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**THE BUSTELO INCIDENT**

**By Myra Tanner Weiss \***

**W**HAT was the Bustelo incident? A man wrote an article in a small radical weekly. The year was 1954. He was detailing a crisis in the cosmetic industry. He only meant to be funny, to give a humorous treatment to a topic in an otherwise very heavy periodical. He was the editor, Joe Hansen, and he used one of his pen names, Jack Bustelo, as was the way with a small, underpaid staff that put the paper together each week. But suddenly the usually silent readership came to life. A flurry of letters arrived at the office—short, angry letters and long carefully considered ones. That paper was *The Militant*. The Bustelo dispute had begun.

And a crisis appeared in the leadership of the small radical movement which threatened to tear the organization apart. The leadership was split between two groups: the "Weiss group" and the "anti-Weiss group." Two sides in a dispute—over what?—renounced the desire for a fight and pledged a new effort toward a collective leadership. A joint statement to that effect was issued by the two opposing male leaders, Murry Weiss, my closest political collaborator, and Farrell Dobbs, then National Secretary, nominal head of the Socialist Workers Party, the small radical movement referred to above.

As I viewed the matter, the brief and heated dispute revealed the prejudice of the Marxist men and the anger of the Marxist women, the human substance of that small American party. Both the prejudice and the anger were familiar to me. The former I encountered the moment I joined the movement in

\*The author joined the Trotskyist movement in 1935, the Workers Party, in Salt Lake City, Utah. She was a founding member of the Socialist Workers Party in 1938 and the Organizer of the Los Angeles Local of the SWP from 1942–1952, at which time she moved to New York to work as a staff writer for *The Militant*. She ran as Vice Presidential candidate with Farrell Dobbs in 1952, 1956, and 1960. She dropped out of the SWP in the mid-Sixties after an unsuccessful struggle against what she considered "bureaucratic" practices. MA, Political Science, NYU, 1972.

1935. The latter I had to contend with in my own heart. The dispute subsided. And both men and women continued their common struggle "against the system."

Thirty-two years later, 1986, the Bustelo dispute is revived. Some of the documents are taken out of the archives, dusted off, and reproduced, presumably to "educate" a new generation of women, under the title *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, Pathfinder Press, New York. Weiss, Dobbs, and Bustelo are gone from the scene but the issues that divided them then still remain and must be fought out by new actors on the stage.

Why? Because male prejudice, male resistance to women's struggle for equality, still dominates that radical movement. The wave of feminist rebellion that began in the Sixties found its expression in that small party, as it is expressed throughout the radical movement and society as a whole. And it is still confronting stubborn masculine resistance. There are no new arguments to meet the embattled women. The old ones will have to do. Hence, the publication again of the old Bustelo fight. Let us take a look at this dispute, then and now.

### ***The Offending Article***

First, let me state that Bustelo (Joe Hansen) was a devoted revolutionist. A fine Marxist writer. And a very dear and loved friend of this writer. His prejudice which showed in his article on cosmetics was a prejudice which he shared with all his male colleagues, to one extent or another. Men, just as women, are products of the society in which we live. We only partially liberate ourselves from the effects of our capitalist environment and that liberation comes with monumental struggle of consciousness. The prejudice in the cosmetics article was not subtle. That is the value of humor. People often say in jest what they would not dare to say in serious tones. However, the feminist movement which began in the Sixties, one would think, would make such a blatant expression of prejudice impossible. Obviously it did not. For the debate is raised anew.

How did the article offend? Let me count the ways:

The title of the article was "Sagging Cosmetic Lines Try a Face Lift." (For the full text see Appendix A.) The title should be enough to demonstrate prejudice, or at least insensitivity to women's problems. "Sagging Lines" afflict both sexes. But

because society historically has tried to confine women to their sex role, their physical function, "sagging lines" are far more disastrous to her. And so it is largely women who are forced onto the surgical table for the face lift. Not really a joking matter.

The substance of the article was to tell women who could no longer afford cosmetics to do without, which is on a par with telling an auto worker to be satisfied with her/his second-hand jalopy, or take a bus. Strange talk for a proletarian revolutionary! But economic crises and especially unemployment often force people into changing their consuming habits. Also not a joking matter.

And finally, the article was addressed to men, as if there were no women readers: "Have you noticed lately that there are fewer girls around with skins you love to touch?" Reading that line any woman reading the paper should fold it respectfully and put it aside, for the writer was talking to the "boys," as usual.

### ***The Discussion***

Of course a lot of the discussion was about cosmetics so let me say right now that I use makeup. I always have. I recommend it to no one. Wear it or not. Have the fresh-scrubbed look that Bustelo said he liked or apply the stuff an inch deep. I couldn't care less. But neither am I about to apologize for it, or feel less revolutionary because I don't choose to express my rebellion against the social system through refusing to use makeup. I say to each her own. Full freedom to do what you please. And apparently Bustelo also thought better of the matter because the initial attack on the use of cosmetics was never expanded into a campaign to "educate" women out of their "indulgence." In fact, fifteen years went by before the Socialist Workers Party went public with the dispute, publishing at least Evelyn Reed's version of the dispute in 1969.<sup>1</sup>

Bustelo dealt with an exchange relation. And there are two parties in exchange: the seller and the buyer. Dealing with the sellers, the hucksters, Bustelo was quite good. They, of course, were not ridiculous. They wanted to realize profits for the

<sup>1</sup> See *Problems of Women's Liberation*, Evelyn Reed (1905-1979), Merit Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1969.

bosses, to sell the goods. Only the women were ridiculous for their patronage, in Bustelo's eyes. But women buy what they want with the money they have to spend. And millions of women tell us what they want with their purchases. We can all hope that the class struggle will not be held up until everyone agrees to a well-scrubbed look, as one of Bustelo's critics commented.

Bustelo ended his article with the obviously sarcastic paragraph:

"Please, girls, don't let a cutback on the job mean a cutback on cosmetics. If you take a layoff, don't lay off the lipstick. Remember, to keep up prosperity, keep up your make-up."

So I guess, according to Bustelo, I'll be keeping the bourgeoisie prosperous and myself poor. So be it. Not very good economic theory, Marxist or otherwise, but of course Bustelo was merely being funny. Conformity, well-scrubbed or painted, is what we oppose. Especially compulsory conformity which the bourgeoisie tries to dictate, and which Bustelo *also* unwittingly tried to impose from the opposite direction in his article.

Cosmetics, style, fashion are all ways in which one presents oneself to the general public. It can be in conformity with bourgeois standards, as dictated by the hired hacks of the fashion and cosmetic industry. Or it can be in rebellion against these. Or it can be a combination or neither of these. When job-hunting, we often have to conform. We are not free to choose. However, we Marxists have always been in favor of complete freedom of individual expression, art, makeup, dress, or whatever. We demand only that everyone have equal access to the means of expression.

It is the height of arrogance for Hansen or anyone else to advise women on what to wear to satisfy the desire for beauty. Beauty and all art are matters for the individual to know and enjoy. All attempts to foist one's taste on others must fail. We dress to please others (lovers, friends); we dress to displease others (often parents); we dress to get attention and we dress to avoid it. We conform and we create. We experiment. We adopt and we discard. To list all these contradictions is to drive home the point that our appearance is entirely a personal matter, uniquely belonging to one alone and no one should dictate or

pressure our decisions in these matters unless we seek a common expression (uniforms).

People are often duped. But that does not mean that people are dupes. In the decade that followed, some youth defied the bourgeoisie on the question of style. Young men started to grow long hair, reducing the separation of the sexes at least in appearance. Many in the older generation were outraged. In some towns men risked brutal reactions to this defiance of the "system." Women put on trousers and the men fussed with coiffures. A revolution took place in fashion. Even the cops won the fight for the new styles. (I think the military is still trying to hold out.) Through style a statement, a political statement, if you will, was made, at least to the extent that it was a defiance of the "system" on however small a matter.

People do not feel that they have access to government or the mass media. In a way, they leap the barrier with T shirts, emblazoned with all kinds of messages. I love New York. I love cats. See? I've been to Skagway! I even saw one young woman walk down the street in a T shirt that had a whole paragraph about the Vietnam war printed on it. I'm sure Bustelo would have loved that too.

The cosmetics issue is important. But what is more important is the dispute that it stirred up, a dispute that opened up the question of the relation between feminism and Marxism. And that is a question of utmost importance to both Marxists and feminists.

### ***Bustelo Writes to Himself***

In a letter to the Editor (Joe Hansen) Jack Bustelo (also Joe Hansen—ain't power grand?) defended himself as well as he could, I guess. But on different turf, he really was a good polemicist. Here, all he could do was toss around *non sequiturs*.

