

# GAY SOCIALIST BULLETIN

## WHO WE ARE ?

We are Lesbian and Male homosexuals who believe that our liberation cannot be achieved in capitalist society. We are socialists who have different views as to how capitalism can be overthrown, but we are all agreed that our liberation lies in the overthrow of this system. While some of us are members of political parties, most of us are not.

Socialists believe that our Australian society is a capitalist society, ie, a society in which power and wealth are monopolised by a small class of exploiters, whom socialists call the capitalist class. We believe that this society is inherently oppressive, corrupt and destructive of human values and cannot make itself otherwise. Socialists believe that this social order can and must be changed, and a new society based on new values put in its place. Socialists work towards building a society in which the welfare of all replaces the gratification of a greedy few, in which economic resources are collectively owned and controlled, in which production is based on social need rather than personal profit, and in which the values of mutual co-operation and respect replace the values of exploitation and domination. We believe that this is not only a possible goal, but is also a desperate necessity.

## WHAT HAS SOCIALISM GOT TO DO WITH HOMOSEXUALS ?

Capitalism oppresses us all in our daily lives, in our capacities as workers, as unemployed people, as consumers. Capitalism divides young against old, white against black, men against women. As homosexuals we experience a particular form of this oppression. We are unacceptable to the official ideology of this society because our public existence contradicts two of the central institutions by which capitalism maintains itself - the nuclear family and specific gender roles for men and women. These patriarchal institutions predate capitalism, but have been inherited by it and are now vital to its existence. They are the chief means by which the capitalist system reproduces itself, both physically and ideologically. They require both the subordination of women (by means of the ideology and practice of sexism) and the repression of non-productive sexuality (such as homosexuality). While capitalism has shown some capacity to accept liberalisation of these institutions, it cannot dispense with them entirely, and this means that the complete liberation of women and homosexuals cannot be achieved while capitalism continues to exist.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GAY LIBERATION AND GAY RIGHTS?

Generally speaking, modern capitalism has accommodated itself to the homosexuals right to exist, and in most capitalist countries, homosexual movements have achieved legal reforms and a limited liberalisation of the position of homosexuals. But capitalism cannot tolerate for long any widespread rejection of the nuclear family and its ideology, and challenges to the essentially subordinate position of women. This is why we see both superficial liberalisation and haphazard repression. We, as socialists, believe that a strategy for homosexual rights based solely on legal reforms and 'changing attitudes' must fail, not because reforms cannot be won or attitudes changed, but because while patriarchal capitalism and the oppression inseparable from it remain in existence the position of homosexuals can never be secure and the liberation of homosexuals can never be won. We therefore argue for a strategy based on opposition to the capitalist system as a whole, seeking to unite homosexuals with all the oppressed.

## WHY ARE WE AT THIS CONFERENCE?

While we believe that some kind of revolution, or time of large scale social change, is essential to overthrow capitalism, we also recognise the radicalising effect of organising together and working towards reforms for ourselves and all the oppressed and exploited. We come to Homosexual Conferences to put socialist ideas forward, to create debate in the homosexual movement and to be involved in the analysis and fight against our oppression.

\* \* \* \* \*

For this reason we are providing a series of three workshops that we believe compliment each other. These workshops look at, among many topics, the sources of socialist politics, how this has influenced the development of the Gay Movement, the basis for sexual politics and a look at analysing our way forward, as lesbians and male homosexuals, in the light of current political trends and economic realities.

These workshops are:

1. The introduction to Socialist and Sexual Politics
2. Development of the Gay Movement
3. The Sky is Falling

We believe these sessions provide the opportunity for lesbians and male homosexuals to assess, and debate amongst ourselves, our political theories and practice.