

# Women and Revolution



Journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League

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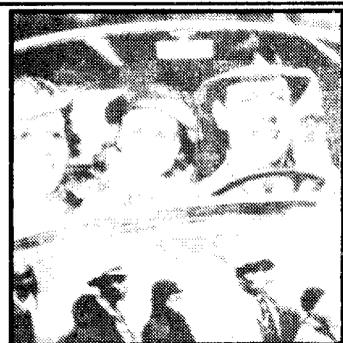
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# Letters

28 May 1980  
New York

Dear Editor,

In your last issue we read of the debate within a section of the women's movement over the definitions of "pornography" versus "erotica." As bookdealers in New York City we offer the following definition: "Pornography" is sold to the working class for under \$10.00 on 42nd Street while "erotica" is sold to the petty bourgeoisie for over \$25.00 through antiquarian bookdealers on 5th Avenue.

Fraternally,  
Paul Abbot  
Larry Lawson

Ms. Clair Greenwood  
c/o *Women & Revolution*

May 30, 1980

Dear Ms. Greenwood:

I purchased a copy of *Women & Revolution* [Spring 1980] outside the Bleecker Cinema one evening last week, and read with great interest and admiration your piece on Feminist Anti-Porn. This is an extremely difficult issue to address in its socio-political context, and you've done a very fine job. In the issue of *Christopher Street* which I'm enclosing with my compliments, I edited (with some difficulty) an article by John D'Emilio on the same topic, and I thought you might enjoy reading this, in addition to the interview with the extraordinary Jacqueline Livingston.

I would also like to invite you to submit your work to *Christopher Street*.

All best,  
Thomas Steele  
Editor  
*Christopher Street*

## Women and Revolution

Journal of the Spartacist League Central Committee  
Commission for Work Among Women

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## Cinema Interruptus

*Editor's Note:* The letter below was printed in the *Boston Real Paper* on July 12. On July 30 charges of "disseminating obscene material" were dropped against the "Deep Throat Two"—no thanks to petty-bourgeois rad-lib types, though. The judge let the Harvard boys off in return for giving him the name and address of the film's distributor (which was printed on the film canister the cops had already seized). So the rich kids get off with the scare of their lives—and less privileged types get their careers and lives wrecked by the state's vindictive morality (you can still see all the "dirty movies" you like in Boston's "combat zone"). Bourgeois hypocrisy, anyone?

\* \* \* \* \*

The reactionary puritan spirit of Boston is once again alive and well: and dangerous. In May, the copresidents of Harvard's Quincy House Cinema Guild are arrested for attempting to show *Deep Throat* on the campus, and then, a month later, *Penthouse* publisher Bob Guccione's film *Caligula* is added to the list of movies "banned in Boston," confiscated by the vice squad. These bold acts of censorship, which deny people the right to pursue their cultural and sexual activities as they wish, are an outrage that undoubtedly makes the likes of antihomosexual bigot Anita Bryant and her ilk quite happy.

Certainly, the protests against *Deep Throat* at Harvard would be easier to swallow—but no less sinister—if the antiporn craze had been led by the cops or even by Anita Bryant herself. But in fact, the troopers who burst upon the scene only did the dirty work for the Ad Hoc Committee to Protest *Deep Throat*. This committee, mobilized by feminists, the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) and the Communist Workers Party (CWP), simply appointed itself the newest guardian of conventional sexual morality. And while they carried placards that read: "Porn Is Violence Against Women," the real violence of the raiding cops evoked no sense of outrage for these censors as they stood idle watching the bust. So now, thanks to these Victorian "leftists," Carl Stork and Nathan Hagan face the possibility of five years in prison. *That's obscene!* But what else could one expect from so grotesque an alliance? We have the feminists allying with the virulently anti-feminist, pronuclear family CWP, while these absurdly totalitarian Mao-thought Stalinists then join forces with that self-proclaimed enemy of "totalitarian Stalinism," the ever so "democratic" DSOC—and it's all for the purposes of puritanical censorship.

This antiporn protest by ostensible socialists has nothing whatsoever to do with Marxism. Obviously, there are some very ugly aspects to the condition of

## National Lawyers Guild vs. "Demon Porn"

Speakers railed against the "demon porn," the main resolution supported people "who take direct action against pornography," and the conference voted unanimously to go on the warpath against "dirty" books and pictures. Was it the Virginia Beach, Va., apostles of decency who are backing a referendum to ban gay literature from the public library? Or the Mt. Diablo, Ca., board of education, which recently banned *Ms.* magazine from its shelves for talking about sex too much?

No, it was the 1980 convention of the National Lawyers Guild, this country's largest association of self-proclaimed radical lawyers, held in Boston last August. The ostensible theme of the conference was the "Fight Against Racism," and Spartacist League (SL) and Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) representatives attended to fight for the perspective of mass labor-centered actions against the fascist terror groups who are now raising their heads with increased boldness. It is ironic that instead of discussing how to fight the Klan, we found ourselves fighting against the majority Guild position which *closely parallels that of the Klan* on this issue: "dirty books" are evil, burn 'em. A PDC spokesman introduced a resolution counterposed to the Guild's petty-bourgeois moralizing:

"Be it resolved, that the NLG opposes all attempts at puritanical censorship whether launched by open reactionaries seeking to smash whatever limited civil liberties formally exist, or by the new feminist 'Legion of Decency' which blames pornography for violence against women. Pornography is not the source of violence against women. It is this capitalist society with its enforced poverty, rigid family structure and straitjacket morality which breeds poisonous frustrations that explode in violence."

She attacked the Guild's resolution as a "reactionary abomination," pointing out that it inevitably leads to

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women under capitalism, and some of them are reflected in pornography. But these reflections are not the enemy; the oppression of women is rooted in the family under capitalism....

The SYL opposes all attempts at puritanical censorship, whether led by Harvard's new "Legion of Decency" or by open reactionaries seeking to smash whatever limited civil liberties still exist. Those in the feminist/DSOC/CWP lash-up should learn a lesson from Iran's Holy Nut Khomeini who also waged a campaign against popular culture and pornography which resulted not in the emancipation of Iranian women, but in their greater enslavement and seclusion behind oppressive black veils. The anti-porn nuts here are espousing the same fundamental *antisexual* mores of bourgeois ideology—and they are simply helping out the reactionary status quo. Drop the charges against the *Deep Throat Two!*

K. Somers  
Spartacus Youth League  
Cambridge

calling for "increased state intervention into the private lives of individuals, which is all the more vicious and reactionary at this juncture of the rise of fascist groups in America, an attempted revival of the Cold War and the Reagan candidacy.... We categorically say NO!"

The PDC representatives linked the NLG's disgusting anti-porn resolution to its more general appetite to "go with the flow" of liberal and petty-bourgeois-radical adaptation to the rightward drift of American society. In the case of Iran, the liberals and Stalinists of the NLG claim there's something "progressive" about Khomeini's "Islamic Republic," where so-called "adulterers," homosexuals and "sinners" of all sorts have been hounded, jailed and even barbarically stoned to death in public. Afghanistan is, if anything, even more stark. Yet the Guild members were incensed because we support the Red Army's intervention against Islamic reactionaries who are pledged to forcibly impose the veil and kill anyone who commits the "crime" of teaching little girls to read!

That the NLG shamelessly tails the U.S. feminists who demand the state should crack down on pornographers comes as no surprise. The NLG has always been a popular-frontist playground uniting pro-Moscow Stalinists, Maoists and rad-lib faddists around the idea that the bourgeois state—and particularly its most oppressive institutions, the cops and courts—can be pressured into playing a "progressive" role. Thus the NLG has never seen anything wrong with suing the unions, asking the government to police the labor movement—all in the interests, of course, of "union democracy" and "anti-discrimination."

In its many articles on demon porn, the Guild tries to explain away its early defense of sundry "non-conformists." But the NLG did once defend the "underground" *Berkeley Barb* and bohemian intellectual Lenny Bruce against the reactionary moralizers of the day. Back then, Bruce tore through a lot of stupid hypocrisy in his routines. He held up pictures of naked ladies and asked, "What's wrong with appealing to the prurient interest? We appeal to the *killing* interest." He said: "What's obscene is [the distinction between] *dirty* screwing and *fancy* screwing. If a guy can tear off a piece of ass with class, then he's cool; but if the author depicts factory workers who are not experts with stag shows, then it's obscene, which is just nonsense."

If Lenny Bruce were alive today, we'd be glad to defend him—but the Guild wouldn't. Likely they'd be among those taking "direct action" against the persecuted comedian, cheering his many busts and police harassment. The logical trajectory of these Guild lawyers is to become a new layer of local DAs upholding bourgeois morality. Perhaps the Guild should consider holding its next convention in some yahoo town which has already cleaned up its act; the keynote speech could be replaced by a militant "mass action" like tossing *Playboys* and *Penthouses* into a purifying fire. ■



Ricardo Watson



AP

# Reagan, Religion and Reaction

## Carter Paved the Way

It used to be taken for granted by liberals that Christian fundamentalism was a religion of the eccentric and bizarre, a cultural peculiarity of such glaring false consciousness that only its devoted and frenzied followers could treat it with anything but ridicule. Though well-entrenched throughout the deep South—with a West Coast mecca in Los Angeles—evangelists from Billy Graham to Oral Roberts to L.A.'s own faith healer Kathryn Kuhlman seemed safely relegated to the early Sunday morning gospel hour on radio and TV.

Yet today Christian fundamentalist sects are mushrooming in size and authority. Backed by millions of dollars, their votes courted by politicians, they are making it big in the political arena—defending god, country, "the right to life," and prayer in the public schools. If the '70s was the era of EST, Scientology and "TM," evangelism looks like the trend of the '80s. But the messiahs of born-again revivalism, morality and anti-communism are no counter-culture joke.

From Jerry Falwell's "Moral Majority" to Benjamin L. Armstrong's Religious Broadcasters, Inc., these "New

Right" apostles seek to become a driving force behind U.S. capitalism's ideological rearmament. One fund-raising letter put out by "Christians for Reagan" sermonizes:

"My friend, our world is being turned upside down and inside out because we Christians have been sitting back and allowing God to be expelled from our schools, allowed our Government to promote baby-killing with our tax dollars, supported so-called 'equal rights' for sexual perverts and much, much more...Mr. Carter is afraid of offending Gloria Steinem, the National Organization for Women and the Equal Rights Amendment crowd but not afraid of turning his back on God."

—New York Times, 18 August 1980

Top dog among TV preachers, Jerry Falwell commands a network of religious academies and the "Old-Time Gospel Hour" (with an estimated audience of 21 million), which net him over \$1 million each week. He has stumped for the white backlash at Reagan's side in Detroit, given solace to Cambodian refugees in Thailand and wined and dined the dictators who rule Taiwan. Worried lest a weak-willed America should "capitulate" to an "overwhelmingly weapons-

superior" USSR, Falwell stumps for war against Russia too, all in the name of promoting an American Christian (read imperialist) renaissance.

