*, 1949). All he has proved is that kinship terms are not reliable retrodictors of technological level and social complexity.

Some American ethnologists (Marvin Harris, Elman Service) and some Soviet ethnologists (N. A. Butinov, V. R. Kabo) have expressed dissatisfaction with this "familistic" focus carried over from Morgan. In contrast, anti-evolutionist social-anthropologists tend to agree that the "powerful tool" of analysis of kinship terms is the one and only worthwhile heritage from Morgan (e.g. Meyer Fortes, *Kinship and the Social Order: The Legacy of Lewis Henry Morgan*, 1963; *Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures*, Univ. of Rochester, Aldine Publ. Co. 1969).

Since the only theory of general historical evolution worth consideration (Morgan's) was untenable in many respects, the empiricists' claim that they were not all against "history," not against "evolution," per se, but for rigorous standards of research and proof, that what they rejected were specific evolutionary and racist schemata, unvalidated and untestable hypotheses and conjectures, cannot be dismissed lightly.

Marxism cannot be satisfied with empiricist nihilistic skepticism, eclecticism, drowning in idiographic minutiae and even in relative trivia, almost-systematized aversion to systematization, and many other defects of these empiricist pioneer social scientists, but the only viable alternatives in this case were even more loathsome. We can find agreement with the empiricists that, before launch-

ing ambitious theories of evolution, it would be helpful to amass a fund of reliable relevant facts (while bearing in mind that, in order to judge which data are likely to be "relevant," we have to venture some working hypothesis or a tentative theory).

Racism. Both ethnology and anthropology were saturated with racist determinism and virulent racism during the nineteenth century. Among the anthropologists, Gobineau, Broca, Hunt, Ripley amassed heaps of skull measurements and "theories" to prove the innate superiority of the Caucasoid "race" over all other humans. James Hunt, President of the Anthropological Society of London, and respected by scientists such as Darwin, Spencer, Wallace, unburdened himself of the following:

"It appears that in the Negro, the growth of the brain is sooner arrested than in a European. This premature union of the bones of the skull may give a proof to much of the mental inferiority which is seen in the Negro race. . . . There is no doubt but what the Negro brain bears a great resemblance to a European female, or to a child's brain . . . and thus it approaches the ape far more than a European." ("On the Negro's Place in Nature," address to the Anthropol. Soc., 1863.)

Similar views prevailed among ethnologists.

Herbert Spencer, originator of the concept "survival of the fittest," and leading the way in his capacity as the recognized "greatest social scientist of the 19th century," explicitly applied this concept to social struggles of the day, looking forward to elimination of the "inferior races" and lower economic strata as a natural and inexorable outcome of the historical process. His disciples in the ranks of American ethnologists included Prof. Dan'l Brinton, Wm. McGee, J.W. Powell, the leading lights in the pre-Boas field. Explicit American white racism against Blacks and against immigrant workers from east Europe and the Mediterranean area was on a constant virulent upswing from the 1890s to the 1920s.

Thus L. H. Morgan, in his capacity as Representative to Congress from Rochester, in the early 1850s:

" . . . it is time to fix some limits to the reproduction of this black race among us. The black population has no independent vitality among us. In the south while the blacks are property, there can be no assignable limit to their reproduction. It is too thin a race intellectually to be fit to propagate and I am perfectly satisfied from reflection that the feeling towards this race is one of hostility throughout the north. We have no respect for them whatever." (C. Resek, *Lewis Henry Morgan; American Scholar*, 1960.)

Morgan apparently felt that slavery was perpetuating the "intellectually thin" Afro-Americans, and favored abolition as a means of getting rid of them through natural selection, in the Spencerian survival of the fittest. "Race" as a determining factor was accepted by most social scientists a century ago, Marx and Engels being conspicuous and lone exceptions. It is clear from a footnote to *Origins* . . . that Engels could find out nothing about Morgan aside from the latter's written works.

Franz Boas, equally competent a scientist in anthropology as in ethnology, waged just as infatigable a battle against racism in anthropometrics and against Spencerian racist determinism as he did against unproven conjectures on the evolution of society, and on the same

empiricist basis: that their contentions were not proved empirically and had not been arrived at through scientifically valid methods. The exacting standards that Boas imposed on anthropometry, where scientific procedure had been as backward as in ethnology, and his untiring challenging of racist ideology and its "scientific" pretensions, earned him such hatred on the part of many American anthropologists that a faction of anthropologists (Putnam, Walcott, Holmes, Hrdlicka, Davenport) managed to strip him of his membership in the American Anthropological Assoc. on Dec. 30, 1919, in one round of a bitter dispute and split between American social-anthropologists and physical-anthropologists.