Trying to reply to one of his critics, Bustelo wrote:

"...I do not believe that 'beauty is predominantly monopolized by the wealthy' and that the 'wealthy are beautiful because the workers are wretched.'

"It appears to me that you might just as well say that 'morality is predominantly monopolized by the wealthy'

and that the 'wealthy are moral because the workers are immoral.'"<sup>2</sup>

One "might just as well"? In what logical school might one "just as well"? They are two entirely different things. If we say that oranges are a citrus fruit, might one "just as well" say that carrots are a citrus fruit? One "might just as well" if non-sense is tolerated. But if not, one can only say lemons or grapefruit are citrus fruits as well because these are of like character. Cosmetics are consumer products. And they are consumed individually. But no one will find morality on a drug store shelf. Morality has to do with social behavior. Don't kill, lie, covet, etc. One "might just as well" talk of other consumer products, like houses, furniture, clothes, etc. And Bustelo's critics would be right there too. The rich live in good homes *precisely because* the workers don't. They consume, or can consume, conspicuously, because the workers are put on such slim rations. Morality of course is entirely a horse of another color.

Later on, in a more careful and "theoretical" treatment of the dispute, one that could hopefully give it a "Marxist" foundation, Bustelo tells his critics that cosmetics are for them a "fetish."

"Long ago in analyzing the strange powers of money, Marx called attention to this projection by which human beings see their relations not as relations but as *things* which they endow with remarkable powers. Indicating the parallel to certain magic objects in primitive beliefs and religions he called it fetishism. What we have in cosmetics is a fetish, a particular fetish in the general fetishism that exists in the world of commodities. The special power that cosmetics have derives from the fact that in addition to economic relations, sexual relations attach to them. That is the real source of the 'beauty' both men and women see in cosmetics."<sup>3</sup>

Now as every good "student of *Capital*" who has really pondered over "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof" knows, Marx was talking about the difficulty people

2 Published originally in a July, 1954 issue of *The Militant*. Also published in the 1986 pamphlet *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, Pathfinder Press, New York, N.Y. p. 34.

3 SWP *Discussion Bulletin*, October, 1954, p. 60, and in the 1986 pamphlet, p. 80.

have understanding the commodity, especially in its lustrous money form. Money is the root of all evil. Money is power. Money makes money, etc. All kinds of glorious or evil attributes are ascribed to money, the universal equivalent. Marx points out in the section cited, Section 4 of the first chapter, that these magical qualities exist because human equality, the social character of labor, is seen only through the labor product, the commodity. Let Marx speak for himself:

"... The equality of all sorts of human labour is expressed objectively by their products all being equally values; the measure of the expenditure of labour-power by the duration of the expenditure, takes the form of the quantity of value of the products of labour; and finally, the mutual relations of the producers within which the social character of their labour affirms itself, takes the form of a social relation between the products."<sup>4</sup>

Money *is* the expression of value. Really and truly. Not an illusion. Cosmetics are *not* an expression of sex. But value, in substance, is the social labor it took to bring those commodities, including money, into being. Money is universally accepted *because* the labor of all humans is equal, regardless of the multitudinous forms of that labor, *because* of our human equality. There is nothing physically equal between iron and wheat. But the fact that both took labor to produce, our labor, gives iron and wheat equality. They are equated in the exchange relation. Our social reality finds expression in things, giving those things their magical quality. Money is neither good nor evil by nature. But the exploitation of labor is. Money is neither weak nor powerful. But the possession of it in sufficient quantities is. Money doesn't make money or bake bread. But it can hire the people who will.

What has all this to do with cosmetics? Nothing at all. People may be afflicted with any kind of fetish. And it may have a sexual character. But cosmetics are *not* a mysterious expression of sex. Ordinary mortals take cosmetics for what they are. There's no "mystery." They can make one look younger, look older, look better, and ineptly applied, look grotesque. Cosmetics are use values, first, and the discussion is all about their consumption. And as Marx made quite clear, from Section 1 on

4 *Capital*, Karl Marx, Kerr edition, pp. 82-83.

in his monumental book, there's no mystery in use values. They can be seen, felt, smelled and heard. They can be measured.

However Bustelo does reveal a mystery in this last "think" piece, and as he formulates it, hope leaps in the breast for a possible solution. Talking about men using after-shave lotion, which advertisers promise will help men with the ladies, Bustelo said:

"... But what is it that the men users of the cosmetic are induced to believe? Obviously that there is a *thing* that can help smooth out their relations with women. And that means, doesn't it, that there is something basically wrong on a wide scale in the *relations* between men and women? What is it? And what is its cause?"

And farther on:

"Again we ask what sorcery it is that has captured and sealed this magic power in a few inches of colored grease. And we have to say that the sorcery is in the fact that a *thing* can be endowed with the capacity to smooth out women's relations with men. We are forced to add to our conclusions that from the side of women [?] something must be basically wrong on a wide scale with their *relations* with the opposite sex."

Indeed there is something basically wrong. But precisely what is wrong is never answered by Bustelo. The hope in the breast dies. Unless, of course, one buys the idea that it is the "lack of harmony and freedom," shaped by capitalism, that makes the relations between the sexes bad. But that argument yields only the tautology: there's a lack of harmony because there's a lack of harmony. Things are pretty bad because—they're bad.

Nonetheless, there is material in Bustelo's answer, which, if noticed, can give us a hint of the direction in which an answer can be found. Bustelo quotes at length Russell Lyne's, author of the *Tastemakers*:

"... Ever since 1905 the automobile industry has been second only to the women's fashion industry in its insistence

on the glamour of 'this year's model' compared with 'last year's model.' In fact, a man clothes himself in his car in much the same spirit that a woman dresses herself in her clothes, and he is subject to the calculated whims of Detroit just as his wife is subject to the equally calculated whims of Paris."

Bustelo fails to note this contrast. But perhaps we've got something. Women adorn themselves with dresses. Men adorn themselves with cars (and the women with the dresses). That "fetish" costs a heck of a lot more money, and men have a lot more. Marxists are always interested in economics, in the material base for social phenomena. Why didn't Bustelo notice this difference between the sexes? It's not just that *real* love doesn't need makeup. It's that men have more money than we do. And with that, they have power. Women do not. Equal pay! Remember? It's in our platform. Equal access to pay. That's in our platform. Some men will cling for dear life to their extra privileges and the delusion of their superiority because of them. This is not a part of their misery. Other men don't even notice the grievance and have to be reminded. But we women notice and it makes us a bit angry, quite a bit.

## BUSTELO'S DEFENSE ATTORNEY

**C**ALLED upon to defend Bustelo, Evelyn Reed postulated a fully developed anti-feminist theory, one which the men held, I believe, but were too cautious to make explicit. That was the notion that women would get their freedom only after the working class took power. First we would win socialism. Then women would get their emancipation. Implicit in this notion is the conclusion that meanwhile the women should shut up! Don't divide the working class. The Socialist Workers Party didn't publish Reed's theory until fifteen years later after it had first rid itself of the "Weiss group." In 1969 the SWP published Reed's views, *Problems of Women's Liberation* which it called "A Marxist Approach." In that pamphlet part of Reed's contribution to the Bustelo controversy was

5 SWP *Discussion Bulletin*, October, 1954, pp. 64-65, and in the 1986 pamphlet, p. 80.

printed under the stunning head "Sex against Sex—or Class against Class?"

The title put the matter succinctly. These two struggles, in Reed's view, were counterposed, opposites. Marxists had traditionally viewed them as complementary, parallel, allied struggles, not antithetical.

Who in the 1950s would propose that we say to Martin Luther King, Jr., and the black freedom fighters, "Race against Race—or Class against Class?" The arrogance of such a question would have been unthinkable. Yet the question was asked of women in 1969, and now asked again with re-publication of the documents, though this revealing head is now deleted.

The blacks would love to have the labor movement take up the battle against race discrimination. Only it didn't. The women would like the same thing. Only the labor bureaucracy, on the whole, never gave a damn. And the rank and file had enough trouble just eking out a living. The blacks and the women could no longer wait for labor to get its act on the road. The working class was, and to some extent still is, steeped with bourgeois-nurtured bias.