And he does mean *Christian*. The "will of god," from the Tsar's Russia to Hitler's Germany to "Human Rights" America, has always evoked that standard leitmotif of social reaction: anti-Semitism. It is not uncommon these days to hear Baptist preachers storming to their congregations about the "ungodly" ways of the Jews, while Falwell has commented that a Jew "can make more money accidentally than you can on purpose" (*Los Angeles Times*, 13 October 1979). And this from a man whose ministry provides him with a private jet and a well-appointed Southern mansion! It is no accident that the Ku Klux Klan, which invests in the "moral future" of America by murdering blacks, Jews, trade unionists and socialists, rounds out its genocidal program with references to "the ways of the Lord" and uses the Christian cross as its symbol of fiery terror.

### "Vote for God in '80"

It seems like any vote in 1980 is a vote for god. The three bourgeois candidates for president were born-again Christians all. While Reagan got all the headlines for his hobnobbing on the gospel circuit, the other two also made their connections with god. The emergence of a politically bellicose religious fundamentalist movement coincided with the onset of Jimmy Carter's administration four years ago. Carter, a born-again Baptist and part-time Sunday School teacher, set out to rejuvenate the "moral fibre" of a demoralized and economically declining nation under the slogan of "human rights," the ideological cover for renewed war preparations against the USSR. To a man (most notably

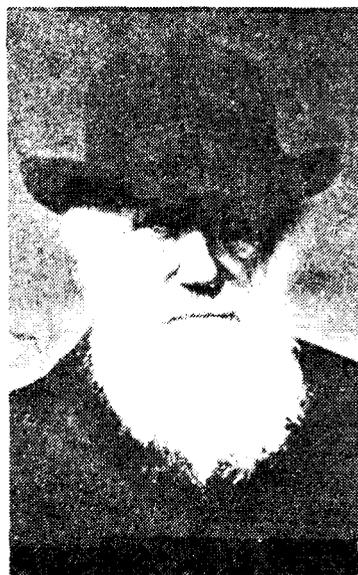


Harold Hanka

**The Ku Klux Klan foments murder and race terror under the sign of the fiery cross.**

the Polish irredentist Brzezinski) the architects of this scheme were themselves seasoned anti-communists and "deeply devout" religious men. Maverick Republican John Anderson was only a bit more discreet than the blatant Carter and Reagan. Although he currently renounces it, on no less than three occasions as an elected official he sponsored the so-called "Jesus  
*continued on next page*

## Hail Charles Darwin!



Karl Marx had intended to dedicate Volume 2 of *Capital* to Charles Darwin (who politely refused the honor). As Marx wrote to Engels in 1859, Darwin's *Origin of Species* "contains the basis in natural history for our

views." The Marxist appreciation of Darwin is based not simply on his scientific breakthroughs but on his uncompromising materialism. Darwin himself delayed publication of his major work for 20 years, at least in part fearful of social ostracism, as his explanation of

evolution removed any need for a supernatural explanation of man's origins and hence constituted a far-reaching challenge to religious myths. That over 120 years later—when even the pope is willing to entertain the thought that possibly the earth revolves around the sun!—American president-elect Reagan still finds it useful to appeal to religious obscurantism by attacking Darwin is testament to the accelerating degeneration of bourgeois ideology into cynical mysticism.

In the early 1800s, prior to Darwin's work, most scientists accepted the traditional concept of a creator god. Two common explanations of observed variations/changes/extinctions of species as examples of "god's master plan" were "typology" and "preformism." The typologists dismissed these differences as subjectively distorted reflections, akin to Plato's "shadows on the cave wall," of immutable "types" of animals and plants (given the crude instruments of measurement available, this belief was not as idealist as it sounds today).

The preformists postulated evolution as merely the unfolding of an already fully-formed, pre-planned being. Originally applied to the development of the embryo, this theory was essentially a take-off on the  
*continued on next page*

## Reagan...

Amendment" to the Constitution, designed to submit the United States to "the authority and law of Jesus Christ"!

But Reagan has scooped them all, making god-loving a number one campaign issue. Speaking before some 20,000 Jesus-lovers at the Religious Roundtable's National Affairs Briefing in August, Reagan declared: "Religious America is awakening, perhaps just in time for our country's sake.... When I hear the First Amendment used as a reason to keep traditional moral values away from policy-making, I am shocked. The First Amendment was written not to protect the people and their laws from religious values but to protect

those values from government tyranny" (UPI, 22 August 1980).

When Reagan announced to the assembled fundamentalists, "I know you can't endorse me. But... I want you to know that I endorse you," the message was clear: back to the clean-living family (no more hypocritical concessions to homosexuals and "women's libbers"), a "balanced budget" (get the blacks and the working class), praying in the schools, and a promise that in the next war against godless communism "god" really will be on "our side."

### Bourgeois Hypocrisy

Reagan may have gotten a lot of applause for his remark to the fundamentalists that Darwin's theory of



James Hamilton

**Out of the backwoods and into the big time: preacher Jerry Falwell's "Moral Majority" hits the road for Reagan, racism, big business and anti-communism.**

## Darwin...

medieval conception of the homunculus, a tiny perfectly formed little human who developed only through growing larger. The American zoologist Louis Agassiz, an arch-opponent of Darwin, defined "evolution" as a type of preformism well into the 19th century, claiming changes and variations in species were merely the revelation of something inherent, "involved," already "folded-in." (Darwin himself never used the word evolution for this reason.) Both theories reinforced the biblical story that the biological world was created by god—Agassiz himself insisted that "Natural History must, in good time, become the analysis of the thoughts of the Creator of the Universe, as manifested in the animal and vegetable kingdoms" (quoted in Ernst Mayr's *Evolution and the Diversity of Life*).

Darwin's work fundamentally overturned these religious conceptions. Among his most important contributions to scientific materialism, first published in 1859 in *Origins of the Species By Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, were: 1) Evolutionary change through species modification in no way implied a continuous "betterment" (he consciously refused to use the words

"higher" or "lower" to describe successive modifications of species). 2) Species were not variants of an ideal type, but simply populations of varying individuals. 3) The existence of species was not planned but was rather the result of haphazard natural selection, based on which variations were most suited to the organism's particular environment. 4) Man himself was simply a part of the evolutionary stream (most shocking of all, of course).

Darwin's work laid the basis for the modern natural sciences and was ultimately accepted by most scientists. But meanwhile the burgeoning bourgeoisie had discovered in science useful "modern" justifications for its imperialist expansion. Darwin's phrase "survival of the fittest" was wrenched out of context and distorted to justify both the "white man's burden" abroad and cutthroat capitalist competition and exploitation of the working class domestically.

The bourgeois ideologues of "social Darwinism" grafted the early 19th century population theories of the Reverend Malthus onto Darwin's "survival of the fittest" to bolster their self-serving claim that life was a bitter competition in which there must be inevitable victors and vanquished. Darwin himself accepted Malthus' pessimistic projection that mankind's ability

evolution had "great flaws," and that he supported "equal time" for the "Biblical story of creation" in the schools (see accompanying article). Of course, much of this pandering to religious obscurantism by the bourgeois candidates is sheer hypocrisy—strictly "for the goyim." After all, Nazi Germany's experiment with creating purely "Aryan physics" probably cost it the atomic bomb, as it purged talented Jewish physicists who ended up making the important breakthroughs for U.S. imperialism instead. You can bet the Pentagon isn't going to start looking up recipes for germ warfare in the New Testament.

Liberals are all upset about this wave of domestic religious revival, but that's only because they were afraid *their* favorite politicians would lose at the polls. *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis is one of those bemoaning the evangelist trend: "When ministers preach to 30 million parishioners that only one brand of politics has God's approval, there is a terrible danger of intolerance" (*New York Times*, 25 September 1980). Indeed? Naturally Lewis has no such concern for "religious intolerance" in Poland and Afghanistan.

Anthony Lewis is one of those same liberals who flew into a rage when Russian troops put a stop to the Afghan mullahs' version of "intolerance": the veiling of women, bride price and the shooting of school teachers. Over Poland, the entire range of bourgeois politicians (including the liberals) fell all over themselves to support the workers' strikes. Why? Because of the Catholic church's influence over Poland's workers and peasants, which was explicitly seen as a bulwark against Communism. From the pope's play debuting in Crackow to state broadcasts of Sunday mass, clericalism

has won a substantial victory. What the liberals are cheering is in fact a blow for Jesus Christ and religious obscurantism at the front door of the Soviet Union. It's real nice and easy to be for "religious tolerance" when capitalism is firmly ensconced in power—but when it's a question of reconquering lost territory for capitalism, bourgeois liberals are as vehement as the rest of their class in defense of the most backward, reactionary, primitive forces on earth.

The dark and lonely American backwoods has always been full of religious nuts—holy rollers, snake-handlers, speakers-in-tongues, Mormons, faith healers, etc. As Marxists we know that these primitive superstitions, born of ignorance, poverty and fear, will ultimately die out when material abundance and education are available to all. The bourgeoisie, in its period of decay being manifestly incapable of even promising any real material and cultural progress any more, increasingly falls back on religious mythology to justify itself before the people.

It is testimony to the decay of capitalist society that two centuries after the French Revolution and the associated triumph of "enlightenment," what Marx called "the same old crap" of religious superstition is still a weighty moral force in human history. Socialist revolution is not only the answer to economic privation and poverty, but also to the ideological barbarism of the church. One thing is certain: given the war fever infecting all sectors of the American bourgeoisie, and their advanced nuclear arsenal, the heavens and the earth they would have us believe god created in six days can be easily annihilated by "god's candidate in '80" in just one. ■

to multiply would soon outstrip the earth's capacity to provide food; in *The Origin of Species* he mentions "the Struggle for Existence amongst all organic beings throughout the world, which inevitably follows from the high geometrical ratio of their increase. ... This is the doctrine of Malthus, applied to the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms."

Marx and Engels disputed this simplistic identification of human society with the rest of the natural world. Engels commented that one didn't need Malthus to observe the struggle for existence in nature, and both he and Marx pointed out that methodologically the "social Darwinists" were simply transferring the Hobbsian theory of inevitable war of every man against every man to the animal world, then transferring this back again to the realm of history as a "law of human society." Engels made the essential point that animals were at most gatherers and men *producers*, with the capacity to produce far beyond a mere subsistence level. Thus for Marxists, the "struggle for existence" in human society consists in "the producing class taking away the control of production and distribution from the class hitherto entrusted with it but now no longer capable of it: that, however, is the Socialist Revolution" (Engels' letter to Lavrov, 12

November 1875, quoted in *Marx and Engels on the Population Bomb*).