Boas continued his battle against racism through the Thirties, when the atmosphere in the country liberalized slightly, and till his death in 1943. M. F. Ashley Montagu, his leading disciple in anthropology, has been effective in the forefront of the battle against racist "science" in anthropology, where it still raises its head (e.g., Carleton Coon), whereas racism has never regained a foothold in post-Boas ethnology. This should give pause to comrades who accept the tendentious view that Morgan's specific evolutionary schemata have been rejected by all professional social-anthropologists since 1920 solely, or even primarily, in order to accommodate to the needs of ruling-class ideology.

Status of Women. It is misleading to posit a one-to-one correlation between espousal of a matriarchalist doctrine and pro-feminism. There is no logical or emotional incompatibility between accepting the notion that women held a "high position" or even ruled in some society in the remote past and conviction that it is right and fitting for the men to keep women "in their place" today. Bachofen, the original matriarchalist, had that cake and ate it, granting the "savages" their idyllic and wondrous matriarchal ways, and simultaneously savoring with intellectual satisfaction the Hegelian-idealist synthesis in which the male "principle" straightens things out in today's world. Brinton, Powell, and McGee were even cruder.

Franz Boas (initially a matriarchalist, prior to 1896), who was second to no one in driving matriarchalist theories and attitudes clean out of the science in the space of two decades, championed equal rights in his own backyard—developing a whole constellation of leading women social-anthropologists (Reichardt, Mead, Lantis, Benedict, the Soviet matriarchalist Y. P. Averkieva). Anthropologist M. F. Ashley Montagu, Boas' leading disciple in physical anthropology, has the utmost contempt for matriarchal dogma, but outdid all matriarchalists in marshalling coherent scientific data and arguments against male supremacy in his work *The Natural Superiority of Women*, written at a time when there was no special market for pro-women books (1952).

It is possible to be a stone-dogmatic matriarchalist while personally engaged in the brutal suppression of gains previously made by women (J. V. Stalin).

All industrial societies are saturated with male chauvinism, and social-anthropologists, while generally liberal and more open to shedding some of their ethnocentrism, are saturated with their share of it. Would this affect their collection, as well as their interpretation, of data relevant to women? I don't doubt it. Thomas Rhys William writes:

"Anthropologists seem rarely to employ women as interpreters or field assistants. Many female anthropologists have employed males in these tasks. It seems that most communities more readily accept a man in the role of an interpreter and field assistant. There are good reasons, however, for using a female interpreter. Research on child-rearing practices, women's sexual behavior, economic and special craft activities will often be studied more efficiently with a woman interpreter acting as intermediary with key female informants." (*Field Methods in the Study of Culture*, 1967)

Did the matriarchalist ethnologists do any better in their day, before they were so cruelly eclipsed? No. The least that can be said for the modern empiricist social-anthropologists is that they do collect data voluminously (which is more than could be said for the matriarchalist armchair-theorizers) and some of the data inevitably deal with women.

All fieldworkers diligently and honestly collect data on kinship terms, filiation and inheritance patterns, postmarital residence rules, and sexual division of labor. That takes care of most of the matriarchalists' concern, except for ferreting out "vestiges" of presumed earlier matriarchal structures. But that doesn't even really begin to cover the data that could be collected on women for synchronic and diachronic cross-cultural studies.

Ironically, matriarchalist dogma trips up on itself in its incorrect identification of patrilineal clans and nuclear families with patriarchy. Nuclear families, whatever their specific weight in the matrix of social structures in the community, and whatever their special variant features in the particular culture, are universal. Many cultures with patrilineal clans and patrilocal post-marital residence lack social stratification and any means of institutionalized oppression, so that the social position of the women more or less balances that of the men. But if these prepatriarchal cultures are still "patriarchal" in matriarchalist dogma, why should opponents of matriarchalism object? In that way, many societies with "matriarchal" (i.e., egalitarian) features end up classified as patriarchal. Matriarchalist dogma can not only act as a diversion from probing into the status of women in the past, but here becomes a positive impediment.

