

# The Oppression of Homosexuals

The SOC has not worked in the gay movement, which is not very active in this period in Orange County, but we feel it is important to state our position on gays and gay oppression.

The Kinsey Report stated that there are 15 million homosexuals in America, and other theorists have put the figure much higher. We recognize that there may be millions of homosexuals in the working class--no one knows how many because of the level of oppression in this country--and a correct response by communists to their oppression will be crucial to winning gays who are advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism and to a new communist party's program. While from the point of view of revolutionary strategy an understanding of the woman question and the national question may be more urgent, Marxist-Leninists cannot ignore or afford a shoddy analysis of the oppression of other sectors, including homosexuals.

As Lenin stated, "Working class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all cases of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter what class is affected.... Unless they are trained, moreover, to respond from Social-Democratic [communist] points of view and no other.... We must blame ourselves, our lagging behind the mass movement, for still being unable to organize sufficiently wide, striking and rapid exposures of all the shameful outrages." (*What Is to be Done?*)

The question of sexual preference is developing into a serious national struggle because of the rise of reactionary anti-gay movements supported by right-wing forces--and because of large counter movements in defense of gays' democratic rights.

The SOC has made a brief study of the question and believes that the oppression of gays, as of women, arose alongside class oppression. All historical research shows that homosexuality has existed as one form of sexuality throughout history, which belies the position of many communist

groups that this form of sexual preference is "a product of decadent capitalism"--a position resulting from their own unexamined prejudice rather than scientific research. (The RCP's continual and ugly use of bigotted epithets is especially appalling.)

We feel that bourgeois ideology and practice influence all social forms under capitalism, including the family. We support and defend the very real types of personal and political sustenance that families can and do provide workers, but capitalism will also tend to reproduce forms of exploitation within families. We must recognize that struggle is still necessary within family relationships, and not sweep this problem under the rug by pretending that perfect, non-exploiting families can be developed under capitalism. From our study, we believe that homosexuality does not attack personal sexual and emotional relationships--the progressive aspect of the family under capitalism. Homosexuality does threaten the bourgeois ideology that the primary (and only legitimate) function of the family is to reproduce the working class, and that decisions about reproduction should be in the hands of the bourgeois state--this is the threat that makes it necessary for capitalism to oppress homosexuality and homosexuals. (Or, if the movement should become strong enough, to co-opt it and subject it to commercial exploitation.)

The SOC believes that it is essential to struggle against anti-gay attitudes in the movement and among comrades. We support the fight for democratic rights of gay people, and we fight anti-gay prejudice within the working class by showing whose interests such prejudice serves--the ruling class. And, with gay people as with others, if we share political, ideological and organizational unity, we encourage their membership in SOC.