So Reagan has announced to cheering Christian fundamentalists that he finds "great flaws" in Darwin's theory of evolution (of course, what he really means is only *some* people are descended from apes). Looks like we're going to have to fight the infamous Tennessee Scopes "Monkey Trial" all over again, as Reagan swears he'll fight for giving at least "equal time" to Biblical "creationism" in the public schools. Scientists in the Soviet Union predicted this morbid degeneration of capitalist ideology in 1931:

"... we observe in present day scientific literature of the bourgeois West more and more frequent attempts to revise Darwinism, and to return to patently idealistic and mystic conceptions up to and including open persecution of evolution (the monkey trial in America) and the quest in the embraces of the Church and the Bible for the reply to problems of the universe and for the revival of waning faith in the stability of the capitalist system."

—B. Zavadovsky, Science at the Cross Roads, Papers presented to the International Congress of the History of Science and Technology by the Delegates of the USSR

A more devastating indictment of the poverty of bourgeois ideology can hardly be imagined. ■

## Fake Left Hails

# Holy Mother Russia's Daughters

"Russian women don't talk—they howl," commented one Parisian journalist on the latest dissident sensations from the Soviet Union, four women (now exiles based in Vienna) who published the samizdat journal *Woman and Russia* last year in Leningrad. These women's "spontaneous howlings," so "purely personal, so passionate," have been translated, reprinted and hailed by virtually the entire Western left, feminist and petty-bourgeois radical circles. "At last, the first real feminists in Russia!" they cheered.

"Feminist" some of these Russian women may possibly be, but there is nothing progressive about the group. They are certainly dramatic though—blood-curdling even. Here's a few samples from *Woman and Russia* (translated by the "Women and Eastern Europe Group," Sheba Feminist Publishers, 1980:

- "Men...are destroying themselves with wine, cigarettes and sexual excesses.... The conservatism of this mass of alcoholics, degenerated to the utmost, the unheeding malevolence towards women of this stunted one-celled organism, this gigantic, spineless amoeba—that is the cruel brake to social progress!" (editorial staff)
- "...then she appeared, rescuer of the fallen. Rejoice, the Daughter, our Saviour. Prayer to the Most Holy Queen helped me to discover and resurrect my female self in all its purity and absoluteness." (Tania Sororeva)
- "To fulfill one's destiny as a mother is the greatest blessing nature holds in store for a woman." (V. Golubeva)
- "You may escape pregnancy... but then such 'trifles' as menstruation, menopause will still exhaust and destroy you.... Pregnancy, undoubtedly a parasitic phenomenon, destroys your youth.... A trail of blood leads from the beds, from the labour to the delivery ward. A trail of blood.... The foul face of patriarchy. Its convulsions. Agony." (R. Batalova)
- "The patriarchy degenerated into a phallocracy.... The cruel pressure on women of this phallocratic 'culture' crushes any sort of female core in women, and pushes them also towards a hatred of other women.... Women's disdain for each other furthers



Peter Lehner

**Russian "feminist dissidents" Yuliya Voznesenskaya, Tatyana Goricheva, Natalya Malakhovskaya, Tatyana Mamonova: man-hating mystics, Virgin Mary worshippers, petty-bourgeois poetesses. Russian women can expect nothing but counterrevolution from this bunch.**

the disintegration of the family..." (editorial staff)

These daughters of Holy Mother Russia paint the Soviet Union as a bloody medieval torture chamber for women (significantly they chose to call themselves *Woman and Russia*, not the Soviet Union). In all their (admittedly widely diverse) writings one finds a common theme: women are worse off in the USSR than in the capitalist West; women's true nature as nurturing mother is crippled and deformed by the "obligation" to do socially productive labor; men are brutal drunken beasts who care only for war and violence.

Is this really the inchoate cry of the imprisoned female soul of Russia? By no means. Where the group comes from is clear from the hysterical Dostoevskian quality of their writing—in fact, they are part of the crackpot fringe of Leningrad's pro-Western dissident intelligentsia. Most are poets and painters, at least one is a theologian, and all are long-time habitués of the smoky little gatherings, excitable and grandiose, of those alienated and arrogant *artistes* and other "sensitive souls" who despise their grey and repressive homeland, contemptuously ignore its working people, and dream only of glamor and fame in the "free" West outside.

Marxists do not claim that the USSR today is any "workers paradise." But even after the political counterrevolution which consolidated a repressive Stalinist bureaucracy, undermining the great liberating goals of the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917, Soviet women remain closer to legal, educational and social parity with men than women in even the most advanced capitalist "democracies." This is by no means

the least of our reasons for defending the USSR against capitalist restoration and imperialist aggression; as utopian socialist Charles Fourier observed, the level of women's emancipation is a telling index of social progress.

In Russia prior to 1917, although capitalist property relations prevailed, social relations especially in the countryside remained semi-feudal. A typical woman in Russia prior to the revolution was illiterate, routinely beaten by her husband, hag-ridden by the priests. In non-Russian areas, for example the Muslim regions, her status was even more debased through feudal institutions like enforced veiling, the bride-price, etc.

Like every doubly oppressed stratum of society, Russian women were among the immediate, direct beneficiaries of the Russian Revolution. The victorious Bolsheviks put more than legal reform (e.g., abortion, divorce) at the service of female liberation, devoting even in the early years of great economic hardship considerable material resources to providing communal facilities (day-care and so forth) aimed at freeing women from household drudgery in isolated family units and laying the material basis for the abolition of the nuclear family.

But women, like all the workers and oppressed, became the victims of the privileged bureaucratic caste which usurped political power from the working class. The conservatizing role of the bureaucratic straitjacket was nowhere more evident than over the woman question. The ideology of the "socialist family," for instance, was as much a betrayal of the aims of Lenin and the Bolsheviks as the blood-purge "Moscow Trials" of the same period.

As Trotsky explained in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937):

"The revolution made a heroic effort to destroy the so-called 'family hearth'—that archaic, stuffy and stagnant institution in which the woman of the toiling classes performs galley labor from childhood to death.... The triumphal rehabilitation of the family is caused by the material and cultural bankruptcy of the state. Instead of openly saying, 'We have proven still too poor and ignorant for the creation of socialist relations among men, our children and grandchildren will realize this aim,' the leaders are forcing people to glue together again the shell of the broken family.... It is hard to measure with the eye the scope of this retreat."

These "feminist dissidents," however, have nothing but contempt for the efforts of Marxists to replace the oppressive family. Instead, they wish to restore "feminist privileges" for themselves so their "true nature" as women may shine undisturbed. That they care not at all for the liberation of the masses of women is quite clear in their attitude towards Afghanistan.

Here you have a shooting war in which the liberation of women from the most backward, feudal oppression is at stake. The Red Army's intervention is the only thing preventing the Afghan mullahs from keeping women enslaved, veiled and ignorant—yet these Russian women call on the soldiers to desert, and spit on their "shameful uniform." Indeed, several even hid their husband and sons to keep them out of the army. No wonder they were expelled from the USSR! The very first act of the first three to arrive in the West was to issue a public statement denouncing the Soviet

intervention in Afghanistan. With the United States making the Red Army's presence in Afghanistan a major justification for its renewed Cold War, these "feminists" are truly a godsend to the imperialists.

### Crusade for Anti-Communism

A recent U.S. tour by Tatyana Mamonova made clear the anti-communist thrust of the group: the sob-stories about "our Russian sisters'" horrible plight are intended to whip up support for the American war drive against the USSR. The *haute bourgeois* Ford Foundation certainly didn't throw away its money sponsoring Mamonova's tour; *Ms.* magazine, which featured "First Feminist Exiles from the USSR" on its November cover, has once again eagerly done the bourgeoisie's dirty work in hostessing Mamonova around the country—naturally picking the one woman who isn't ostentatiously medieval and is therefore more palatable to Western liberal tastes (Mamonova recently and "painfully" separated herself from the other three, who have gone on to form the "Club Maria" the better to honor god's mother).

No self-respecting leftist has ever doubted *Ms.*' willingness to serve capitalism—after all, editor Gloria Steinem never did see anything wrong with taking CIA money, and the *Ms.* crowd for over a year has pushed a reactionary anti-porn campaign coinciding with the FBI's crackdown. ("Tatyana and I put up anti-pornography stickers on Vienna newstands," Robin Morgan cozily recalled their initial get-together.) Morgan organized the tour, proving in the process the only thing "radical" about her "feminism" is the compulsive male-baiting she unleashed on the



**Bolshevik Revolution smashed the counterrevolutionary, murderously anti-Semitic Black Hundreds, who rallied behind the Russian Orthodox priests.**

placid audiences. ("I find that question incredibly sophomoric—maybe that's because a man asked it" was a typical crack.)

The *real* reason for Mamonova's presence in the U.S. wasn't these campus "ovulars" (the latest feminist word for "seminars"), though. Morgan was delighted to explain the real big-time deals going on. After name-dropping about Mamonova's enthusiastic reception at



Gamma

**Polish strikers still kneel to priests. Workers must break with the reactionary Catholic church!**

City Hall in New York, with Carol Bellamy, Bella Abzug and Gloria Steinem, and even Ed Koch's support ("freaked out by all the women, but trying to hold up the banner nonetheless"), she bragged at Rutgers on October 20: "We are going to Washington D.C. on Wednesday for a reception in Tatyana's honor by the Congressional Women's Caucus..." And *they* are going to really take some action. They will be "issuing a statement on three points. One, the general condition of Soviet women, calling for an investigation" (as well as demanding the right to publish feminist journals in the USSR and expressing "concern" over harassed female dissidents). Meanwhile, Mamonova intends to ask the United Nations to demand that she and her reactionary religious friends be allowed to publish their pro-Western propaganda in the USSR.

We're not surprised that imperialist ideologues, willing to pick up any stick to beat the USSR, may be able to use these only-too-willing women. We doubt though that tiny emigre circles bowing before Mother of God ikons will cut much ice with the Western working class. Even Solzhenitsyn's tsar-loving mysticism finally alienated some of his more liberal bourgeois supporters. Far more useful are types like Mamonova with their admiration for Western "freedoms" and condemnation of the Red Army. Obviously an ambitious woman, Mamonova clearly believes she's got a future in the West. After all, she thinks women have almost got it made under capitalism. The editorial statement of *Woman and Russia* explains:

"... in Europe this question [of the position of women in society] is close to being resolved—particularly in France, where four women are in the cabinet."

The statement goes on to note approvingly the

examples of "Margaret Thatcher... Indira Gandhi, Sirimavo Bandaranaike"! More vicious, anti-working-class demagogues we can't imagine.

As Marxists we stand for literary and cultural freedom in the Soviet Union. We do not accept the brutal, Russian-chauvinist bureaucrats as the arbiters of "culture" and we recognize that the repressive Stalinist bureaucracy represents a greater direct threat to the gains of October than the literary apologists for tsarism, clericalism, "Russian feminism" or what have you. But we remain implacably hostile to the so-called "dissidents" who make common cause with imperialism's "human rights" crusade for capitalist restoration in the deformed workers states. The new "Russian feminists" are nothing new; they are merely the women's auxiliary of a "movement" which believes Russian society should be "democratized" through such measures as Western imperialist economic blackmail against the Soviet masses.