R. Piddington, a British synchronic functionalist: "In older anthropological works, the terms patriarchy and matriarchy, or father-right and mother-right, are sometimes used to correspond with patrilinearity and matrilinearity. But these terms are best avoided since they may convey misleading implications about the power and status of women in matrilinear communities. It is highly dangerous to generalize about the position of women in primitive society, but something must be said on the subject, because there are many misinterpretations which have been put forward. At one extreme is the view that women occupy, or once occupied, the dominant position associated with the term matriarchy, a conception which no one would seriously defend today. But the contrary view, that women in primitive society occupy an utterly degraded and menial position, being regarded as mere chattel, is still frequently put forward . . . The view that women occupy a degraded position in primitive society is often supported by superficial observations and spurious arguments. Though their social role is often

less spectacular [sic] than that of the opposite sex, women have their own spheres of influence from which they derive satisfactions and rights which are definitely validated in social customs and usage . . ." (*Introduction to Social Anthropology*).

This can be taken as one of many corroborations of the fact that patriarchal features are weak, poorly developed, or nonexistent among many primitive peoples, whatever their filiation and post-marital residence rules. One of the most interesting "matriarchal" propositions—that ethnographic data indicate patriarchal male domination does not extend far back into time—is validated, even though the whole matriarchalist schema cannot stand up. Other "matriarchalist" theorems that can be validated empirically, even without the support of the overall theory (in fact, much better without the support of the overall theory, which detracts from and compromises the theorems in question), are: 1) the prevalence of primitive communism and absence of private property in the means of production (as distinguished from personal property), and 2) the crucial contributions to the development of human society made specifically by women (a theorem testable on the basis of the sexual division of labor in primitive groups).

People biased favorably toward matriarchalist views often suspect that evidence for "matriarchy" is being suppressed, distorted, or minimized by sinister patriarchalists. Curiously, an opposite process is often at work. Observers from a society much further advanced in patriarchal development are often shocked when they observe the state of affairs in more weakly patriarchalized cultures, and jump to the conclusion that the women "wear the pants . . . are Amazons . . . have the men under their thumb." This misunderstanding accounts for a huge proportion of matriarchalist "data." For example, the dilettant ethnologist Briffault reports that a 17th century Japanese traveler observed the "Gilyaks" [Nivkh], and found that the women were in complete control. That's the way it may well have looked to the traveler from super-patriarchal Japan, but his assessment of the situation would have been strange news to the Nivkh women—and to the overbearing Nivkh men.

This fallacy is analogous to that made by some white South Africans visiting the United States, whose minds are blown by the way Afro-Americans are "running around loose . . . pushing white folk around . . . getting away with murder."

The problem of what contributions to the development of human culture were made by women generally, given the universal sexual division of labor, was tackled by the matriarchalist O. T. Mason (*Women's Share in Primitive Culture*, 1911). In quaint, lyrical, and patronizing style, he presents a poorly organized anecdotal account of work by primitive women in various fields such as: food preparation and food storage, tending and use of fire, materials processing (weaving, spinning, sewing, basketry, working of skins, fur, leather, pottery, ceramics, stonework, shellwork), toolmaking, knowledge and use of medicines and herbs, horticulture, house-building, load carrying, language. Supporting data available at the time are cited. The text could be edited to a fraction of its volume without substantive loss. There is no attempt at a statistical survey to correlate patterns in work done

exclusively or mostly by women, work done exclusively or mostly by men, or by both sexes in part (as when men build the frame of the house and women are responsible for thatching the roof and finishings, or when men are responsible for carrying fire during nomadic wanderings, but only nonmenstruating women are empowered to tend the fire hearth when camping, etc.), or to correlate the above with level of culture and predominant production activities.

Although all complete ethnographic accounts deal with women's status and women's activities, I know of no adequate survey of the subject drawing upon the enormous volume of data available in scattered papers and monographs during this century. A brief paper by G. P. Murdock (*Social Forces*, vol. 15, 551-553 (1937)) contains a useful table of economic activities broken down by sexual division of labor, based on data referable to 224 tribes with some higher civilizations thrown in. Metal working, weapon making, hunting of land and aquatic animals are found to be universally exclusive male activities, while women predominate in grain grinding, water carrying, cooking, gathering of plants and herbs, clothing manufacture, and preservation of meat and fish. Other activities are graded proportionately with statistical weights. These tabular data could be studied with emphasis on those activities most likely to promote significant advances in culture under paleolithic conditions.

The prevalent view among social scientists and in the general public is that what primitive men do (hunting, fighting) is more "prestitious . . . spectacular . . . interesting . . . exciting . . . intellectually stimulating," while what women do is "only" domestic (everything else except hunting and fighting?), a view which is not only androcentrically biased, but grossly underrates the crucial labor performed by primitive women.

Some books by women social-anthropologists about primitive women: *Tiwi Wives*, Jane Goodale; *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, Cath. Berndt; *Aboriginal Woman, Sacred and Profane*, Phyllis Kaberry.