Let us look more closely at this theoretical notion, for any notion, in my opinion, which gets voiced and a hearing, has at least an element of truth in it. That is why we struggle for freedom of expression, the right to debate, because in that collective process the whole truth has a chance to emerge. It is true that only with the transformation of society from capitalism to socialism can all of us find the social ground for equality. Capitalism *requires* inequality. It cannot exist without it. Socially constructed productive resources must be individually owned by a few—and the many have to be without them so that they are forced to sell their labor power. Other inequalities are built into the system in order to preserve that basic one. Capitalist society *must always* keep us divided between the rich and the poor—and the contrast between these two categories in the United States is truly obscene. All this understanding of the world in which we live was analyzed scientifically by Marx. Racism and sexism are not necessarily essential to the existence of capitalism but they have been inherited and promoted as a means of sustaining the class division. The capitalist class is so small that it needs to divide in order to rule.

The proletariat, on the other hand, creates all the wealth of society. Without it there would be no capitalism, no surplus value, no profit. Therefore it has the power *and* the incentive for social change. And it constitutes the majority of the people

in advanced capitalist countries. This is the element of truth in the notion that women will realize their freedom only in a socialist society.

But the error is a very big one indeed. It does not follow that first the workers make a socialist revolution and then the women get their liberation. Marx did not and could not know just how the transition from capitalism to socialism would take place. The most likely course was that indicated by the relations discussed above. Marx hypothesized that the revolution could also come about first in a backward country like Russia. Also that a revolution could be made peacefully, power simply being passed from one class to another, all at once or in stages.

History, almost a century later, proved Marx right about a new society based on economic planning, but the change came about through the least likely variant, in backward Russia where the working class was still a minority of the population and the majority, the peasantry, were still held in semi-feudal bondage. In fact, nowhere in history, no place in the world, has the transition between the two societies been effected as anticipated by Marx and Engels, by a people overwhelmingly proletarian.

And we have had only one, Russia, and possibly two if we include Yugoslavia, where the revolution was directly carried out by the working class, even as a minority class.

The Red Army, objectively, not subjectively, made the transformation in Eastern Europe while it wound up its victory over Hitler. The peasant masses of China overwhelmed Chiang Kai Shek. And, in Cuba, a middle class? student? intellectual? band of guerrillas felled the tyrant Batista and dared to defy Batista's sponsor, the U.S. imperialists. True. None of these transformations could have taken place without the support, or at least acquiescence of the working class. And all were a refraction of the contradictions between the basic classes in modern society. But none were "classical" transitions as Marx and Engels had thought most likely, the conquest of power by an industrial proletariat that constituted the majority of an advanced capitalist society.

The revolution everywhere developed on the least expected variant, not the most likely one. But Marx and Engels never gave us a schema for the transformation. They were not foolish. They did give us some analytical tools that might help us hack our way through our complex history. In general, we

have the dialectic which taught us to deal with change through contradictions.

The bourgeoisie temporarily blocked the proletarian revolution in the advanced countries by the construction of a buffer labor bureaucracy. But the upheavals in the colonial and semi-colonial countries could not be blocked. Nor could these struggles come to fruition within the confines of the bourgeois order. Capitalism on a world scale had already entered its period of decline. The proletariat had to do the job that the bourgeoisie historically was supposed to accomplish. The most backward had to leap to the position of most advanced.

In Russia, the serfs could not be freed for integration into capitalist urban factories as had happened in France of 1789. The material ground for the growth of these was absent. The world was already exhausted by war, the first one fought on a world scale, because the world was too small to absorb the younger German capitalism. For the same reasons, only a planned economy could assimilate a liberated Russian peasantry. Only the working class could free the serf.

The bourgeoisie of Eastern Europe fled before the Red Army not because Stalin promised to confiscate its wealth. He promised to safeguard it. But because the bourgeoisie needs state power to exploit the toiling masses. Only then does it regard its capital investment secure. So the bourgeoisie fled taking its portable wealth with it.

Capitalism in the U.S. and West Europe was rich enough, thanks to super-exploitation of the rest of the capitalist world, to grant concessions to the organized labor movement, which nonetheless had to fight valiantly for them. The organized workers fought for and won social security, unemployment insurance, automatic increases in wages with price increases in an effort to maintain real gains, shorter hours of work, better pay, and better working conditions. All these gains were first raised as demands by the radical movement, and then fought for and won bit by bit by the class. But further the labor movement did not, could not go, without a huge leap in political consciousness. Forced to make concessions, the bourgeoisie moved through its government to take back what it had been forced to give.

In addition the capitalists sent their capital abroad to escape the concessions granted at home, accelerating economic development in the "third" world and *internationalizing* the class struggle. To understand the new stage in the development of the class struggle, the workers had to and still must acquire a

grasp of the class politics of our time. The axis of revolution necessarily shifted to those who could raise that political awareness. The black revolution. The feminist revolt. The lesbians and gays. The handicapped. The native American Indians. The Latinos. The unevenness within the working class had to be bridged. But as the law of uneven and combined development would teach us, the bridge is made, not just by catching up, but by surpassing. It was Martin Luther King, Jr., who brought to the struggle against the war in Vietnam its first organized, mass support, not the labor movement, already encrusted with bureaucratic barnacles.

Tell the blacks to wait for the working class? They are the working class, a big part of it. Tell the blacks to wait for socialism? They have waited long enough. The pain became unbearable. But the SWP, which once had such a glorious history, in its decline speaks the unspeakable.

No. We are not schematists. The blacks may lead the American revolution. The women may lead it. All the oppressed will make it. It is not the blacks nor the women who divide the working class with race or sex struggle. It is prejudice, long and carefully cultivated by the bourgeoisie, that divides our class. In our struggle to overcome that prejudice the bonds of true revolutionary unity are forged. Political consciousness begins with a rejection of all prejudice. The elimination of bias is the first task for would-be political educators.

The women may lag behind at times, as the men do now. But they can also trigger the big event as they did in the Russian Revolution of 1917. Re-read Trotsky's account of the February Revolution in Russia:

"The fact is that the February revolution was begun from below, overcoming the resistance of its own revolutionary organizations, the initiative being taken of their own accord by the most oppressed and downtrodden part of the proletariat—the women textile workers, among them no doubt many soldiers' wives."<sup>6</sup>

"A great role is played by women workers in the relation between workers and soldiers. They go up to the cordons more boldly than men, take hold of the rifles, beseech, almost command: 'Put down your bayonets—join us.' The

6 *History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. I, Leon Trotsky, Sphere Books Ltd., London, p. 110.

soldiers are excited, ashamed, exchange anxious glances, waver; someone makes up his mind first, and the bayonets rise guiltily above the shoulders of the advancing crowd. The barrier is opened, a joyous and grateful 'Hurrah!' shakes the air. . . the revolution makes another forward step."

Sooner or later, to be sure, the male workers would win the soldiers to their side. But who knows how long a time that might have been? The fact is that the women workers began the revolution of 1917 in Russia with their unauthorized strike activity. And they played a major role in the first great strategic task, winning the Czar's soldiers to the side of the working class.

In the crush of revolutionary events the women are seen in the forefront. But also in ordinary times, times that we experience today, the women everywhere are breaking down the walls that keep us out of the fight. We will have no more of the "kirche, kinder, und kueche" of a Hitler. That leads to death.

We cannot counterpose the class struggle to the sex struggle or the black struggle. These latter struggles are an integral part of the class struggle. The struggle of the working class against the capitalist class, the struggle for socialism, is also the struggle of women against sexism, the struggle of blacks against racism, the struggle of lesbians and gays against homophobic prejudice, the struggle of Latinos against pro-imperialists, etc. The struggle for political growth in consciousness in the first instance is the struggle against bourgeois notions and practices of prejudice.

True. The class struggle tends to split the feminist struggle as the latter does the former. Some bourgeois women will abandon their feminist cause when bourgeois privileges are endangered. But feminism requires socialism for its realization, just as does the workers' struggle for liberation. Patriarchal relations are rooted in the laws of private property, the *sine qua non* of all class societies. It was not accidental that the early feminist pioneers of the Sixties arrived at socialist conclusions. Private ownership of the means of production is an irreconcilable contradiction to collective ownership. And private property for centuries has been the tool of the men, endemic to patriarchy.

## *Compulsion and Desire*

Reed discovers a contradiction in the position of Bustelo's critics which she regards as insupportable. Of course, a dialectician would expect to see contradictions. It is the Marxist task to explain these, not to eliminate them. All reality is composed of contradictions. In this dispute we are dealing with the desire to use cosmetics and the compulsion to use them. Here is Reed:

"The arguments against him [Bustelo] center around the 'needs and wants' of women in the realm of sexual beauty which Bustelo, it seems, does not understand. . . . After reading through the criticisms, however, I find two main propositions, both of them contradictory, which may be summed up as follows: 'Women want what they do not want.' . . .