### Fake Left Hails Reaction—Again

That ostensible Marxists should have actually cheered *Woman and Russia's* blasts of confused obscurantism, feminine mysticism, all-sided contempt for Soviet society and blatant pro-Western appetites is genuinely scandalous! Most egregious in their fulsome support have been those so-called "Trotskyists" around the United Secretariat. The French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire saluted the journal as a "fundamental historic event" (*Cahiers du féminisme* No. 14), while *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* (February-March 1980), a joint project of the USec and the British Clifffite organization, published four of their articles under Alix Holt's enthusiastic recommendation as "a new and very significant development for the democratic movement in Eastern Europe." The reformist American Socialist Workers Party, too, thinks they're great; the *Militant* (8 August 1980) hailed the journal's purpose in "publish[ing] the truth about the day-to-day suffering and humiliation of women in the USSR." The British Socialist Workers Party, which believes the USSR is "state capitalist," made clear it really believes the Soviet Union is worse than the imperialists; *Socialist Worker* (5 July 1980) explained the Leningrad group's "radical feminism" as an "instinctive, emotional response to the extreme oppression of women in the Soviet Union," stating that "women's position [in the USSR] is... in some ways worse than that of women in the west."

These tendencies can't even distinguish between a reactionary and progressive movement. This was clear enough in their support to Khomeini's feudal Islamic Republic, in which women are veiled and homosexuals shot. Given a growing climate of bourgeois warmongering against the Soviet Union, they now find their refusal to defend the deformed workers states against imperialism more useful than ever.

### Women in the Soviet Union

None of these "new Russian feminists" is likely to make inroads into the Soviet population—and certainly not the "Club Maria." Even before the Revolution, the Russian intelligentsia despised the barbaric Russian

Orthodox church, and today 90 percent of the Soviet people profess themselves to be non-believers. In contrast, in Poland the Catholic church, headed by the vigorously anti-Communist Polish pope Wojtyla, acted as symbol, supporter and advisor to the recent workers' strikes, which is precisely why they were so enthusiastically hailed by the imperialist West. The bourgeois ideologues know—as do we—that the Catholic church's influence is the spearhead of capitalist counterrevolution there. The Russian Orthodox church would be only too happy to play a comparable role—and it's a damned good thing it can't.

Pro-Western dissidents like Sakharov can of course point to aspects of Soviet society, such as political and artistic censorship, where democratic freedoms are greater in at least the bourgeois democracies of the capitalist West. But this *not true* in the area of women's rights. The economic opportunities for Soviet women are greater, and their status in society in general is higher, than in the United States or Western Europe. This is de facto conceded by the Leningrad feminists themselves, who don't deny the reams of statistics easily available on the high percentages (compared to the West) of Soviet women doctors, engineers, government bureaucrats, etc. But for them this constitutes women's oppression, and they attack precisely what is democratic and progressive about Soviet society.

An article by Shusha Guppy in the London *Guardian* (17 August 1980), titled "How Russian freedom makes women monsters," summarized the views of the new Russian feminist movement, indicating its position on equal rights to a livelihood is at best equivalent to Phyllis Schlafly's:

"Russian women do not aspire to the external forms of freedom, but fight against these because they have been turned into monstrosities: equal pay for equal work and access to all jobs, for example means being given jobs like road-building or truck-driving, which are so heavy that they destroy women's health and their ability to bear children. Women have not been given equality with

men, but men's destiny, which negates their own fundamental nature." (emphasis in original)

Sakharov too bemoans the widespread participation of women in the labor force, not least because it impedes their social role as mothers:

"Hence the impossibility of a normal family upbringing for children, with serious social consequences. Hence, too, the destruction of the health of millions of women doing heavy work."

—*My Country and the World*, 1975

The accusation that Soviet women are forced into doing body-destroying labor is a lie pure and simple. Outside the collective farm sector, there is a free market for labor in the USSR, as attested to by all reputable Western bourgeois experts on the Soviet economy (e.g., Alec Nove). No worker in the Soviet Union, man or woman, is coerced to do heavy construction work or mining. Rather, wages for this work are put well above the average. And there are women who want to work on construction gangs or in coal mines—indeed, *Ms.* magazine proudly displays their smiling faces, when they're American. In the Soviet Union they can do it.

Not only do various pro-Western Soviet dissidents oppose equal economic opportunity for women, but some defend the most barbaric practices oppressing women. Valery Chalidze (now in exile), Sakharov's main collaborator in the Moscow Human Rights Committee, condemns the Bolsheviks for outlawing polygamy and the forcible abduction of brides in Islamic Central Asia:

"In the Central Asia republics, for a very long time polygamy existed. But when the Bolsheviks arose, polygamy was prohibited. It may seem strange to you that I talk about the right of women to participate in polygamous marriage contracts, but it is an important right and important personally to each woman."

—*New York Times Magazine*, 4 March 1973

This is equivalent to denouncing Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation for violating the "right" of blacks to be chattel slaves! Chalidze concludes with a blanket



Workers Vanguard

Only SL/SYL boldly hailed Red Army in Afghanistan against the Muslim fanatics who shoot those who teach girls to read, and throw acid in faces of unveiled women.

## Love and Taxes

Everybody hates taxes, but the squeals were loudest this year among married working couples, who resent having to pay at a much higher rate than unmarried couples living together and having the same income. After all, what about the old saying, "Marriage pays"? The tax laws have always been geared to the traditional family, where the man earns the money and supports a non-working wife, probably a couple of kids and a mortgage. But times have changed—who can live on one income these days? Nearly half the married couples in the U.S. have two incomes, while soaring inflation keeps pushing them into ever higher tax brackets. While the so-called "marriage tax penalty" hits hardest at petty-bourgeois professionals, it is also gouging two-income working-class families, often more than doubling their annual taxes.

We certainly empathize with those getting screwed by the IRS' "marriage tax penalty." As our readers know, we are no champions of the bourgeois

institution of marriage, the state's legal sanction of the nuclear family. Yet it's hard not to relish the mess Carter's got himself into. Everybody remembers how the "born again" bible thumper made a big deal about telling his staff they'd better stop "living in sin" and get married—or else. Well, now you've even got ministers in conservative Maryland telling their parishioners to live together rather than get married and suffer higher taxes! The case of the Boyters of Ellicott City, Maryland, who get divorced every year before filing taxes and then remarry in January, has become a *cause célèbre*, as the government is trying to nail them for perpetrating a "tax sham." Right-wing neanderthals are now accusing Carter of fostering unblessed cohabitation by taxing those who follow the path of righteousness to the marriage license bureau.

So there's sometimes a contradiction between money and "morality" in this capitalist society. One thing you can be sure of, though: the bourgeois state is bound to resolve it in the worst possible way: You will marry, and you will pay!

defense of pre-feudal barbarism in the name of "national tradition":

"The same consideration applies to other so-called survivals of past systems. Prohibitions of national traditions in Central Asia and the Caucasus were put in force quite roughly in many cases. This often insulted national feelings and dignity."

### For Political Revolution in the USSR! Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!

The genuine liberation of women in the Soviet Union can only be brought about by those with a vision of a communist future in which the traditional patriarchal family is superceded. Revolutionary Marxists in the Soviet Union would far more effectively combat the ideology of Sakharov, Chalidze and the "Russian feminists" than can the ruling Stalinist bureaucrats, who in their own way appeal to traditional Russian chauvinism, anti-Semitism and other backward social attitudes. A Soviet revolutionary government would more fully integrate women at all economic levels, especially at the top. It would undercut the reactionary ideology of the family, reimposed by the Stalinist bureaucrats, and make fully available state child-care services, community household service institutions, etc. to liberate women from their tedious "family hearth" drudgery.

To accomplish all these things requires a political revolution against the deeply conservative Stalinist bureaucracy. What forces will lead it? Certainly not the decayed, reactionary Russian Orthodox church—and certainly not these would-be liberated ladies who want to work only if it's being an artist or a prime minister. It will be the working people of the Soviet Union, defending their socialized property forms, who will reestablish the revolutionary traditions of Bolshevism. A key aspect of the platform of a workers opposition in the USSR today is support of the Red Army's intervention into Afghanistan. It is no doubt a profoundly

radicalizing experience for many of the young Soviet soldiers to compare conditions in Afghanistan today, with Uzbekistan or Tadzikistan in Soviet Central Asia—areas liberated by the Russian Revolution from the social control of the mullahs.

Even some bourgeois commentators have recognized the historic gains made by women of the Soviet East in comparison to feudal Afghanistan. Jill Tweedie in the *London Guardian* (31 July 1980) admitted that women in Afghanistan needed the Red Army:

"Whatever the reasons for the Soviet presence... one fact seems rather certain: one half of the population can only benefit from the continued presence of the Soviet troops and has everything to lose if the rebels win."

Mamonova & Co. want the veiled women of Afghanistan to "do their own thing," not to rely on those "war-mongering men." But Tweedie recognized the absurdity of that too:

"But how exactly are you supposed to determine your destiny when you are illiterate, beaten down by poverty, haunted by fear and have not one word to say politically and socially about this destiny? Particularly when it is evident that the interests of the capitalist West are that you remain in this state of abject feudalism."

These "Russian feminists" who say "Carrying the Red banner is really no different from wearing the veil" ought to try living the life of a veiled Afghan woman, enslaved to the religious obscurantism they hail (and too bad if they're Great Russian chauvinists who don't happen to like Muslims).

Soviet women can expect nothing from such a feminist movement, allied to one of women's worst enemies domestically, the Church, and to imperialism internationally—except maybe counterrevolution. The emancipation of Soviet women will be completed only when the proletariat throws out the Stalinist bureaucracy in a political revolution and reestablishes the proud and liberating traditions of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. ■

## Sex and the Single Pope

# More Papal Bull

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14 November 1980

Peripatetic Pope Wojtyla is on the attack again. But the Western press has been more reticent this time; instead of marshaling the faithful against Communism, the "human rights" pope is bent on reinforcing the Catholic church's medieval proscriptions on sex. Of course, the Vatican's torturous and arcane attempts to convince humanity there can be no happiness this side of the grave, that salvation lies in self-denial and submissiveness to authority, are not new. But it took this Polish pope, product of the most reactionary bastion of Catholicism in Europe, to ram through a just-concluded Synod in Rome an aggressive assault on "sexual permissiveness."

According to the pope, a man can't even lust after his own wife anymore: a man is guilty of "adultery in the heart" if he looks at his own wife in a lustful way. The bishops' Synod confirmed these hard-line social policies. Divorced Catholics can now remarry without being banned from the church doors—but they can only take communion (the church's most sacred rite) if they don't have sex with their new spouse. Then there's birth control (although why anyone would need it if they followed all the pope's proscriptions we can't imagine). But even though one U.S. bishop cautiously raised the fact that three-quarters of American Catholics practice some form of artificial birth control, Wojtyla is adamant on banning it.