6. *Soviet Ethnology* (extracted for separate article)

7. *Summary*

A) There is more than one important way in which Marxism can inform ethnology, and vice-versa, at the present time. Unlike most other social sciences with academic standing, ethnology tends to studies of a variety of societies rather than limiting its focus to the present society, and thus inherently shares common ground and overlap with Marxism. This common interest is explicitly recognized by such American ethnologists as Leslie White, Marshall Sahlins, Marvin Harris, Elman Service, Morton Fried, and others who champion a materialist (however mechanical, nondialectical, or antidialectical) approach in ethnology against prevailing eclectic and idealist trends, and who look favorably upon Marxism as a useful and superior methodology (despite what they perceive as the anomalously backward and naive matriarchalism accepted and defended by adherents of political groups pro-

fessing Marxism).

This means that small numbers of social science students of qualitatively high academic caliber are being, and will be, oriented favorably toward groups and parties calling themselves Marxist and claiming an interest in developing Marxist theory. This also means a qualitatively different, specialized, and knowledgeable audience we will have to address ourselves to, and exchange views with, in this field.

The general problem, also being tackled by Soviet ethnologists as they shake loose from their matriarchalist swaddling bands, is one of developing an adequate materialist approach to the study of a whole range of societies known to ethnography, and the implications for prehistory. Technology and productivity, production of means of subsistence, exchange of products in societies where this is a major factor, limitations and advantages of the ecological environment and efficiency in exploiting it, demographic factors such as population size, population density, rate of change in population, size of settlements, prevailing modes of production and distribution, and conflict between competing and opposing cultures or between groups and strata within a socially differentiated culture, would take primacy, within such a research approach, over the idealistic and familistic orientations prevalent today.

B) This article explicitly supersedes and repudiates my komchvanstvo-laden premature article of two years ago (*DB*, vol. 29, No. 23, 1971);

C) It must be emphasized that the inadequacy of the specific matriarchal theory of social origins stemming from Bachofen and Morgan does not inevitably invalidate important theorems which, while incorporated within that theory, do not stand or fall with it, but which are independently validated or amenable to empirical test. These theorems would then become part of an adequate historical-materialist theory of social evolution applicable to pre-class society, and to human sociogenesis.

Important constituents of such a theory would be:

1) the axiom of the primacy of the material causal factors referred to above (technological-economic-demographic-ecological and political conflict) over secondary and superstructural factors (ideology, kinship law and customs, religion, specific cultural traits, psychology and interpersonal transactions);

2) theorems on the specific and general evolution of the community, clan, family, political organization;

3) primitive social equality, no class or caste oppression and exploitation and no consistent institutionalized oppression of women (or anyone) before certain material prerequisites are met;

4) primitive communism preceding subsequent development of private property in basic economic resources and in the means of production;

5) basic unity of the world historical process, granting diversity in specific lines of evolutionary development (here powerful support is brought by the independent and parallel evolution and development of class societies in disparate areas such as: 1) the Americas, 2) Europe-Asia-Africa, 3) Oceania).

July 10, 1973

by Sudie, Los Angeles Branch; and
Geb, San Francisco Branch

Back during the 1971 pre-convention discussion, there was an article which advocated the perspective of a mass feminist party, similar to the SWP's perspective for mass Raza and Black parties (see "Toward a Female Party," by Sudie and Geb, DB Vol. 29 No. 7).

The '71 convention didn't accept that perspective. We have had two years since then to judge the question further, and some developments in those two years are relevant to the discussion.

We weren't able to respond to the arguments against the feminist party that were presented by comrades in the '71 discussion, since these arguments were presented too late—the discussion period was over before we saw them. Part of the purpose of this article is to deal with those arguments.

* * *

THE QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE

The first question to deal with in discussing a certain type of party is the question of principle. Is it within revolutionary principles to support a certain kind of party or not, and why? A party of the "left wing" of the bourgeoisie would be out of our principles to support, for example; it is within our principles to support parties of an oppressed nationality.

Our attitude towards feminist parties in principle has to come from our basic attitude toward feminism, which itself comes from our basic analysis of the position of women in modern society. Since Engels wrote *Origin of the Family*, we have known that within the modern, bourgeois family, the man "is the bourgeois and the wife represents the proletariat." From ancient Greece to modern bourgeois society, woman is "the slave of man's lust and a mere instrument for the production of children"—her slavery hasn't been ended, just "glossed over."