"1. In the competitive sex market which features capitalism, women are obliged to compete with other women for economic security, whether it is in the form of jobs or husbands. Therefore, women do not 'indulge' in cosmetics. We are under *social compulsion* to use them.

"2. The use of cosmetics is good and necessary because they help to make women beautiful. We have the *right* to use them.

"Here *free choice* and the right to use cosmetics is coupled with *social compulsion*. To uphold social compulsion in the name of free choice is contradictory."

Good grief! How does the notion that there are two factors involved in the use of cosmetics, free choice and compulsion, get transformed into the one "upholding" the other? How does "coupling" get changed into "upholding"? Someone is taking leave of her senses. To say that there are two factors affecting the decision to use cosmetics, one desire, and the other compulsion, cannot possibly be construed to mean therefore compulsion is endorsed by desire. Bustelo's critics want desire to be freed of compulsion. Workers want jobs. We know we must produce in order to consume. That does not mean we uphold the *compulsion* to sell one's labor power, the conditions of labor under capitalism, and thereby lose one's claim to the labor

7 SWP Discussion Bulletin, October, 1954, p. 27, and in the 1986 pamphlet, pp. 56-57.



product. Capitalism forces us into this sale. And this compulsion we oppose. We don't "adapt" to it, with or without apologies for our behavior. We sell our labor power because we are *compelled* to.

Rape and sex are often "coupled." We like the latter and hate the former. Feminists want to liberate sex from the element of rape. And that element has been pretty widespread in the relations between the sexes. There was a time when men had the power of life or death over their mates. In some contemporary cultures they still do. In my lifetime the marriage vows required her to promise to "obey," a vestige of our slavery, no doubt. But what kind of sexual freedom is there for the woman who must "obey"? Only in the last few decades has that obligation been deleted from the "love" contract.

Bustelo's critics asked for a struggle against the disease of sexist treatment of women instead of a struggle against one of the symptoms of that disease. It is bad enough that sexist males regard us primarily as sex objects instead of people like themselves with brains, talents, and abilities, without men also ridiculing women caught in that unhappy condition. Bustelo's critics want to *free* desire from compulsion.

Women are both free to use makeup (if they can afford it) and they are forced to use it under capitalism, if they want to join the party. If we were free, truly free to live our lives as we wished, both women and men may or may not use cosmetics. And how we use them will and should depend on the user. Those who *want* to use makeup should be able to afford to do so. But to see any of us supporting "compulsion" is absolute nonsense.

### **Millions of "Dumb" Women**

We all agree that the hucksters are only selling commodities for the greater profits of their masters. But we are not the dumb creatures Reed wants to make out of women who, she says, are "dragooned" and "wheedled" into the cosmetic trap:

"There are three main gangs of profiteers who batten off the mass of women they dragoon or wheedle into their sex-commodity market in search of beauty:

"1. Those who profit by the manipulation of female flesh into the current standardized fashion size and mould;

"2. Those who paint and emulsify this manipulated flesh with cosmetics, dyes, lotions, perfumes, etc.;

"3. Those who decorate the manipulated and painted flesh with high-fashion clothes, jewelry, etc. . .

And after this witty and devastating description of the techniques through which our sexist society press women into the sex role, reducing us to a glob of flesh, Reed, full of pity, goes on to explain:

"... Weighed down and frustrated by the real burdens of life under capitalism, whose source they do not understand[!], working women especially tend to view their imaginary 'disfigurements' as the source of their troubles. They become victims of inferiority complexes. And so they flock by the thousands and tens of thousands and millions to the manipulators and decorators of female flesh, pouring their hard-earned money into the coffers of these profiteers.

"Through Hollywood stars and beauty contests these fleshly standards are maintained and ballyhooed. Selected 'beauties' are paraded before the hypnotized eyes of women through every available means: in the movies, on television, in the slick and pulp magazines."<sup>8</sup>

And then we are told that "we must give at least a token recognition of the harsh reality." Just a little lipstick, perhaps?

Women do not have an inferiority complex because they may have "disfigurements." Our sense of inferiority is the other side of the male sense of "superiority," the treatment of women as sex objects only.

The side not discussed anywhere to my knowledge by either Bustelo or Reed is the role of the men in this massive sex and cosmetic game. *Men* see the glamorous star, the beauty queen, not just the women, and they look around lusting for its likeness in their environment, among their circles of friends. He sees the proper measurements and appraises all the women he sees in those terms. Women accept men easily, no matter how they look or what they wear. Women look for intelligence, skill, competence, courage, or less nobly and more practically, money and power in a man. The men with the latter can be physically as ugly as sin, or as fat as Laura Gray's (our cartoonist

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 33, and in 1986, p. 65.

in those years) "Mr. Moneybags," and still corner the market on the glamorous stars. But men, in the sex chase, want the models in the ads. Who are the dupes? The women who look for character in men? Or the men who look for Monroe, use her and abuse her?

I went to the beauty parlor the other day to get my hair done, "adapter" that I am. There was a sign hanging on the wall:

"Four Things a Woman Must Learn

1. How to look like a girl,
2. How to act like a lady,
3. How to think like a man, and
4. How to work like a dog."

Now I know that not all men insist on Monroe and not all will use and abuse the closest each woman can come to Marilyn's physical attributes. But bourgeois society will "rate" the man to some extent at least on the woman he wins. And if she isn't to be much of a credit in the appearance department, she should at least be able to cook well, keep house, and bear offspring. And preferably all three for the man is in control. He does the choosing. He has both power and money, on whatever quantitative scale, relative to women. That's one of the things the feminist upsurge has aimed to correct.

In actual fact Bustelo and Reed have everything altogether upside down. Let Bustelo's supporters lecture the men on the beauty of the "well-scrubbed" look. About the beauty of character and intelligence. They are the ones who need it. It's a lot easier to attack the women as "dupes" than to attack the men as MCP's who force us into that role.

And to the sexist prejudice, the compulsion in women's use of cosmetics, I would not give ever so slight a "token" of acceptance. It's total war.

### ***And the Argument Gets Mean***

One of Bustelo's critics was Marjorie McGowan. She needs no defense from me. Her article is clearly well thought out and very well written (see Appendix B). As a historical materialist she tries to remind Bustelo that human progress is a continuous process, with evolutionary as well as revolutionary characteris-

tics; that progress has been most rapidly advanced under capitalism, and will continue only when the final restrictions of class society are removed, with socialism. She concentrates her argument on the desire for cosmetics, one side of the contradiction of which she is very well aware:

"The fact is, as in all other phases of life in capitalist America, a revolution has been going on in standards of beauty side by side with and flowing out of the revolution in technology. This revolution is more than cosmetic-deep. It involves the glow of physical health and good nutrition which stands in direct relation to the higher standards of living of the American economy. It also involves the freer and more informal mode of attire, the more natural gestures and grace of movement, which flow out of and parallel the concurrent revolution in sexual morality of the last 35 years or so. The long-stemmed American beauty, full of natural vitality and physical grace, with shining hair, clear eyes, smooth skin and natural cosmetics with a trace of accent here and there, is no fiction but an American commonplace. This type of beauty is the American social standard, whatever Bustelo might think of it, but by and large it is the exclusive property of first of all youth, and secondly of wealth. If this American beauty is also neurosis-ridden, as our observant Bustelo comments upon, this only demonstrates that things are considerably more complicated than they seem. But why throw out the baby with the bath?"

Reed wrote mainly on the element of compulsion in the use of cosmetics, as did Bustelo, exposing the profiteering fraud of a bourgeois industry. And insofar as that is done we can have no disagreement with either Bustelo or Reed. But as with the nonsense about *supporting* compulsion, Reed gets mean in her argument with her comrade. After quoting the above, Reed goes on to say:

"There is no doubt that this is the capitalist social standard. But I know what I think of it. I think it sounds like a description of the female counterpart of the Nordic Hero; of the female White Supremacist. Where, in the 'standard' of beauty is there any place for the dark-skinned Negro woman with kinky hair, or the short-stemmed women of the Puerto Rican, Jewish, Japanese, and other

European and Asiatic [sic] races, all of whom make up the working population of this country?"