The Italian press didn't take kindly to Wojtyla's hard stance; they didn't get it. A writer in *Corriere della Sera* figured the line on "adultery of the heart" was an attempt to strengthen the family by encouraging "infidelity at home." More seriously the Polish pope



AP

Lust in the mind, lust in the heart, lust, lust, lust.

was endangering a delicate *modus vivendi* so carefully worked out between secular Italian politicians and the Vatican on such sensitive social questions in the past. Angry pro-abortion demonstrators carried signs attacking him: "Wojtyla—In Poland there has been an abortion law for 15 years; why don't you 'interfere' in your own country?" Not since his unleashing of the Inquisition against "dissident" Catholic theologian Hans Küng last year (which caused one liberal Catholic to question whether the pope was not "a new Torquemada on the Tiber?") has Wojtyla made so clear the consistently reactionary thrust of his Papacy.

Wojtyla told his Latin American followers to shut up and suffer in silence under the bloody terror of their Catholic imperialist-puppet dictators, while in Poland he has aggressively encouraged political movements against the ruling regime, the better to prepare the ground for capitalist counterrevolution. It's useful that Wojtyla has shown the social program his Church Victorious would enforce—the most sexually repressive, totalitarian, rigid, guilt-inspiring, miserable kind of life. The more Wojtyla exposes this face of Catholic reaction, the better it is in terms of dispelling dangerous illusions that this vigorously anti-Communist pope is any sort of defender of "human rights and liberty."

And there's still poor old Galileo, dead to these 300 years. We suppose that in instructing the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (guess who) to "reopen" the case, Pope Wojtyla thinks he's made a powerful statement for "human rights." Perhaps the Vatican will finally admit that the earth actually does move around the sun after all (but then, Copernicus was a *fellow Pole*). "Still, it moves," Galileo supposedly muttered under his breath when forced to recant his "heresy" under the threat of Inquisition torture. And the Vatican does too, but only three centuries late. Some "human rights": Stalinist "rehabilitations" occur with the speed of light in comparison. ■

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Nina Leen

# Lasch and Backlash

## Haven in a Heartless World: A Review

Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan have been telling us that unless strong and independent family life is reconstituted we are doomed, that those good old American values of self-help, self-reliance and self-denial have been so sapped by decades of paternalistic big government that we are on the verge of total moral

*Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged*  
by Christopher Lasch  
Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1977

**A Review by Clair Greenwood and Jack Shapiro**

collapse. But they're not alone. New Left social critic Christopher Lasch has also discovered the virtues of strong family life. He asserts in *Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged*.

"An understanding of the impact of the family on personality, and of the political implications of recent changes that have separated love and constraint, makes it impossible any longer to equate defense of the nuclear family with reactionary politics or criticism of it with radicalism. Many radicals in the seventies have rediscovered the importance of family ties, often without even reading *Haven in a Heartless World*."

These discerning radicals, he approvingly notes, have rediscovered in the course of "practical activity" that "the working-class family constitutes an important cultural resource in the working-class struggle to survive" against the inroads of bad schools, inflation, crime and drugs, television "with its alluring images," etc. No more outmoded visions of the "romantic dream of individual self-fulfillment" for Lasch; he thinks the Saul Alinsky Institute is on the right track, with its

advocacy of "a revival of the family and of voluntary associations."

Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism* (W.W. Norton, 1978) was praised in liberal and left circles as a brilliant put-down of the bland, self-indulgent "me generation" of the 1970s. Lasch's indictment of the play-it-cool "zipless fuck" mentality, his exposure of the ravenous needs and insecurities masked by "I'm okay, you're okay" psychobabble, were on target. The degeneration of New Left life-style radicalism into magical mystery religions and subsistence-level organic farming in the barren, stony fields of Vermont communes (which local residents sensibly abandoned for the fleshpots of industrial civilization) provided plenty of opportunity for ridicule. And Lasch's work contains an important insight: the "counter-culture" ended up being merely a mirror image of consumer capitalism; such utopian experiments with "alternative life-styles" were doomed to failure under capitalism. Lasch's assault on the fads and fantasies of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia of the '60s and '70s is fun to read.

While Lasch recognizes that such escapist fantasies did not succeed in escaping anything, that they only drove real conflicts underground for a while, he cannot come up with anything qualitatively better. He is a critic of the times, not the system, and essentially accepts the limitations of this capitalist society. He advises "less reliance on experts," a return to "traditions of localism, self-help and community action"—and, of course, strengthening of the family on a new, higher and more egalitarian level.

In *The Culture of Narcissism*, Lasch claims that:  
"Many radicals still direct their indignation against the

authoritarian family, repressive sexual morality, literary censorship, the work ethic, and other foundations of bourgeois order that have been weakened or destroyed by advanced capitalism itself. . . . Economic man himself has given way to the psychological man of our times—the final product of bourgeois individualism.”

Since *Women and Revolution* has found itself compelled recently to devote more space to attacking precisely “the authoritarian family, repressive sexual morality, literary censorship” (but not the “work ethic,” which we have nothing against *per se*), this blanket assertion of Lasch’s amazed us. It is not only untrue; it’s nonsensical. This country has always had a mean, fundamentalist small-town moralistic streak. Probably the single most obvious political trend over the past five years or so has been the resurgence of conservatism into a major political and social force. Although Lasch is perfectly aware of this, he doesn’t believe it represents any serious threat. “Advanced capitalism” has transcended all that “outmoded” nonsense, he claims. His worldview formed during the early ‘60s, Lasch takes the myths of Lyndon Johnson’s “Great Society” at face value and today stubbornly continues to believe that “corporate liberalism” (or “the therapeutic state” as he calls it) is still in some sense the “main enemy.” He takes as good coin the ideological claims of the main bourgeois political tendencies; he believes Roosevelt’s “New Deal” really was one.

Lasch’s call for renewed family life as the answer to both the blandishments of the “liberal state” and defense against the “heartless world” has drawn down a lot of angry attacks. We are happy to absolve him of at least the charges of being a closet Reaganite. Actually he is a classic New Leftist—albeit fallen on hard times. During the ‘60s the theory of the all-powerful “liberal state” as the characteristic, permanent, new face of capitalism (and thus the “main enemy”), had wide appeal. It was stupid and shortsighted, crediting capitalism with the ability to resolve its fundamental economic contradictions and buy off the entire population with material goodies, but at least the original impulse was leftist. The thesis that bourgeois liberalism was no better, in fact was worse in its “stupefying” effects than old-fashioned conservatism, represented at the time a sharp break with the classic Stalinist (so-called “old left”) line of supporting the Democratic Party as the “lesser evil.”

Today liberal economic panaceas and social programs have been largely discredited by events. Most people are worse off than they were 10 or 15 years ago. At a certain point it becomes very easy for the Old Right’s and the New Left’s attacks on “liberalism” to find political convergence. We have already seen that convergence domestically in the feminist anti-porn campaign, which links ex-‘60s radicals and the National Lawyers Guild with book-burning, bible-thumping reactionaries. Why was *Haven in a Heartless World* hailed by some conservatives as a “marvelously

reactionary book”? Why did Jimmy Carter’s speechwriters find Lasch’s critique of “narcissism” a perfect rationale for their man’s austerity programs? Lasch, who once snidely observed that “historians need to become more conscious of the social conditions under which they work,” ought to ponder this.

### “There’s No Place Like Home”

*Haven* is simultaneously sophisticated, dense and bizarre. Lasch’s basic conclusion echoes Dorothy’s after her whirlwind tour of the Land of Oz (in its ‘70s incarnation as Werner Erhard’s EST-land): “There’s no place like home.” Except home isn’t what it used to be, either, because mom and pop have let themselves get all confused by the advice of experts (like Dr. Spock) so we have today a generation of mindless, cool, cynical,



Margaret Bourke-White

Classic Depression photo: “happy family” was no haven.

self-indulgent infants susceptible to endless manipulation by the “therapeutic state.” Sure, women should have equal rights, Lasch says, but what we *really* ought to be worrying about is what’s happening to the kids. We must “make it possible for women to compete economically with men without sacrificing their families or even the very hope of a family,” he insists. “Selfish feminists” don’t understand this—but they better not try to resolve their problems through child-care centers, or “outside experts” like doctors, psychiatrists, or state aid, because those agencies only postpone the inevitable reckoning. Women must not abdicate their familial responsibilities, he warns, unless they want to be responsible for the end of civilization as we know it.

One of the hallmarks of crackpotism is a tendency towards creating totally perfect systems, so that every phenomenon becomes organically linked to every other and *all* unite in a cascading crescendo proving the author’s thesis. Lasch insists that everything from “mass outbreaks of violence,” “voter apathy,” “the decline of

romantic love," and the general weakening of all "civilized restraints" are the result of this "therapeutic" erosion of family life. He has even discovered a growing convergence of "personality structure" between black ghetto and white middle-class youth, "produced not just by the dangerous world of the ghetto but, increasingly, by the condition of middle-class life as well." This is why "black culture" is so attractive to "disaffected whites," he says (he must mean the New Left; at least some "disaffected" white youth today seem to find the Ku Klux Klan the "culture" of choice).

Blacks have hardly suffered from over-solicitous infusions of social projects, medical care, psychiatric clinics, fancy educational systems—all those things Lasch tags as contributing factors to the erosion of the middle-class family. The absence of jobs, education, or any opportunities for meaningful, creative work has led to the poisonous despair and disintegration of the ghetto. But Lasch has his reasons for asserting that middle-class kids and ghetto youth are just the same—all screwed up. In polemicizing against feminism and radical life-stylism, Lasch can't resist the standard old guilty liberal argument: look, he says, the real oppressed, blacks themselves, really want a family "where the father earns the money and the mother raises the children."

It is true that there was a strong element of hero-worship of the "outsider," the "primitive rebel," in New Leftism, including glorification of the more deadly aspects of black ghetto life. Lasch has turned this upside-down by discovering where the New Left really went wrong: the "noble savage" the kids hailed turns out to be, not some existential individualist, but a good family man with wife and kids (or wants to be, anyhow). Does Lasch think it's accidental that this discovery coincided with New Leftists' coming of child-bearing age? Or could it be, after all, that all this "rediscovery" of the need for family discipline was inspired merely by the irresistible desire to occasionally bust the little creeps one across the chops?

Lasch is intensely preoccupied with proving that "the world is a ghetto" and that vague horrible dangers hang over the heads of us all. Although he admits that this fearful picture is in part merely a psychological projection on the part of the deformed "infantile" personalities produced by advanced capitalism ("unable to internalize authority... he projects forbidden impulses outward and transforms the world into a nightmare"), still Lasch really does believe that the world is becoming more and more a nightmare.