The SWP unconditionally supports the struggle of women to end their slavery, just as unconditionally as we support the struggles against wage-slavery, chattel-slavery, national-slavery, etc. So it is certainly within our principles to support some particular form of the feminist struggle, such as a feminist party. If a party is consistently and militantly feminist, expressing the feminist interests of the masses of women, then that is enough by itself to make it within our principles to support it, because "feminism is a revolutionary struggle in its own right," as the YSA NEC has said (1970 YSA women's liberation resolution).

In any particular situation, it might not be a good idea to give even critical support to a certain feminist party, just as in many situations we don't give even critical support to a certain labor party, or a certain Third World party. But such a decision is made in the context of a principled support to the struggles of women, workers, and oppressed nationalities, and to those organizations, coalitions, and political parties, which ac-

tually advance these struggles.

The 1971 SWP political resolution (p. 15) recognizes that ". . . the American revolution will have a combined character. It will be a revolution by the oppressed nationalities for self-determination together with a working-class revolution." Our article on the feminist party at that time suggested that along with these two ingredients there is also a third, the female revolution "to abolish their status as mere instruments of production" (the *Manifesto*). We aren't sure to what extent other comrades have accepted women as one of the basic ingredients of the combined revolution.

Sometimes it's argued that "a major factor in our support to a Chicano or Black party is the almost unalloyed proletarian composition of Blacks, Chicanos and Chicanas . . ." (see Lynn Henderson's answer to us on the feminist party, in DB No. 22 in '71, p. 39). The logic of this is that there is not any especially high percentage of workers in the female sex, and so the SWP shouldn't be quite so favorable to a female party.

The problem with that logic is that the percentage of a group which is working class, is not a very reliable measure of how oppressed that group is, or how revolutionary its struggles and its parties are. Many oppressed nationalities are mostly peasant, and therefore petty-bourgeois. Not too long ago Blacks in the US were largely sharecroppers. On the other hand, there are Black and Raza millionaires. It's entirely possible that at some future point, the Black bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie would get together to form a bourgeois Black party, just like the Parti Quebecois in Quebec. That would be an example of a Black party we wouldn't support.

The "proletarian composition" factor by itself would argue in favor of supporting the Black Panther Party, a Black party with an "almost unalloyed proletarian composition." The SWP rejects the Panthers, because their politics prevent them from becoming the party of the Black masses. On the other hand, a Black party which had the right kind of politics would be worth supporting enthusiastically—even if it started out as largely student-based.

The revolutionary nature of Raza, Black, and feminist struggles is not a result of the percentage of these groups which are workers, but rather a result of their oppression. The political character of their parties comes from the political character of their struggles.

When Engels says in *Origin of the Family* that in the modern, bourgeois family, the man "is the bourgeois and the wife represents the proletariat," he was trying to help us see the similarity between class oppression and sexual oppression.

Why a Party

A party is an all-purpose political organization. The AFL-CIO basically only deals with economic struggle. WONAAC only dealt with abortion and related issues.

NPAC, only with the war. None of these have run candidates of their own for public office. None of them have seriously related to gay liberation, to the struggle for bilingual schools for the barrio, to legalizing marijuana, etc.

In the United States today, the elections are at the center of political life, and almost every group that calls itself a party takes part in the elections sooner or later. Many parties are completely centered around elections. The kind of party the masses need—whether a revolutionary socialist party or a labor party or a party of an oppressed nationality or a feminist party—is the kind that is dedicated to mobilizing and leading them in struggle for their liberation. So long as elections remain at the center of politics in the minds of the masses, this will require taking part in them. But it requires much more, from organizing a strike-support committee, to organizing rallies for the ERA, to publicizing cases of police brutality.

La Raza Unida Party is in many ways a good example of a party which is making a real contribution to the struggle. It generally has an activist membership. It runs energetic campaigns against the parties of the status quo in the elections, and carries the struggle to the masses all year round. Women need a female party which is generally along the same lines, only with a feminist rather than Raza-nationalist program.

The reason women need a political party, is to struggle for political power for the oppressed sex as a group. This doesn't have to mean setting up a female state. For instance, the recent abortion victory was a real strengthening of women's collective political power. So was winning the vote. Passing the ERA will be the same. A female party, by leading mass struggles for concrete examples of female power like these, would contribute in an important way to the revolutionary process.

Comradé Matilde Zimmermann's answer to the female party question (see DB No. 22 in '71) claims that "in effect, Sudie and Geb counterpose voting to action as the 'quickest' way of bringing feminist issues to masses of women." But Matilde has misunderstood the feminist party perspective.