Shame! Shame! McGowan was no Nazi. And Reed was well aware of that. She was a *comrade!* The rose, the basis for the analogy, comes in many colors. It is not only white. It is pink, red, and yellow as well. Nor did McGowan speak of straight versus "kinky" hair, only "shining" hair. The "long-stemmed" beauty among women as everyone knows comes in all colors, black, brown, and red. It is the product of better nutrition, and by and large belongs to *all* youth, as McGowan pointed out, and at least the "wealthy" in this exploitative society, as McGowan pointed out. McGowan is as angry about the fact that working women are too poor and exploited to enjoy at least the "appearance" of youth and beauty as long as possible in life as Bustelo is that we are also the victims of hucksters—only Bustelo ridiculed the women, not the hucksters who are at least making money out of their wares. Only Reed apparently identifies the "commonplace" American beauty with the blond, Nordic type, not McGowan. This ugly argument against McGowan, a comrade who came out of our splendid Minnesota movement, was wisely omitted from the 1969 publication of Reed but it is again restored in 1986.

## Women Leaders

Finally Reed deals with Women Leaders. And here she says:

"The Woman Question is analogous to the Negro Question in this respect: that in the former it is the women, in the latter it is the Negroes, who must take the lead. The party as a whole carries forward our general Marxist positions and program on these as well as all other questions. But the leadership of women and Negroes, in a personal, directional sense, must come from those who are directly involved."

9 SWP *Discussion Bulletin*, October, 1954, pp. 64–65, and in the 1986 pamphlet, p. 80.

All very well and good if somewhat obvious. But then Reed goes on to say:

"Since the interests of the party are paramount, however, if this leadership gets off on a wrong course, it must be corrected by the party. [Of course.] The primary duty of women and Negro leaders is first of all to be Marxists, and only after that women and Negroes. Certain failures of Negro leaders in the past [??] were due, among other things, to the fact that they did not understand this elementary principle of class struggle and were therefore not genuine Marxists."<sup>10</sup>

Nature has it the other way around. We are first female and black before we become Marxists. And with the prejudice in society, and we are still a part of that, men and whites rarely let us forget it. Blacks were generally called to speak when black issues were involved. And the same with women. Otherwise don't interrupt the white male "Marxists" who deal with the "big" social questions.

Reed would not know about that because she was never in that "leadership," at least in the Fifties, although clearly she should have been. In the Political Committee which had the responsibility of "guiding" the organization between conventions and plenums in the Fifties, I believe I was the only regular member who was a woman, and we had no blacks. A few made alternate status. But that was all. And by the Sixties, Dobbs manipulated the Committee to get rid of me, leaving it all white and male at that time.

And if some Negro leaders failed to be first "Marxist" and then black, and simply walked away, they were only doing what many women did, including the one woman among the 18 who were imprisoned during World War II and our first candidate for Vice President of the United States, the very able leader, Grace Carlson.

After lecturing us on the enormity of the "responsibilities" of leadership, Reed gives us a prescription for getting some women leaders:

"Above all, it is necessary to develop a *collective* leadership of women. In this respect I hold up, as the finest example, the women of the matriarchy..."

10 *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41, omitted in 1986.

Hear! Hear! A "collective leadership of women" is a good idea. But how does one achieve collectivity when the right of women to caucus is denied, as it is in the SWP today? And why tell us to emulate primitive woman who lived with primitive man, not schooled in male "superiority"? And how would we go about doing things the way she did? If confronted with modern man, I suspect primitive woman would just bash him on the head and send him packing.

## WHAT MARXISM MEANS TO FEMINISTS

I WAS a feminist before I became a Marxist. Now I am both. But I was born female, and I didn't mind in the least. In fact I thought it great luck. My parents had already produced two boys and were very anxious for a daughter. So I was one girl-baby very much desired. And it felt good. I thought I was really something special. True, that joy didn't last too long for I was soon followed by another daughter, a baby brother, and still another daughter. But somehow I never lost that feeling of being wanted despite the competition. My childhood was a long glorious play time in the beautiful valley of Salt Lake, surrounded by mountains demanding to be explored, sometimes with my siblings, and sometimes alone.

Then came puberty and the approach of adolescence. Then came the discovery that being a girl wasn't so hot after all. I was expected to enter a social division of labor that would make me subordinate to some man. I was horrified. I could not even choose the man. He would have to choose me. And what if he didn't? And what if he did? I suddenly felt out of control of my life. The whole idea was totally repugnant to me. The notion of living my life as a human being only through a man who would go out and do great deeds or not do great deeds—but he would be the doing and I would be his vassal was absolutely outrageous. And the idea of living a life of dependency was truly terrifying. I swore that I would never live that way. I would never be dependent on any man or any one! And I never have, except in the social sense that we are all dependent on each other.

Such injustice was outrageous. And I wanted to change it. By the time I reached college, in 1934, I finally found others

who wanted to change society—the Marxists. My understanding of the world in which I lived took a giant leap forward, and I no longer felt hopelessly alone.

In my personal experience is to be found also a social experience. The feminist movement, which has always existed, underground or in the open, also found allies in other oppressed sections of the population. The early U.S. suffrage movement also became active with the abolitionists, fighting to liberate the slave as well as herself. The feminist movement in Europe found ready supporters and allies for its struggle in the proletarian movement of emancipation, as expressed in Marxist organizations, when the working class got strong enough to assert its rights.

The Marxist movement embraced feminism programmatically. It made women's demands its own. The "small revolutionary movement" referred to previously, the Socialist Workers Party, eventually demanded the right of women to free birth-control and abortion rights, equal pay, equal access to skills and the professions, etc., demands that the women as a whole began to fight for with mass strength in the Sixties. I use the adverb "eventually" because nothing comes about easily. Frances James, another of Bustelo's critics, running as the SWP's candidate for supervisor in San Francisco in 1952 proposed putting into our platform liberalized abortion laws and was defeated. She was especially frustrated at that time for a group of liberal doctors was already fighting for such changes in Sacramento.

But even more. The first proletarian revolution, even though in a backward country, Russia, confronted the world with a bold new image of government. Its program for women reflected the Marxist concern for the emancipation of women. The embrace of Marxism by feminists everywhere was fully justified for all time.

As Carol Hayden put it in her as yet unpublished, unfortunately, doctoral work *Feminism and Bolshevism: the Zbenotdel and the Politics of Women's Emancipation in Russia, 1917-1930*:

"The early years of the Soviet regime also represented the first time in history that the government of any modern nation officially announced its intention to carry out a full-scale program for women's emancipation. At a time when women's movements in the West limited themselves primarily to demands for a broader political enfranchise-

ment of women, the fledgling Soviet government granted women full and equal political participation at all levels of government. Moreover, the Soviet regime in addition proposed a radical transformation of women's conditions of life, which would include the establishment of a broad network of social services designed to 'socialize' women's household labor, liberalization of marriage and divorce laws, and the setting up of 'affirmative action' programs for the purpose of drawing women into government, political organizations, trade unions, factory management, and the professions and skilled trades. This was the most radical program for female equality advanced by any national government in modern times."<sup>11</sup>

The first appearance of a proletarian government also brought the realization of the immediate demands of the feminists. Or rather I should say the first effort toward that realization. The will was there. The means were not. Russia was a vast sea of backwardness. Russia was too poor. After years of fighting for survival against every major capitalist nation in the world, including the United States, the revolution receded and the bourgeois phenomenon of bureaucracy began to grow. By 1930 it had gained sufficient dominance to dissolve the women's movement, the Zhenotdel, as it also destroyed the party that had made the revolution, first the Left Opposition in the Twenties and then the rest of the Bolshevik leadership with the purges of the Thirties.

Stalin dissolved the Zhenotdel in 1930, and simultaneously dissolved the national minorities sections as well. The bureaucracy had to consolidate its power by eliminating all actual or potential bodies of opposition. And it did so with the claim that women had already won their fight. A new stage had been reached. Socialism was already at hand. As Dr. Hayden reports the event:

"Although Party leaders tried to paint a rosy picture of the great strides in the area of Party work among women which would result from its being taken over by the Party as a whole, it was apparent that significant numbers of Zhenotdel organizers were not buying this argument. There appear to have been no public displays of

11 University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A. and London, 1982, p. iv.

opposition on the part of Zhenotdel members. Kaganovich [Stalin's henchman in this matter], however, revealed in his speech to the Organization Bureau in January 1930 that the reaction of the Zhenotdel to its 'reorganization' was one of *great resistance* and demoralization. Objections of Zhenotdel organizers that by dissolving the Zhenotdel the Party would be disarming itself in regard to work among women were summarily dismissed by Kaganovich as 'trifles.' However, in protesting the Zhenotdel's loss of independence, Zhenotdel workers rightly understood that this 'reorganization' represented a demotion in status of Party workers among women and marked the irretrievable loss of a once very important organized women's pressure group at the highest levels of the Party."<sup>12</sup>

### ***Two Steps Forward. One Back.***

The Russian Revolution, a proletarian revolution, put women at last on the world map. But like proletarian democracy as a whole, we just made our mark. We showed our colors. The bureaucracy that again rules Russia, as bureaucracy rules the United States, is a new kind of bureaucracy. It is based on a different class, thanks to the revolution. Stalin and his heirs did not and could not bring capitalism back. Not even Hitler could do that. Twenty million Russian workers, men and women, saw to that. (Oh, what a terrible price we pay for so little progress.) But like the Soviet workers, Soviet women are still that one step ahead. Again, Dr. Hayden:

"Because of the bold and far-reaching nature of its early programs for women's equality, the Soviet regime today claims that the 'woman question' has been 'resolved' in Soviet Russia. According to official pronouncements, Soviet women now enjoy the benefits of complete equality of the sexes in a socialist society. The regime has rewritten the history of the Zhenotdel, in order to attempt to convince people inside and outside the USSR that the Wom-

12 Ibid., pp. 369-70.

cn's Department accomplished its goal of raising women to a status equal to that of men in the short decade of its existence. Official histories try to minimize the problem of male resistance to the enforcement of women's rights and instead tend to concentrate on the issue of women's 'backwardness' as the major obstacle to the realization of sexual equality...