### Invasion of the Body-Snatchers

There seems to be something of a small boom in theories of new and invidious forms of social control developed by the modern state. Jacques Donzelot's *The Policing of Families* and Michel Foucault's *Sexuality in History* (Volume I) sound the same alarm and were reviewed favorably by Lasch in *The New York Review of Books* (12 June 1980). All three develop the common theme: doctors and "sexperts" have wormed their way into our psyches, creating a world of blissfully acquiescent passionless (at least on the surface) "pod people" whose very bodies and sexualities are the new instruments through which the state wields its

(benevolently disguised) totalitarian control. Now, everybody really knows that one of the big all-time lies perpetrated by the state and other bureaucratic institutions is "We are here to help you." It seems only super-sophisticated intellectuals like Lasch, Donzelot and Foucault believe in the earth-shaking effects of teams of sociologists telling poor families they don't have enough money.

Donzelot's particular *shtick* is doctors. He is outraged by the medical "colonization" of the family: "The doctor prescribes, the mother executes." "Technicians of human relations" have invaded the family, says Donzelot. It's all a liberal plot, a design which has succeeded in its totalitarian aim. Lasch says in his review, "In the end they [the liberals] outflanked their adversaries by creating a therapeutic state which left the family more or less intact yet subjected it to nonstop supervision."

Doctors, says Lasch, have "usurped" the mothers' traditional functions. "The new religion of health, though based on modern science and technology, was no more tolerant of other religions than was Christianity itself," Lasch indignantly writes in *Haven*. Well, why *should* it have been? How many women died in childbirth before Dr. Semmelweiss discovered the cause of puerperal fever (losing his own life in the process)? The nerve of that man, to tell doctors they must wash their hands before delivering another child! Lasch doesn't like such arrogance. Let's not offend all those devout peasant families who think "Our Lady of Lourdes" really delivers the goods for hopeless cripples or terminal syphilitics. Let's not "usurp" sacred "motherly rights" by pointing out that Christian Science faith-healing has led hundreds of helpless infants to miserable deaths.

This is not just harmless crackpotism. To the extent anybody polices the family, it is not the doctor, but the priest (or rabbi or mullah), at least in more primitive societies. All too often the New Leftoid rationale that "it's their culture and we can't tell them what to do" has led to capitulation to reaction. Most of the ostensible left hailed Khomeini's medievalist, reactionary regime in Iran, even justifying the barbaric enslavement of women in veils as merely a legitimate expression of "their culture."

Foucault tends to be simply strange, as opposed to this outrageous assault on some of the real gains (however limited) of modern capitalist society. We wouldn't go into his theories at all, except some of our readers may pick up *The History of Sexuality* in hopes of finding some juicy erotic gossip. Abandon hope: the whole thing is a turgid, highly idiosyncratic, abstract defense of his pet theory of "bio-power." What is it? Nothing less than "the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production," "an indispensable element in the development of capitalism." Sounds like L. Ron Hubbard, you say? The true genius of this French *philosophe* has clearly escaped you.

Marx dealt with such idiocies very well over a hundred years ago in the *Grundrisse*. The essence of capitalism, he pointed out, is the fact that the workers' activity "is determined and regulated on all sides by the movement of the machinery, not the other way around." But none of that old Marxian nonsense for

Foucault—particularly not the Marxist analysis of the state as “bodies of armed men and prisons.” No, it’s new improved bio-power that does the trick for the really modern state. What he means is: the state gets you today through manipulating your sexuality (via psychiatric and sex-therapy agents) as opposed to simply trying to kill you if you step out of line. Tell that to the Vietnamese—or any ghetto black in America.

### Herbert Marcuse: Bringing It All Back Home

Herbert Marcuse is the father of many of these theories of the absolutist evil of the “liberal state.” The methodology, the grumpy complaints about contemporary culture, the belief that “they” have turned us into zombies seduced into submission by their soothing psychiatrists, *Playboy* advisors, air-conditioners—it all goes back to Marcuse’s 1964 *One-Dimensional Man*. Marcuse taught that modern technology itself, with its cornucopia of endless mass-produced delights, was the enemy:

“The people recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. The very mechanism which ties the individual to his society has changed, and social control is anchored in the very needs which it has produced.”

Marcuse wasn’t even particularly original in this complaint. By 1964 the theme had already been struck repeatedly by ex-advertising executives making their *mea culpas* via such popular “exposés” as *The Hidden Persuaders*, which became instant discussion topics for such concerned pillars of society as *Reader’s Digest* and “youth-oriented” Unitarian ministers or hip young rabbis.

Marcuse’s disgust with “the affluent society” was heartfelt; indeed, his thesis that “the granting of liberties” was only a guise for totalitarian repression tended to dissolve into simple personal outrage: “The degree to which the population is allowed to break the peace wherever there still is peace and silence, to be ugly and to uglify things, to ooze familiarity, to offend against good form is frightening.”

Good form? Such rantings against the American population’s evident preference for making love in automobiles instead of meadows, for lovers’ strolls “on a Manhattan street” as opposed to “outside the town walls” resemble more the sentimental snobbery of some *alt-europäische* Herr Professor’s dotage (town walls? in America?) than they do a clarion call to revolution. Marcuse was shocked that “they” actually set out Hegel and Marx, Shelley and Baudelaire in cheap editions in the drugstore, where just anybody might pick them up. “Such assimilation is historically premature,” he warned darkly. The subversive genius of such works, Marcuse felt, lost their power when presented as mere commodities; the people were so brainwashed by consumer society they couldn’t tell the difference between *Theories of Surplus Value* and a Waring blender. In America’s “culture-machine,” truly “the evil and the rational are inseparable,” he concluded gloomily.

Thus far Marcuse and Lasch share a common distaste (even to the singling out of identical works which they assert reveal the deformed and manipulated sexuality of American culture: Hemingway, Faulkner, Nabokov’s *Lolita*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*). And the deeply pessimistic atmosphere is the same. Nonetheless Marcuse, for all his snobbery, became the guru of a generation of would-be revolutionaries. He was at least consistent in his opposition to advanced capitalism. His anguished cry that only the “outcasts and outsiders” could save civilization had more than a touch of the aristocrat’s romanticization of the outlaw, yet he was willing to stake everything on them:

“...the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colors, the unemployed and the unemployable... their life is the most immediate and the most real need for ending intolerable conditions and institutions.... Their opposition hits the system from without and is therefore not deflected by the system.... When they get together and go out into the streets, without arms, without protection, in order to ask for the most primitive civil rights, they know that they face dogs, stones, and bombs, jail, concentration camps, even death.... The fact that they start refusing to play the game may be the fact which marks the beginning of the end of a period.”

A strategy of despair; stupid and impatient, yes—but at its best Marcusean New Leftism had a heroic element. Lasch’s retreat from the “heartless world” back to the dubious comforts of the hearth inspired only Jimmy Carter’s speechwriters. To the extent Lasch is more sophisticated and critical of Marcuse’s obvious absurdities, he is at the same time less radical.

But perhaps it’s only a question of changing times; after all, the ’60s looked a lot more promising to petty-

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bourgeois radicals than the late '70s. As communists, we know that the struggle for proletarian revolution is long and difficult. Karl Marx counterposed this perspective to that of the impatient German petty-bourgeois radicals of his day, in the period of reaction following the failure of the 1848 revolution:

"What we say to the workers is: You have 15, 20, 50 years of civil war to go through in order to change society and to train yourselves for the exercise of political power, whereas they say, we must take over at once, or else we may as well take to our beds."

—speech to the Communist League,  
15 September 1850

So in the '60s Marcuse wanted "the revolution now," today Lasch can see nothing better than going back to (the marital) bed.

### Neither "Heartless World" nor "Family Haven": For a Socialist Society

Lasch makes fun of Paul Zweig's rationale for becoming a communist in the 1950s, that it "released him... from the failed rooms and broken vases of a purely private life." Zweig (a kind of Norman Mailer-esque hip European intellectual) ended up following the Swami Baba into pure mysticism—so much for trying to evade the demands of the "private life," Lasch triumphantly concludes. Yet surely we have seen enough of the "failed rooms and broken vases" of family life to know that the future will never be built by trying to piece back together those shattered fragments. Lasch's model of the "advanced liberal family" is in any case a myth—capitalism has *not* been able to replace the traditional family.

The nuclear family continues to be the main social institution oppressing women, isolating them from social life, imprisoning them in an endless cycle of child care and household drudgery. And capitalism enforces the ideology of the monogamous family unit as a useful conservatizing force. Yet it is still true that people need

their families against the "heartless world"—because there is *no alternative* in this society. That is Lasch's most powerful point against the prophets of "instant gratification." But as communists, we reject his "choice" of a return to family values enforced in the atomized nuclear family of sexual repression or the soulless and alienated society of "welfare statism."

Even in the wake of proletarian revolution, the family will not be instantly abolished—it must be replaced voluntarily, beginning with the availability of communal facilities (child-care and so forth) laying the material basis for freeing women from housework and enforced isolation. The grim Orwellian vision of endless grey state orphanages and lonely individuals living in little dormitory rooms is *not* what socialist society will look like. Our struggle is rather to create a communist society which will offer opportunities for far richer and more diverse forms of human relationships, freed of economic coercion, than anything the most advanced capitalist society has been able to offer even that tiny privileged minority with the leisure and money to experiment today.

It is of course impossible to predict how the complex, deep and diverse emotional needs of the human species will unfold under socialism. Isaac Deutscher, in a polemic against the New Left at a 1966 Socialist Scholars Conference, perhaps said it best:

"We do not maintain that socialism is going to solve all the predicaments of the human race. We are struggling in the first instance with the predicaments that are of man's making and that man can resolve. May I remind you that Trotsky, for instance, speaks of three basic tragedies—hunger, sex, and death—besetting man. Hunger is the enemy that Marxism and the modern labor movement have taken on.

"Yes, socialist man will still be pursued by sex and death; but we are convinced that he will be better equipped than we are to cope with these.... We do not see in socialist man evolution's last and perfect product, or the end of history, but in a sense only the beginning of history." ■

## Women and Revolution



Journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League

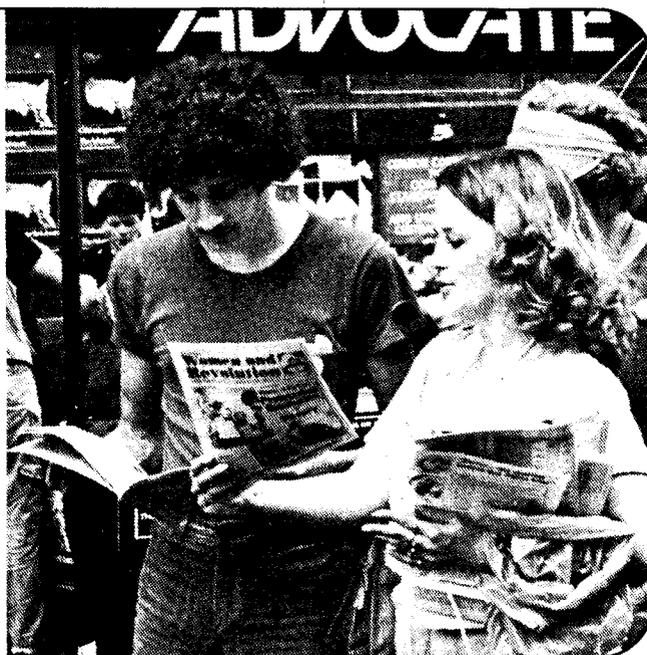
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# Lillian Hellman vs. Mary McCarthy: What Becomes a Legend Most?

