

the socialist attitude to the homosexual struggle

Homosexuals have not always been oppressed. Our oppression is neither inevitable or unchangable. As socialists we are confident that it will be changed along with the society which is responsible for not only our oppression but that of women, blacks and working people in general.

We believe that homosexual oppression arose only with the division of society into classes and the consolidation of the patriarchal family system which is one of the pillars of its rule. Homosexuality contradicts the moral and ideological values which are used to prop up the family and the sexual mores which are built around it.

Flowing from this class society, and for us that means the present capitalist system, finds it necessary to oppress homosexuals. This is done through the complex system of morals and ethics which persecute us and in the discrimination we face right throughout society. Capitalism institutionalises our oppression in law and through the use of its police, its courts and its prisons.

liberation

It is because of this that we see our/as only being possible after the overthrow of the present system. While we can win many important reforms and make significant gains at present, it is only after putting an end to the society which is responsible for perpetuating our oppression through its institutions and its ideology, that we can really concieve of totally eliminating it.

We consider that a socialist transformation of society offers the basis for gay liberation because it creates the conditions for the elimination of the sexist nuclear family and the entrenched morality which is used to uphold it. This will be done by socialising the primary functions of the family by providing abundant facilities for cooking, laundry, caring for the old, young and sick, and thereby removing the economic compulsion which stands behind all human relations associated with the family. Socialism allows for the free expression of human beings in all areas of their lives.

During the late sixties and early seventies we saw the rise of a conscious movement of gay people to challenge their oppression in a large number of countries. The movement took its inspiration from from the feminist movement and other

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movements which had started to challenge the traditional values of this society. Although there has been a lull in the activity of Gay Liberation in Australia over the past year or so, the radicalisation of homosexuals still continues and is reflected widely. This conference is a telling example of that.

We believe that the Gay Liberation movement should be an independent, broad and non-exclusive movement which is able to unite homosexuals of differing views in a common struggle to end their oppression. We see the way forward for the movement - both in building itself, thus giving confidence to other homosexuals to come out and be proud in fighting for their rights, and as well in achieving gains which will positively effect the lives of all homosexuals - is to initiate campaigns, demonstrations, teach-ins, forums etc., around concrete demands which will mobilise large numbers of people in opposition to the crushing of our human and democratic rights. An action-oriented, non-elitist approach is essential if we are going to achieve our objectives.

One concrete example of how we could take up such a mass orientation is through making a submission to the current "Royal Commission on Human Relations" and engaging

The 6th. National Conference of the Socialist Youth Alliance will be held in Melbourne over the weekend October 4 & 5. If you are interested in attending the conference or finding out more about the SYA contact any one of the people whose names appear on this leaflet or the SYA branch in your state (addresses below.)

in activities around it. All submissions will be published by the Commission and to date no truly representative submission has come from the homosexual movement.

The sort of submission we suggest would be as follows:

"We the participants in the first national homosexual conference in Australia consider that people are capable of deciding for themselves what sort of relationships they find fulfilling. However in this society there are any number of social sanctions brought to bear on individuals to repress the form of their sexual expression and enforce upon all a specific heterosexual orientation.

"This being the case we call upon this commission to openly support efforts to force the Australian state and federal governments to accept the following demands:

"(i) Repeal of all laws currently used to persecute homosexuals. This would include:

a) Repeal of all laws regarding offensive behavior.

SOCIALIST LITERATURE

The bookstall of the Socialist Youth Alliance and the Socialist Workers League can be found on the ground floor of the Union Building throughout the conference.

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- b) Repeal of all laws regarding soliciting.
- c) Repeal of all laws prohibiting homosexual acts as such.
- d) Repeal of all regulations prohibiting homosexual behavior in government institutions, such as 'welfare' homes, schools, psychiatric hospitals, prisons and the armed forces.

(ii) For a ban on all discrimination which would include:

- a) Discrimination in housing
- b) Discrimination in employment
- c) Discrimination in education
- d) That homosexual parents have the right to custody of their own children, and that all homosexuals have the right to adopt children.

(iii) For a ban on the inhuman practices of aversion therapy and psychosurgery.

(iv) The repeal of all existing laws used to persecute homosexuals be made retrospective, so that those already in prison can be released. And for adequate compensation for those who have suffered under existing laws.

"We do not consider that **acceptance** of these demands will be enough in itself to end discrimination against homosexuals and repair the damage done over the past centuries. Therefore we also call upon this commission to support all efforts to gain government funding for homosexual legal aid services; homosexual medical aid services and homosexual counselling services."

The position of the Socialist Workers League and the Socialist Youth Alliance **is** explained briefly in this leaflet. A more detailed presentation of our views can be found in the paper presented to this conference by Richard Wilson which is printed on page 46 of the first booklet.

If you are interested in discussing the relation of gayliberation to socialism in more detail, or more generally discussing the politics of the Socialist Workers League and the Socialist Youth Alliance, contact any of the **activists** in the Gay Liberation movement listed below or the branch of the SWL and the SYA in your state.

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_____ I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SWL or THE SYA

_____ I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE SWL _____, THE SYA _____.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

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