"In contrast to these official claims of the regime, the conditions of life of Soviet women today present a paradoxical situation. Soviet women enjoy many advantages, yet to be won by women in the West, such as a widespread network of state-supported child care institutions, free access to a wide range of trades and professions, and a large degree of economic equality with their male co-workers. However, more than sixty years after the Bolshevik Revolution, Soviet women continue to bear the major burden of household labor, and women have suffered the most from the government's long-term decision to give low priority to consumers' goods production [a policy, in part, made necessary by new threats of war]. Lack of modern household appliances, the poor quality of meals in public dining rooms, and the scarcity, high cost, and inferior quality of basic necessities force women to labor many additional hours outside of their jobs to maintain their households. Women still make up the large majority of the least skilled and lowest paid workers, and the representation of women in positions of political leadership falls far short of their more than 50 percent of the population...." (Bracketed matter is mine, MTW)<sup>13</sup>

The workers have also made some gains. They no longer suffer the catastrophic consequences of capitalist economic crises. Unemployment has become economically unnecessary. And while strikes are no longer legal, "we already have socialism," the workers can and do make their voices heard with the slowdown. Bureaucrats rave and rant for greater productivity, as in bourgeois society. But more often than not, they do so in vain.

The struggle of the proletariat and the struggle of women for emancipation go hand in hand. We are natural allies. But there are also differences.

13 Ibid., pp. v-vi.

## IS FEMINISM BOURGEOIS?

SOME men in the SWP used to confront me with the charge of being a bourgeois feminist, not in writing, but in the "corridors." I would reply, no, I am a proletarian feminist, in fact a socialist feminist. But that seemed to satisfy no one. The truth was that in their minds feminism itself was bourgeois. Reed, in the Bustelo dispute, gave this notion its theoretical expression. Is it? And again we must answer, yes and no. Only this time a small yes and a very big no.

The bourgeois revolution was made against the feudal system, the monarchy. It was supposed to give power to the people and the people were to rule themselves through a popular vote. All well and good. Only certain people were excluded from that category. In the American revolution, men without property were excluded. Slaves were excluded. And all women were excluded, regardless of economic status. The category "people" turned out to be pretty small, excluding most of the people. The bourgeois revolution therefore was not complete. And it had to be completed later on. In this sense feminism is bourgeois. Slavery was also incompatible with the bourgeois system of "free" labor. The bloodiest civil war in history had to be fought to correct that "little" oversight. And the women didn't get the vote until 1917, the last to win this "bourgeois" right.

Here we have the small "yes" to the question posed above. Now for the big no.

Even the bourgeoisie didn't fight for the bourgeois revolution. It's too small a class to win anything by itself. But that class wanted the revolution. It wanted the serfs free—so they could work in the factories. It wanted the king dethroned—so it could make laws for its own enrichment. And insofar as these things were in the bourgeois interest, the bourgeoisie played a progressive role in history. But the bourgeois revolution, like all revolutions, and wars, was fought by the people, the sansculots, the peasants, men and women. Those who fought the battles also had their interests, which quickly made their presence known. The proletarian revolution was born in the bourgeois revolution, only the new class had to grow, gain strength, mature in order to assert interests of its own. By 1871 in France the Paris Commune did just that.

The bourgeoisie wanted to, had to, end slavery in the United States, for its own growth and development. But it

didn't want to and didn't have to end the oppression of women or the discrimination against blacks. To keep most of the people poor, to reconcile most men to an inferior social position, men had to be supplied with some area of "superiority." Women were ready-made for that role. There are so many of us. And all "civilized" society has suppressed women. Women were the first to be disenfranchised, ruled out of power, to make way for private property in the first place. Men may be poor and pushed around on their jobs. But they always get their turn at the pushing. The women balance things out.

Evelyn Reed, as I have said, attempted to give a theoretical base to the male notion of feminism as bourgeois, and we are indebted to her for that:

"The class distinctions between women transcend their sex identity as women. This is above all true in modern capitalist society, the epoch of the sharpest polarization of class forces.

"Historically, the sex struggle was part of the bourgeois feminist movement of the last century. It was a reform movement, conducted within the framework of the capitalist system, and not seeking to abolish it. But it was a progressive struggle in that women rebelled against almost total male domination on several fronts. Through the feminist movement a number of important reforms were won by the women. But that feminist movement has run its course, achieved its limited aims, and the problems we face today must be placed within the context of the class struggle."<sup>14</sup>

Isn't the message here clear? Feminism, with its limited aims, *was* progressive. Now that's over. Get in line, sister. Class is the thing.

Why should class interests "transcend" sex interests? Isn't it better that sex interests should *add to* class interests? Give the working class greater strength, more power, to make its revolution? Just as the women felt aggrieved and looked around for an ally, so the proletariat looks around for allies and can find one in the grievances of the women. The oppression of women as women, all classes of women, adds fuel to the fire of the working class. The bourgeoisie is not a solid block that must be

14 *Problems of Women's Liberation*, p. 43.

overcome. It has fissures and cracks. Like the proletariat, it is not one homogeneous whole.

It is true that the feminist movement of Russia, which always had its class divisions, split after the February revolution finally and for good when some feminists endorsed Kerensky and the continuation of the first world war. But how many brave bourgeois women, and even women from the class of the nobility, moved over to the proletarian cause and stayed there? We had bourgeois women come into the SWP. And we welcomed them indeed.

As a fish cannery worker before World War II, I wore a white cotton uniform that stunk of fish. But as a shop steward in the plant, I was delighted when approached by a man in a gray flannel suit and tie from the office, inside of management, who wanted to express his support for our union struggle, who wanted to assure us inside information when we needed it. Reed would have been pleased too to see such support from the "enemy" camp.

The feminist struggle, Reed said, is a "reform movement, conducted within the framework of the capitalist system, and not seeking to abolish it." And what is the labor movement, pray tell? Do the workers demand an end to capitalist exploitation, an end to the sale of labor power? I wish they did. But for now they merely demand a higher price for their slavery. And if capitalism could satisfy the workers in this respect we would probably never hear of socialism again. The workers' movement is only *potentially* revolutionary. Reform *can be* transformed into revolution, necessarily is transformed if Marx is right about the irreconcilable nature of the contradiction between the classes. And neither Bustelo nor his defense attorney would regard Marx as wrong about that. But then why put women down as "reformist"?

Feminism has run its course, has "achieved its limited aims." So forget all that stuff and get in line! What nonsense! In the decade that was to follow this controversy the women were to step out *en masse* to tell the world that their goals were not yet reached, their aspirations not yet realized, their needs not yet satisfied. We want more. Much more. In fact we want socialism. The feminist vanguard has said so! So move over boys, or we'll push you over. Make room for us.

Reed *nowhere* talks of the inequities between the sexes in contemporary society. What kind of "vanguard" is it, Marxist or otherwise, that can't anticipate by a mere decade or so a great

social upheaval? Instead, Reed pronounces feminist struggle dead! A relic of the past.

But the SWP did anticipate that upsurge, or at least left the door open for its possibility. We had a feminist program which decried the inequality in wages, in job opportunities, which demanded adequate child care centers for working mothers, etc.

### *Theory and Practice*

Of course, in a discussion on cosmetics and their use, it isn't necessary to talk also about equal rights for women. But when the discussion goes from cosmetics to the "woman question" as a whole, as it does in Reed's exposition, so far indeed that we are told that there are no more feminist issues, only class issues, it is necessary to remember that program. I know for the Weiss "group" (the Weisses and those who agreed with us) fought for this program.