Two such literary legends as Lillian Hellman and Mary McCarthy squabbling over who's a liar and who's a slanderer, with over a million bucks at stake, certainly isn't very becoming. But these really aren't two bitter old ladies locked in senile death-battle over whose cat killed the canary. Although New York intelligentsia clique fights are often best left to Woody Allen ("I hear *Dissent* and *Commentary* are fusing—they're calling it *Dysentery*," he said in *Annie Hall*), this case did provoke a few thoughts.

Two self-serving myths of American liberalism are in collision here, with roots going back to the '30s when so many literati had heady affairs with communism. The current fracas was kicked off by Mary McCarthy's caustic comment on the Dick Cavett show last January that "Lillian Hellman... is terribly overrated, a bad writer and dishonest writer... every word she writes is a lie, including 'and' and 'the.'" So liberal darling/feminist heroine Hellman, author of *Scoundrel Time* and the memoir which became the popular movie *Julia*, promptly sued McCarthy et al. for \$1.7 million, claiming "mental anguish" and "injury in her profession."

But it isn't really the money, or literary reputation, that Hellman and McCarthy are fighting over—the real question is whose legend will prevail. Hellman's defenders cite her defense of "simple decency" before the infamous 1952 HUAC trials. Many of McCarthy's partisans, on the other hand, recall her image as a righteously indignant seeker-for-truth, attacking Stalin's brutal repression and exposing the cheery "men of good will" Popular Front lies fellow travelers like Hellman spouted. Of course it is to Hellman's credit that she refused to fink to HUAC—unlike Elia Kazan, Clifford Odets and so many others—and to McCarthy's that she recognized the Moscow Trials for the vicious frame-up they were. Yet the truth is rather more complicated, and even though a lot of blood's flowed under the bridge since the '30s and '40s, it's obvious the old wars haven't been forgotten (and why not; after all, for many their brush with communism was the most vivid, important part of their lives). As we pointed out in a *Workers Vanguard* (18 June 1976) review of *Scoundrel Time*: "Hellman's memoir... confirms the general warning appropriate to the confessional genre: look out for what is omitted.... although [Hellman] explains her stand before HUAC by 'these simple rules of human decency,' life was not so simple, she was not so simple, and it was all political."

Hellman was a well-known Stalinist fellow traveler, as McCarthy remembers full well. Hellman joined the Stalinists in cheering on their bloody Popular Front policies in the Spanish Civil War, while McCarthy supported the POUMists being butchered on Stalin's orders. Hellman's "simple decency" didn't extend to



Not Mary McCarthy.

the victims of the 1936 Moscow Trials frame-up, nor to the Trotskyist leaders sent to prison in 1943 under the U.S. Smith Act, nor to artists like the Russian composer Shostakovich, muzzled and harassed by the bureaucracy while she bumbled on about the progressive culture of the USSR. No wonder McCarthy today still can't stand Hellman, wrapped up in her Blackglama mink and utterly snobbish self-congratulations as just another well-bred white Southern lady steeped in "old-fashioned American traditions."

Of course Mary McCarthy did her bit for the Cold War, abandoning her earlier Trotskyist sympathies. During the '50s she opposed the anti-Communist witchhunts only because they gave real anti-Communism a bad name with their "red-neck anti-intellectual boorish methods," and attacked "the Communist's concealment of his ideas and motives" in a speech to the notoriously Cold War, anti-Communist American Committee for Cultural Freedom. Still, to her credit McCarthy did break with the Cold War crowd relatively early during the Vietnam War, and wrote a

*continued on page 22*

# Peking Bans Babies

China is all the rage now. U.S. grain and military technology, barred to the Soviet Union, flow freely into the "new China," while Bloomingdale's of New York City has given the "beautiful people's" blessing to U.S. imperialism's alliance with the People's Republic of China, advising young women to pick up the "tasteful accessories" of "daily life in the People's Republic" and set off their make-up with a Mao suit. But life is not so sweet for the young women of China, and beneath all the fashionable fluff lie some hard and unpleasant truths.

The Peking bureaucrats have launched a new campaign of sexual repression and "population control," bringing intense social pressure to bear on the Chinese people, who are ordered to think of nothing but boosting production. Under the slogan "Late, Long, Few and Fine" legal rewards and penalties have been instituted to pressure people to marry later and have fewer children.

Trotsky once described the Stalinist attitude toward the family and personal relations as "the philosophy of a priest endowed also with the powers of a gendarme." That pretty well captures the character of the current campaign to achieve zero population growth by the year 2000. "Late marriage" is now the law in China, which means women must be at least 23 and men at least 25 (26 in cities) to marry without facing penalties. And no marriage usually means no sex. So intense is the opprobrium heaped on individuals who break this ban that sometimes suicide is their only recourse. As the *Washington Post* (17 December 1979) reported, "When two Chinese students at a Shanghai university were caught making love in the bushes, the man was imprisoned and the woman committed suicide. Classmates publicly criticized the pair because 'they let themselves go while others have to hold themselves in'."

Even the *New York Times'* China correspondent Fox Butterfield, normally the most amiable and gullible retailer of Peking press releases, was upset by his "new China" friends' puritanical campaign:

"When sexual relations outside of marriage are mentioned in the Communist press, they are always described in such phrases as 'improper relations between men and women,' or 'engaging in messy relations between men and women.' Even the vernacular term 'having relations' has a sordid ring to some Chinese. 'You shouldn't talk about such things,' a friend who is a Communist Party member chided when I asked for her reaction to the word. 'It is a very dirty thing'."

—*New York Times Magazine*, 13 January 1980

Only single people are admitted to the universities, technical schools and apprenticeship programs which are the only options available to young people seeking to escape the still poor and backward countryside. Married couples are severely penalized too if they have too many children. Couples who have a second child less than four years after the first are fined as much as ten percent of their wages for the next four years,

while parents of "unplanned" children are denied promotions or bonuses for three years.

Even the Chinese *People's Daily* has felt compelled to report on some of the harshest "excesses" of this campaign, charging that some clinics have tricked women into sterilization "causing both mental and physical pain" (*Los Angeles Times*, 17 March 1980). In some places officials have reportedly ordered doctors to sterilize women immediately after childbirth, while they're still anaesthetized.

Family planning in Stalinist China has always been manipulated by the bureaucracy to promote its nationalistic ends. When Mao launched the "Great Leap Forward," which tried to substitute the sheer labor power of millions of Chinese for modern technology, the regime encouraged a high birth rate, making birth control, divorces and abortions hard to get. Mao even stopped having census statistics compiled—which speaks volumes about how much of a rational population control program Mao ever had! Now the pendulum has swung back. The constant is the subordination of human needs, in all their individual diversity, to capricious bureaucratic dictates.

It's interesting that Peking's alliance with U.S. imperialism has had its reflection even in Deng & Co.'s current zero-growth drive. China has received \$50 million (the biggest handout from the capitalist world since 1949) from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities for computer technology to monitor its birth rate. Such technology is a good thing—as is the wide availability of modern forms of birth control. The problem of China's huge population and still impoverished society certainly demands some form of family planning. But the arbitrary bureaucratic methods of the Stalinist caste, creating untold misery, will never liberate Chinese women (or men).

When Mao's peasant armies smashed capitalist class rule in China in 1949, the state which issued from this historic victory, although bureaucratically deformed, carried out a series of profoundly progressive reforms undermining the age-old oppression of women in the "Celestial Empire." Barbaric practices like foot-binding and bride-buying, child marriage and arranged matrimony, bigamy and concubinage were abolished. Houses of prostitution were closed and pimps shot. Women, who for centuries had been chattel to their fathers or husbands, were given full legal equality. Yet this liberation remains only partial, given China's economic backwardness and the straitjacket of bureaucratic rule.

It is only the collectivist economic system of China which has enabled Chinese women to enter the twentieth century—and that system of proletarian property forms must be unconditionally defended against imperialist encroachment.

China's Stalinist rulers are playing a deadly game in their deals with U.S. imperialism, designed to catapult them into "superpower" status by the end of the

century. Peking encourages U.S. war propaganda against the USSR, but if the Soviet Union falls, militarily/industrially more backward China will soon be carved up by the victorious imperialists.

Behind America's Madison Avenue "friendship society" talk today lies its historic ambition to reconquer China for capitalist exploitation. The Peking bureaucracy's illusions in building "socialism in one county" through deals with this mortal class enemy of

the proletariat pose the gravest internal threat to the Chinese working class. Only political revolution by the working class against these nationalistic parasites can open the road to a world socialist order based on material plenty for all. Then and only then will the liberation of women be completed, and the ideology of the family and sexual repression, upon which the Stalinists rely to control the population, lose its bitter and tragic force. ■

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# Norton Sound: Witchhunt at Sea

Last spring the U.S. Navy launched an investigation into alleged "widespread lesbian activity" aboard the *Norton Sound*, a high-security missile test ship based in Long Beach Harbor, Los Angeles. When 24 of the 61 women sailors on the *Norton Sound* were charged with homosexuality, the case got national media attention, in part because the *Norton Sound* is one of the first ships to test the Navy's new "Women at Sea" program. And test the women they did. After being told life aboard ship would be difficult and they should stick together, the women were hounded, spied on and prevented even from entering the crowded women's showers together. Tensions mounted from the outset, as officers and male crewmen began seeing lesbians under every bunk of the women's berth. Not surprisingly, the witchhunt had racist overtones as well, as all but one of the black women sailors aboard were charged with lesbianism.

No doubt the Navy hoped to achieve a wave of quiet resignations, as usually happens. Last year alone, the Navy discharged 778 men and 76 women for homosexuality. But this time it backfired, as the women went public with their case. It came out that the Naval Investigative Service (NIS) had threatened *Norton Sound* sailors with court martial or demotion if they didn't give testimony against the accused, and in fact three of the five prosecution witnesses were women initially accused of lesbianism. Nearly half the prosecution's witnesses later stated the NIS had distorted or falsified their written statements. Also publicized was the fact that the *Norton Sound* is a floating hell: a gang called the "Dirty Dozen" was running on-board drug-peddling and loan-sharking with impunity; two stabbings and a fire set this year; a black woman sailor disappeared overboard in mysterious circumstances in 1979—the case still unsolved.