Voting is itself a type of action. Masses of women took their first feminist action by voting for abortion or childcare or the ERA in various referendums. Voting for a feminist party would also be a feminist action.

The relation between voting and other kinds of action is the same for women as it is for Blacks, la Raza, workers, or socialists. Both are necessary; both should be integrated together. Election campaigns should be used to mobilize mass actions as well as to educate. Presenting an alternative to the parties of sexism helps to keep mass actions from getting absorbed into the Democratic Party. The best models in the US at present are the election campaigns of the Socialist Workers Party, and those of La Raza Unida Party. The same principles apply to other oppressed nationalities, workers, and to women.

The quickest way of bringing feminist issues to masses of women is the same as the quickest way of bringing nationalist issues to masses of la Raza—by using both: election campaigns, and other calls to mass actions.

The SWP developed its perspective for an independent Black political party as a result of developing the perspective of independent Black political action. This in

particular means being independent from the political parties of the system. Since it would be unrealistic to ask the masses of Blacks to jump overnight from supporting the Democrats to supporting the Socialist Workers, the intermediate stage of a Black party could help to act as a stepping-stone. Breaking the capitalist party monopoly is essential.

The same goes for independent female political action.

Program

The center of the program of a feminist party is feminism. We might be able to imagine a female party which was anti-feminist, but in reality it seems pretty safe to assume that any female party is almost certain to be a feminist party. Feminism is revolutionary in its own right; a feminist party would represent a challenge to the bourgeois order with far-reaching implications.

The SWP would not insist that a Raza or Black party must have a socialist program from the start. A party which expresses Raza or Black nationalist sentiment, and which mobilized the masses of the oppressed nationalities in struggle, would have the effect of helping to break the masses from capitalist politics, and bringing them closer to revolutionary socialist conclusions—even if its program began as basically a militant nationalist program without saying too much about other questions.

Likewise we should not insist that a feminist party must have a socialist program from the start. A socialist program could tend to exclude those women who were ready to split with capitalist politics in action and in voting, who were ready for dedicated work and militant struggle for feminist goals, who were ready for a feminist party—but not for socialism.

One argument that has been used against the call for a feminist party says that such a party—since it wants the right to rule society—needs to take a stand on every question under the sun, from Bangladesh to Allende to Watergate to marijuana to terrorism to tax reform. The argument then concludes that this would tend to divide the feminist movement. But there is no difference here between a feminist party, and La Raza Unida Party, or a Black party, or a labor party.

La Raza Unida Party, which is still in its stage of beginning growth into a mass party, is mainly concerned with issues that are the most immediate questions in the minds of the Raza masses. As the struggle moves forward, as the party becomes a mass party, then a more advanced program will be needed to deal with the more advanced stage of the struggle. This is a gradual process.

It would be divisive at this stage to try to set up a feminist party which supports every last sentence of the Transitional Program (it would also be divisive to try to set up a labor party with all of that at this stage!). But a feminist party which took as its beginning the basics of women's liberation (from childcare, the ERA, and women's studies programs, to end-the-war, stop inflation, etc.), could find itself rapidly winning the sympathy of millions of radicalizing women. Its analysis of these issues, from the viewpoint of the oppressed sex, would give its program a massive appeal.

In his answer to our 1971 article, Comrade Lynn Henderson bases himself largely on a misinterpretation. He thinks we are saying that "our support to a feminist par-

ty is to be extended irregardless and irrespective of its program" (p. 38). He doesn't give the quote from our article which he bases this interpretation on. He can't give it, because we never said such a thing.

Maybe our original article was in some ways incomplete, and so it led to misunderstandings such as Lynn's. So let's clear the question up now. The SWP is in favor of the formation of an independent Black political party, but the SWP doesn't necessarily support every organization which calls itself a Black party—for instance, the SWP doesn't support the Black Panther Party. There is a tactical question of how to apply the general principle of support to an independent Black political party to some particular concrete organization or candidates. We look at their program. We look at their actual policies in practice. We look at the kind of people involved, the number of people, the kind of organization (is it democratic?), who controls it, where it seems to be going, etc.

Our policy towards an independent female party should be the same.

The Future

In *Origin of the Family*, Engels referred to the founding of the patriarchy and private property, as "the world-historic defeat of the female sex." The socialist revolution will undo that defeat—it will be a world-historic victory for the female sex.

That doesn't necessarily mean that a socialist government will be all female. The primitive matriarchy in general didn't exclude men, and the coming female revolution doesn't necessarily have to either.