"Fought" is perhaps the wrong word. Few opposed us, at least openly. The male leadership of the SWP sometimes forgot about it, but they didn't oppose it. And they sometimes formulated it poorly, but took correction.

Isn't this a strange contradiction? The *Party* said there were feminist issues that women (and men) should fight for. Reed told us there were none. But by 1969, when the SWP went public with the dispute, Reed had to amend her stand. History was forcing a correction. While still clinging to her theoretical abstractions, she admitted in her parenthetical introduction to the Bustelo dispute that there were *some* issues for women to raise:

"It is true that women in general, even those in the upper classes, do suffer to some degree from male chauvinism. On some occasions and issues it is necessary and useful for women belonging to different social strata to form special organizations and take united action to eliminate injustices and disabilities inflicted upon the whole sex. One example is the movement to legalize birth control and give all women the right to abortion."<sup>15</sup>

However reluctantly, we do have a correction from Reed to her 1954 position. Other "examples," like equal pay, are not mentioned. But she clings to her battered theoretical ground by reminding us that "wealthy women are just as likely to uphold the status quo and their privileged positions in it as are wealthy men." And we reply, so are some male workers, "just as likely" to uphold wage and job discrimination, especially the labor bureaucracy.

"Whenever they (bourgeois women) do so," continues Reed, "they betray their own sex for the sake of their class interests and comforts." And so do some working class men betray their own class when they endorse unequal wages. We Marxists hope these will be in the minority.

But the controversy in 1954 is still with us. Only now it takes on also a new form, just to prove there's always "progress." Now the SWP tells the women that they don't need the right to caucus because the party is a "revolutionary" one and already grants women full equality. Note the similarity of this argument with that of Stalin in dissolving the Zhenotdel.

But before bringing our dispute up to date, it is necessary to go way back beyond written history to clear up some other differences I have with Reed and the SWP, her sponsors.

## **A FEW WORDS ON ANTHROPOLOGY**

**A**NY discussion of women and their role in society sooner or later must go into the field of anthropology. The Bustelo dispute was no exception. Reed and McGowan were the primary contenders in this area too. In fact, it was the Bustelo dispute which pushed Reed to the study of anthropology. She devoted the last years of her life to this work and spoke and wrote extensively, primarily popularizing the writings of Robert Briffault, *The Mothers*.

McGowan disagreed with Reed's anthropological views. McGowan felt that research in the 20th century had disproved, or at least altered, the basic theses of Marx and Engels in the anthropological field.

I disagreed with both. It is extremely difficult with our limited cultural experience and our biases to imagine what the



primitive human was like, what they felt and feared and how they loved. Just as difficult as it is for us to imagine how our socialist descendants will feel. But it is important to gain some insight into the primitive society before patriarchy to help women understand that they have not always been treated as inferior.

The Marxist critique of capitalist economy does not stand or fall on any theoretical structure in the field of anthropology. Wide latitude in the interpretation of data is possible. That does not grant license to theoretical slovenliness, as McGowan correctly noted. Engels had a great respect for science and methodology. So must we.

In my anthropological studies I saw a concerted effort to refute the theories of Engels as elaborated in the *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* but, unlike McGowan, I thought the researchers had failed. Just as the bourgeois academic world was always trying to refute Marx's *Capital*, especially the notion that capitalism was only one stage in the economic history of human beings, so bourgeois anthropologists were anxious to demonstrate that private property, the family, and patriarchy had also always been, and presumably therefore always would be. The class hostility to Marxism is an absolute barrier to scientific work in all of the social sciences.

However, in the case of the assault on Engels an additional factor was evident. Male domination of anthropology also yielded a male bias in the interpretation of data. Fortunately, contemporary feminist anthropologists such as Eleanor Burke Leacock are engaged in defending Engels, uncovering this bias and advancing the Marxist concept of primitive communism in the light of newer data. Leacock also took the time to critically examine Reed's work in her book, *The Myth of Male Domination*, Monthly Review Press, New York, which is why I need only "a few words," and of course Leacock has done all her homework.

My differences with Reed primarily stem from my differences with Briffault. Reed swallowed Briffault's point of view hook, line, reel and rod, the whole fishing gear. Briffault was not a Marxist. However, he undertook the task of rescuing women from the oblivion to which they were treated by many other anthropologists, of refuting the notion of male supremacy in primitive society, and that was a valuable contribution.

Now, at least, there were two voices coming out of bourgeois academia. One was saying woman, stay home! You are and always have been inferior. Briffault was saying woman, stay

home! You are and always have been superior. You are by nature the nurturer. These two messages were the same although the premises differed. The latter was more pleasant to hear, but no more accurate in my view.

There are many inconsistencies in Briffault's anthropology. But Reed did not cite him when he came close to a Marxist position, only when he went far astray. He came close to a Marxist understanding when he noted the group solidarity of primitive society and the role of private property in the transition to patriarchy:

"Primitive human nature differed considerably from what we often assume to be human nature in general. Primitives do not think in terms of their ego and its interests, but in terms of the group-individual. . . . The individualism which is the alpha and omega of the motives of modern man is not a primitive character but a product of social evolution, which has developed mainly, if not solely, in relation to social circumstances, and more especially to the growth of personal property."<sup>16</sup>

He goes far afield when he credits only the women with creating this solidarity. Men, he contended, were the opposite, competitive, individualistic and aggressive. Women were the nurturers. And of course these are the differences between the sexes in the patriarchal division of labor.

Both Briffault and Reed accepted the notion that the patriarchal division of labor was based on the biological differences between the sexes. And if that were the case, the patriarchal division of labor would be hard to eliminate. At best it could only be modified. This notion will not be found in Engels' concept of primitive communism.

The theory is based on an assemblage of data which attempts to show the ferocity of the male sex drive among the lower animals, a ferocity only modified in humans. Much of this tale of violent male sexual behavior is taken from the behavior of animals in captivity, a totally unnatural condition of life—so unnatural it is almost impossible to guess the rage and frustration of the animals at their confinement, particularly those not born in captivity.

There is great variety in the ways in which reproduction of each species is accomplished. But it is accomplished or the

species wouldn't be around for long. And I think some evidence could be produced to "prove" almost any theory if one is not too rigorous in validating a generalization.

Reed goes even further than Briffault in running down the male. She asserts an epoch of cannibalism, together with hunting. And only the male of our species had the appetite for the meal of humans.

Briffault made an over correction, as often happens in polemics. He saw the women as the nurturing sex and men as the opposite, aggressive and competitive, the hunters. These opposite qualities belong to modern, patriarchal society, as I have said. Women do the nurturing. That is our assignment. And men are competitive and acquisitive in a hostile social environment. But was that true also of primitive society? Engels thought not. Primitive society was communist. Both sexes nurtured and shared in dealing with work and play. Engels viewed the patriarchal division of labor between the sexes as the destruction of collectivity in production relations, as the beginning of the institution of private property, the beginning of class societies.

Engels did not view cooperation, the first advance in productivity, as acquired in opposition to our animal nature, but in harmony with it, advancing beyond the other animals, first because of the human ability to grasp—opposition between thumb and fingers and thereby to extend physical limitations, and second because of greater intelligence which made it possible for homo sapiens to survive among animals stronger and more fleet than the human. Primitive humans, unlike our modern ones, had great respect for other creatures, and probably love and affection as well as fear. Animal totems identified humans with other species with pride. We could thereby become as strong as the bear, as fierce as the lion, as fast as the deer, or as free as the eagle.

### ***Suppressing Cannibalism***

Let us start with Reed's "original" contribution, her contention that her book, *Woman's Evolution*, Pathfinder Press, 1975:

"... presents a new theory about totemism and taboo, among the most enigmatic institutions of primeval and

held the view that the ancient taboo on sexual intercourse with certain relatives, like our own taboo, arose out of a universal fear of incest. This book challenges that assumption. The ancient taboo existed—but it was primarily directed against the perils of cannibalism in the hunting epoch."<sup>17</sup>

It's not difficult to show the many problems with the "universal fear of incest" theory. But does the need to suppress cannibalism fare any better?

Totems and taboos probably existed throughout primitive communist societies. But cannibalism, here defined as killing humans to eat them, is nowhere established as universal—an epoch through which people lived, together with hunting. Proclaiming it so doesn't make it so. It was nowhere a systematic method of meeting the sustenance needs of any society. It appears, by all authorities I have read, to have been sporadic, scattered, episodic and confined to special conditions of extreme hardship. If we regard cannibalism as ever a sustained and universal stage of human evolution the human animal would be unique among the higher animals in this experience. What other animal feeds or has fed on itself systematically? Each carnivorous species can, obviously, including modern humans, if under enough duress. But such a survival system, as a system, would defeat itself.