Charges were quickly dropped against 16 of the original 24, and finally the Navy found only two of the remaining eight guilty (both black). In the end, four of the Navy's witnesses ended up in mental institutions, while the "Norton 8" became celebrities—appearing on the Phil Donahue and Today shows, at fundraisers in chic LA discos, at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day

rally, besides receiving numerous book and movie rights offers.

Throughout the hearings, many of the "Norton 8" correctly insisted that their sexual activities were no one's business except their own. But their defense, headed by the American Civil Liberties Union, didn't challenge the Navy's anti-homosexual regulation, as has been done by other victimized homosexuals in the armed services, such as Leonard Matlovich. Some of the women even based their defense on proving they were "straight," bringing men who'd slept with them to testify at the hearings. Meanwhile, the National Gay Task Force says the way to combat discrimination in the military is to urge Carter to order the armed forces to "review" their anti-homosexual regulations.

We are opposed to every act of discrimination and oppression in capitalist society, even within the bourgeoisie's own apparatus of state terror, the cops and armed forces. Anti-homosexual regulations in the services must be opposed and those victimized for sexual preference must be defended. But our opposition to anti-democratic regulations in the military has nothing to do with the reformists' schemes to "reform" the military.

Unlike the petty-bourgeois gay activists and feminists, we are irreconcilably opposed to the very existence of the bourgeois armed forces. Imperialism won't be any less reactionary and murderous when its missiles are launched by women or its bombers guided to their targets by homosexuals sitting in front of the radar screens. One reason the Navy even has programs like "Women at Sea" is to try to upgrade its volunteer force through attracting more loyal and better educated layers of society, the better to carry out its anti-Soviet war preparations. And it's not surprising that many blacks have joined up, looking for "career training" as just about every federal poverty/job training program has been slashed to the bone. We oppose the witchhunt against the "Norton 8" and demand that all charges be dropped—but it's good to hear that at least one of the accused black women says there's no way she's ever going back into the Navy. ■

## Hellman vs. McCarthy...

(continued from page 19)

good book exposing U.S. imperialism's crimes in Vietnam—and attacking those '50s organizations she had addressed. Polemicizing against Diana Trilling in her book *Hanoi*, McCarthy wrote:

"I reject Mrs. Trilling's call to order. . . . And if as a result of my ill-considered actions, world Communism comes to power, it will be too late then, I shall be told to be sorry. Never mind. Some sort of life will continue, as Pasternak, Solzhenitsyn, Sinyavski, Daniel have discovered, and I would rather be on their letterhead, if they will allow me, than on that of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, which in its days of glory, as Mrs. Trilling will recall, was eager to exercise its right of protest on such initiatives as the issue of a U.S. visa to Graham Greene and

was actually divided within its ranks on the question of whether Senator Joseph McCarthy was a friend or enemy of domestic liberty."

It's too bad Hellman and McCarthy have chosen to battle it out on the rather obscure terrain of purely personal "morality," since both know where plenty of bodies are buried. But they seem to have settled for enshrinement in a panoply of petty-bourgeois legends of liberalism. As Trotskyists we have long pointed out that such legendary "personal morality" does not stand outside class politics. This case proves it doesn't even stand above vicious squabbles over money. Nor can we help noting that Hellman hasn't forgotten at least one of the grand old Stalinist traditions—she's still seeking revenge against her enemies through the capitalist state. ■

## Workers Party...

(continued from page 24)

in the White House and cop terror on the streets. Enough of presidents who tell poor women who can't afford abortions: "Life is not fair." Coleman's slogan "Enough! It's time for a workers party!" spoke directly to them.

Although Coleman did not win her race, her

campaign brought the program of class struggle against capitalism to San Francisco workers and minorities. In the closing weeks of the election, *Women and Revolution* interviewed Diana Coleman, whose long experience as an activist in the civil rights movement, the antiwar and women's movements and in the trade unions brought her to a militant socialist perspective of support to the Spartacist League (excerpts from that interview accompany this article). ■

## Interview with Diana Coleman

**W&R:** With rising urban crime, many feminists are advocating castrating rapists, judo classes, carrying mace, etc., as an answer to the question of self-defense. How do you feel about this?

**Coleman:** There's self-defense and self-defense. The feminists' insistence on karate and kung-fu and whistles and mace is really part of the California lifestyle in a lot of ways. It's part of keeping in shape and eating organic bean sprouts.

I used to do kung-fu, and so on, myself, but I learned that there are better ways. When I lived in Detroit I went to a self-defense class. There were the usual lesbian feminists and young petty-bourgeois women, but the class also included a number of black working-class women, both young and old. The instructor had us tell about our experiences and a number of the women told stories of being raped or attacked. Then we got to a middle-aged black woman. She said, "I was lying at home on my bed. Someone broke down the front door, then they broke down my bedroom door. They came after me..." Everybody was horrified, asking, "What happened? What happened?" So she said, "Well, I picked up my .45 and blew him away."

So why don't all these feminists go out and join the National Rifle Association? It's because they're part of the liberal milieu which still stands for gun control. Well, I stand opposed to that. Anyhow, for the middle-aged black woman who works eight to ten hours a day, jogging and karate just aren't very realistic.

If the right to carry arms is outlawed, only cops and criminals will have guns, which is pretty dangerous for all of us.

What the people who call for gun control really want is for the cops to have even more deadly weapons. Harry Britt, San Francisco's liberal gay Democrat, calls for gun control. He also calls for more gay cops—but at the same time admits that having gay cops on the police force means they're used for even more effective

entrapment of other gays!

This capitalist state isn't going to protect minorities and the working class. I was one of the organizers of the April 19 Committee Against Nazis in San Francisco, and we *did* stop them, by organizing a mass trade-union based countermobilization—while all the liberals and reformists told people to stay home. With the rise of the Klan and Nazis, we really need the right of armed self-defense, and that's one of the key planks in my program.

**W&R:** How does your campaign address the fight against the fascist/Klan attacks on blacks and the labor movement?

**Coleman:** You know, I went down South to do civil rights work in 1965, but believe me, I have seen more of the Klan in California in the last year than I ever saw in Mississippi. That says something about what's going on in this country today, that the Klan and Nazis are on the rise again.

Mark Friedman [the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congressman] seems to spend all his time in Southern California running around bragging about how he *debated* Tom Metzger of the Ku Klux Klan. Even his Republican opponent had enough sense to say he didn't want to provide a platform for the Klan to put forward their "ideas." We know the Klan isn't any debating society—it's a race-terror organization that *kills*. And even while Friedman debates the Klan, the Klan bombed the Communist Party's headquarters in Southern California—and even laid a pipe bomb at the SWP's own headquarters!

I'm putting forward the perspective of a labor/black mobilization to stop the Klan and Nazis—no debates with these murderers! I have used this campaign to talk to people about what happened in San Francisco on April 19 when the Nazis tried to march in and "celebrate" Hitler's birthday. The Board of Supervisors—the Democrats and Republicans who sit on that Board—stood idly by and did nothing, and so did the SWP and the Communist Party. But the Spartacist League initiated a demonstration that got 1,200 people down there, trade unionists and minorities. It was endorsed by nine local unions and 35 union officials, and we stopped the Nazis cold. And I've pointed out the difference between that and what happened in Chattanooga, where there was no effort to stop the Klan and they came out and shot down black women walking in the street. So maybe the next time the Nazis come to San Francisco, we'll have 12,000 people out there, not just 1,200.



Workers Vanguard

Spartacist Campaign Says:

# Enough! It's Time for a Workers Party!



Young Spartacus Photo

At a time of significant rightward shift in American politics, Diana Coleman's Spartacist campaign for Board of Supervisors gave San Francisco working people a chance to vote for an authentic revolutionary alternative. While Carter and Reagan tried to outbid each other in the arms race against "Red Russia," Coleman stood up as a staunch defender of the USSR against imperialist war threats. Against all the bourgeois politicians (and their trade-union flunkies) yearning for Catholic church-led capitalist restoration in Poland, Coleman stood for strict separation of church and state, defense of socialized property and workers political revolution. In an impressive showing for a Bolshevik candidate, Coleman received 7,183 votes.

Coleman's campaign fought to mobilize the labor movement and minorities to struggle for what they need to live a decent life. Unlike reformists angling for City Hall desks, Coleman stood for class struggle. "The capitalist state can't be reformed to serve the interests of workers and poor people," her election brochure stated. "It must be replaced by a workers state and it will take a socialist revolution to get one."

Coleman counterposed her working-class program to the Bay Area's middle-class eco-freaks. These liberal faddists march in lockstep with the capitalist austerity drive of Carter and Reagan, proclaiming that less of everything is better, more "natural." When Governor Jerry Brown cuts back social services he proclaims "small is beautiful." These eco-faddists cry "no nukes,"

meaning nuclear power plants, while ignoring Pentagon plans to blow up the world. These utopian liberals care more about man-eating Great White sharks than people who can't find work. They want to outlaw pornography, guns and cars. The Coleman campaign said working people and the poor need *more* of everything, not less.

Coleman's campaign opposed the divisive and crippling "me first" ethnic/sexual politics of Bay Area reformists. Enclaves of the oppressed, like San Francisco's gay Castro Street district, are no fortresses against the spreading wave of reaction that has made every sort of so-called "social deviant" its target. Coleman opposed these reformist illusions, calling for building a strong and united working-class movement which can defend the democratic rights of all.

In the unions, in the black and Latino neighborhoods, on the campuses, millions of Americans are disgusted with the likes of Carter and Reagan. They have had more than enough of economic depression and runaway inflation. Enough of racist injustice and warmongering. Enough of capitalist parties that have billions for war and peanuts for the cities: schools that don't teach, hospitals that don't heal, homes that you can't afford to live in, streets that can't be walked in safety. Enough of union-busting and scab-herding cops; paychecks that don't pay the bills, factories boarded up. Enough of Anita Bryant reaction

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**Diana Coleman, 34**, is a socialist union militant born in San Francisco. Her experience as an activist in the civil rights movement, the anti-war and women's movements and in the unions brought her to a militant socialist perspective of support to the Trotskyist Spartacist League.

At an early age she took part in demonstrations at City Hall which rode the witchhunting, McCarthyite HUAC out of San Francisco in 1960. In 1965 she went to Gulfport, Mississippi to work with the militant civil rights organization—SNCC. She came back to the Bay Area to become active in the Vietnam anti-war movement. Coleman was a prominent leader of

Oakland Women's Liberation and an active union militant for ten years, six of them at the phone company in the Communications Workers of America (CWA) as a member of the Militant Action Caucus. Coleman was a spokesman for the Union Committee Against Secret Service Harassment which won an apology and legal settlement from the U.S. Secret Service for its illegal seizure of San Francisco CWA militant Jane Margolis at her union's 1979 convention. Most recently she was an organizer of the April 19 Committee Against Nazis (ANCAN), the Spartacist League-initiated united front which stopped the Nazis from celebrating Hitler's birthday at the San Francisco Civic Center.