But in order for a socialist revolution to complete its most basic tasks it has to include a female revolution. The female sex, as a group, has been excluded from social and political power for thousands of years—it needs to win back, as a group, the power that has been denied it as a group. The purpose of a feminist party is to win political power for women as a group.

It is wrong to draw a difference between women's liberation and Black or Raza liberation by saying that Afro-America or la Raza might separate and set up a separate state. The basic separation is the separation that objectively exists now, between oppressed and oppressor—which applies between oppressed sex and oppressor sex just as much as between oppressed nation and oppressor nation.

Because of this objective separation, it is necessary for the oppressed groups to respond with another separation—forming all-Black, all-Raza, all-female, or other such groups or parties. This may end in the setting up of separate states, or it may not—the struggle will determine this.

There is no reason to rule out in advance the possibility of a separate women's state (even if this idea is shocking to those who believe that women are dependent on men). There are historical precedents in the ancient world, such as the Amazons or the nations of Lesbos, whose history is generally suppressed. There is a wing of the lesbian movement today which thinks along such lines (for instance, see the book *Lesbian Nation* by Jill Johnston). It is much too soon to predict how big this trend will be when the revolution comes. But there are over 100,000,000 women in the US alone—

including several million who are more-or-less exclusively gay, and many others who would dig on the idea of living in an all-female state, for all kinds of reasons. If the separatist trend in feminism represents the same percentage of feminists in the future, as it does now, then it seems entirely possible that a separate state will be demanded, and won, by a significant portion of the female sex.

There are very few cities in the US where all the oppressed nationalities put together add up to half the people. But women make up half, or a bit more than half, of every state, city, and town, from coast to coast. On the whole, the number of women in the US is at least triple the number of all the oppressed nationalities put together.

Women have not only the numbers, but also the power. The idea that women are powerless is a myth which plays an important role in keeping women from using their potential power. Look how easy women won the right to abortion. When women struggle as women they have the power of half the population. They also have the power to divide and disorient the ruling class itself. In addition, women can win the support of the working class any time the women of the working class decide to insist on and demand it. And women can win the support of the oppressed nationalities the same way. Most of all, women—as mothers—can win the support of the youth

It should be taken for granted that women have the right to an independent state, or any other form of independence they choose. Women have been oppressed so totally, for so many thousands of years, that they have the unconditional right to demand anything that they decide is necessary for their liberation. If a hundred thousand women demand Staten Island, if a million women demand Marin County—they'd have the support of every consistent revolutionary.

But the question of forming a party, doesn't depend on the question of an independent state. For women, or Blacks, or la Raza, the idea of a separate state is a ways into the future, and their needs are right now. A feminist party is needed to mobilize the masses of women in action to win female control of reproduction, to win free 24-hour childcare, to win the ERA and equal rights and opportunities in general, to win liberation for gay women, to end the oppression of female prisoners, to win freedom from rape, to end the suppression of women's history, etc.

The 1971 SWP resolution on women's liberation correctly says that "While women need allies, it is only women, organized independently . . . who can win full female liberation. No other movement can substitute for this." It is from this basic fact, that the need for a feminist party results.

Right Now

It is wrong to think that the idea of a mass, independent feminist party is an abstract conjecture about the distant future and to conclude that it is too soon to think about it.

It isn't a new idea. A feminist ran an independent, feminist campaign for president a century ago. The American Women's Party was a very important group in the time

of the suffrage movement and the winning of the vote.

The fact that the Feminist Party exists today shows that the women's liberation movement takes the idea seriously. Founded by Flo Kennedy and with Gloria Steinem, Kate Millet, etc., as members, the Feminist Party claims to have some 300 chapters around the country. Its membership is not very active as a group. In particular, the FP hasn't yet taken the step of running its own candidates for public office, which is an important part of a party's life. Instead, local chapters one by one have decided to support various existing candidates (Flo Kennedy reports that 30 to 40 FP chapters supported Jenness and Pulley of the SWP in '72). In general, one of the main things wrong with the Feminist Party is that it really isn't a party at all. Because of this, it can't be effective in winning women away from the Democratic Party.

How should we deal with the FP and its sympathizers? Not by telling them that a feminist party is a mistake because we don't call for a women's state. Not by telling them that a feminist party would split the movement. Not by telling them that women need action rather than voting. The best way to deal with them is to tell them of the need to break completely with the parties of sexism and capitalism, the need for the FP to be independent of and opposed to those parties, and the need for the FP to help mobilize women in mass feminist actions.

It is wrong to argue that "At this stage a new female party . . . could become nothing but a Women's Caucus of the Democratic Party . . . or . . . the Peace and Freedom Party," as Matilde does on page 30. This seems to underestimate the ability of women to do things independently of men. An independent feminist party is the opposite of a women's caucus of some party. It would be easier for us to help break the women represented by the National Women's Political Caucus away from the capitalist parties if we were proposing that they run independent candidates and move towards an independent feminist party. At this stage, only very few of them can see the Socialist Workers Party as even a realistic alternative. An independent feminist party could have much broader, much more immediate appeal.

Should we adopt the slogan, "Build a Feminist Party Now!"? This would be similar to the mistake the Workers League makes in their slogan, "Build a Labor Party Now!" There are many steps between here and there, and it would be unrealistic and sectarian to try to skip them. The women's party, like the labor party or the Black party, should be a general perspective which is carried out in many different concrete ways — it shouldn't be presented as a single slogan for use everywhere, all the time.

One of the most important concrete implications of the feminist party perspective is an understanding of the importance of multi-issue feminist groups. The 1971 SWP resolution on women's liberation had the correct perspective of seeing the need for both single-focus action coalitions like WONAAC, and the multi-issue women's liberation groups as well. When a women's liberation group begins running candidates against the capitalist parties, that's when we really start moving toward a feminist party.

It would be wrong to try to substitute any one feminist issue for the feminist movement as a whole — women need

both single-issue and multi-issue approaches. Some of the most successful work the SWP has done in the past two years was around abortion. In that situation, it would be very easy for us to lose some of our contact with the women's liberation movement as a whole, and to substitute the abortion movement for it. By the time of the November 1972 YSA convention, this was a serious problem. The women's liberation report at that convention must have been something like forty minutes long. Almost the entire report was about the abortion movement — all other aspects of women's liberation, put together, got less than one minute of this report. In reality, it was an abortion movement report, not a women's liberation movement report.

There was nothing wrong with having an abortion report as one of the main reports at that YSA convention. But it was wrong to have it as a *substitute* for a women's liberation report. It was wrong to ignore the child-care movement, the ERA, the present state of the various multi-issue groups from NOW to Female Liberation, the lesbian movement, the movement against rape, the feminist press, etc.

By concentrating almost exclusively on abortion, we put ourselves in the position of being somewhat disoriented by the tremendous victory when the Supreme Court repealed the abortion laws in January. This is somewhat like putting all our eggs in one basket — no matter how good a basket, we still shouldn't do it, we still need diversity.

The multi-issue feminist groups we've worked in, such as Female Liberation in Boston and in Berkeley, have suffered as a result of our comrades not playing an active and leading role in work around issues other than abortion. A perspective of building towards an independent female party would have made it easier for us to see the importance of work in multi-issue groups and on other issues, alongside our work on abortion, since a feminist party will to a large extent evolve out of the multi-issue type groups.

Our Opponents

In judging the perspective of a female party, it helps to look at how the various left tendencies would see it.

Those most opposed to feminism, like the Workers League or Progressive Labor, would have nothing to do with a feminist party and would openly fight against it. The tendencies who oppose feminism in general but support working-class feminism, would also oppose a feminist party, unless maybe it was a feminist labor party.

The ultralefts, if they stayed true to their ultraleftism, would have to oppose any feminist party which took part in elections, since ultraleftism calls for abstaining from elections.

The reformists would oppose a feminist party for the same reasons they oppose an independent Black party. They would rather support the "left" wing of the Democratic Party, or pick and choose between the two sexist parties, or at most would want a third, "people's" party.

There are basically only two political types who could fit comfortably into a mass, independent, action-oriented feminist party. One is the backbone of the feminist movement, the healthy independent. The other is the revolutionary socialist feminists.

The only political tendency around that could be comfortable with a female party perspective is the SWP majority.

This follows from our belief that feminism is a revolutionary movement in its own right, that only organizations of women can win female liberation, that it is wrong to abandon the masses to the establishment parties at election time, that breaking with the political parties of sexism is a qualitative step forward, etc.

We can also see this in the fact that among all the general left groups, only the SWP has the comparable position relative to the call for a mass, independent Black political party, and only the SWP has this kind of analysis

of La Raza Unida Party.

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The question of a feminist party will no doubt come up again and again in one form or another, for many years to come. It is important to have an understanding of the question which we can explain to the activists in the feminist movement without confusion, ambiguity, or incompleteness. The books of the past aren't adequate to answer new questions. Women's liberation in particular requires a big expansion of revolutionary theory.

July 4, 1973