Furthermore, the hunting period of human evolution came long after the gathering period when humans first constituted themselves a society.

If cannibalism was not a universal practice, constituting an epoch in the evolution of society, methodologically speaking it is ridiculous to try to explain generalized behavior, a totemic system, through particular, sporadic and/or episodic behavior. It is like trying to explain commodity exchange on the basis of the bribe, the buying and selling of honor. The latter can be explained by the former, but not vice versa.

There are many indications that all of primitive society had great fear of cannibalism, not just the women. It meant conditions of life so harsh that survival was threatened.

Simply put, the taboo says "You can't kill or mate with certain men or women." Here the taboo applies. And if this is

17 *Woman's Evolution*, Evelyn Reed, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1975, p. xvii.

true, the converse must also be: "You can kill or mate with these other men and women." The taboo does not apply here.

Reed poses the problem of the dual character of the totemic system in the following way:

"The theory of cannibalism illuminates one clause of the taboo, the food clause. However, it was a twofold prohibition covering sex as well as food. As [James G.] Frazer spells out this combination:

"Corresponding to the two sides of the system are two rough-and-ready tests or canons of Totemism; first the rule that a man may not kill or eat his totem animal or plant; and second, the rule that he may not marry or cohabit with a woman of the same totem.' (*Totemism and Exogamy*, Vol. I, p. 101)

"To explain this puzzling duality of the totemic taboo we must see its inseparable connection with the specialization and divergences of female and male in the transition from primate to human."<sup>18</sup>

The proscription of the taboo was certainly about killing within the protected group. And if one could kill only within a group where one could also only mate that might put a big damper on the killing privilege. It could make good primitive sense not only to forbid killing altogether in group A but to build ties of family closeness with group B as well to make killing humans difficult altogether. This could be an explanation of exogamy. I'm not saying it is. But it could be and I at least like it better than the need to "curb" cannibalism.

As society grew, successive clans would be built and the strength of the whole would vary in direct proportion to the closeness of its units. The mating of people in group A with the people in group B would certainly help to seal the bonds between them. And it would help in the sharing of food supplies and intratribal cooperation.

Engels' view of primitive society was that survival and progress were dependent on cooperation, the first means of increasing the productivity of labor. The totemic system helped to assure that system of cooperation and probably sufficed even in times of terrible hardship.

The difficulty some bourgeois anthropologists have in understanding early social development is that they often start

18 Ibid., p. 42.

with the wrong premise—that humans are naturally selfish, even greedy, not cooperative. That is the premise that justifies bourgeois indifference to humanity. Reed too works with that premise although confining it to the male sex. Men needed "curbing" and the women did the "curbing."

Primitive communism was a society without a state, without an armed body set against the community to enforce its laws, without jails and jailers. There were councils composed of both men and women to discuss and to resolve problems. And there were laws, or a moral code, a totemic system, by which the community was safeguarded. And part of that code was the practice, as was seen so recently with the American Indians, of serving others before yourself. Only giving won praise, not taking. Cooperation was the fundamental characteristic of primitive society.

Leacock, who lived and worked among the Naskapi Indians of northeast Canada, described their social system in the following way:

"In the 1630s individuals within Naskapi society were autonomous; people made decisions about activities for which they were responsible. Group decisions were arrived at through feeling for consensus. The essential and direct interdependence of the group as a whole both necessitated this autonomy and made it possible as a viable system—*total interdependence was inseparable from real autonomy*. . . . The emphasis was on generosity, on cooperation, on patience and good humor, but also on never forcing one's will on others. This ethic was enforced through ridicule and teasing, often bawdy, behind which lay the threat of great anger at injustice, and the deep fear of starvation, that might ultimately force individual hunters to abandon the group in order that someone might survive. . . .

"The 'sagamores,' or 'headmen,' were spokesmen or intermediaries for the group; they held no formal power. 'They have reproached me a hundred times because we fear our Captains, while they laugh at and make sport of theirs,' bemoaned Le Jeune [a Jesuit missionary]. They 'cannot endure in the least those who seem desirous of assuming superiority over the others; they place all virtue in a certain gentleness or apathy.' Women as well as men became shamans at that time. . . ."

Leacock's work is filled with delightful stories of these beautiful people who appear to have been loving and caring, men as well as women. Which way was it?

### ***Our Animal Origins***

To bolster the cannibalistic theory of the totemic system, Reed reaches into the sex differences between women and men. To do that she goes back to our origins in the animal queendom to discover that the male sex drive is a killer drive and, because the female animal bears the young, her drive is a nurturing one. Therefore, the women brought "society" into being (this is also the view of Briffault). She cites all the evidence to demonstrate that the animals never enjoyed the human patriarchy. And of course that is good. The male lion is not a king. But I don't think Reed proves he is a mere stud either. The lioness is not queen.

We are told by Reed of the terrible experiment of the London Zoo in the 1920s which watched male baboons kill the few females that had been added to their quarters. Reed pointed out some of the unnatural conditions that prevailed and that caused the catastrophe. However the story adds to the violence of sex in the animal world.

But we can also add the lifetime work of the zoologist, Dr. Dian Fossey, who lived for eighteen years with gorillas in Rwanda. "Gorillas are almost altruistic in nature," she once said. "There's very little if any 'me-itis.' When I get back to civilization I'm always appalled by 'me, me, me.' You take these fine regal animals. How many fathers have the same sense of pater-nity? How many human mothers are more caring?" *The New York Times*, Dec. 29, 1985.

Reed thinks love is a female trait, not male, in the animal world. She says:

"Another fallacy about animal behavior is the popular notion that sexual attraction involves love or affection. The fusion of love with sexual desire is a human acquisition that does not exist among animals. As Briffault explains, tender sentiments, the rudiments of love, exist only in the female brood (*The Mothers*, vol. I, p. 131). These maternal and filial sentiments were eventually

ing sex-love. But with animals sex is no more than raw hunger."<sup>19</sup>

According to Reed "Animal behavior, fashioned by nature's mode of survival, is preponderantly individualistic and competitive. . . . With the exception of the provision made by the female for her offspring there is no cooperation among animals in getting or sharing food."<sup>20</sup>

I have watched male seagulls bring food to the females sitting on eggs in June, their mating season, near Moses Park, New York. And the world is full of gaggles, flocks, herds, be- vies, prides, animals that live together, eat, hunt and play together. Few species devour themselves. Most look to their own kind for help and protection. Most quite instinctively cooperate where conditions permit. Try telling the millions of pet owners that animals can't feel the tender emotions of love. Individualism and competition are characteristic of only one animal, the human, and that only in class society.

I can't resist the temptation to tell you about the "vicious" pigeon, one of so many in New York, that brutally attacked my car one day as I was driving down 13th Street. It dove at my windshield and I applied the brakes in shock. Then it did it again and again I had to brake. Then I saw ahead of me in the street the smashed body of another pigeon that must have been hit by an earlier driver. Its mate, as I interpreted the evidence, was trying to frighten my moving car away—too late. Of course, if that heroic little bird was a female, I prove nothing. But would a male pigeon behave differently? And what was the pigeon feeling if not love?

Briffault, like most men, has very good reason to be enthralled by the nurturing woman because, like some others of his privileged sex, he gets nurtured. It is better strategy to confess that the male sex drive is not so kind. According to Reed "As Briffault demonstrates, the two sexes are specialized for different functions: the male for sex and the female for maternity."<sup>21</sup> He gets the fun. She gets the work.

Reed accepts this notion and says that maternity is woman's "primary function." Where is all this sacrificing kindness which women have and men are, by nature, unable to feel? The female animal acts in her own interests. She needs the offspring

19 Ibid., p. 56.

20 Ibid., p. 45.

21 Ibid., p. 58.

as much as they need her. Her lactic glands are secreting like mad and her breasts begin to hurt if she can't suckle. And she *must* protect the offspring to assure relief. Have you ever heard the agonized bellowing of a dairy cow when the farmer is late with the milking?

It is precisely this dual standard that feminists want to correct. Women like sex as well as men. The reproduction of our species is the responsibility of both sexes. And I am very uncomfortable with a discussion that identifies sex and love. Sex is only one form of love, and not the most important. For the human, sex is a raw hunger as well as for our fellow creatures. It is chemical and glandular. But before we bed together, we must talk together. At least that is the way most women like it.

Love of life, based on our survival instinct, is the most important love, and it is extended to all who make us safe and warm and assure us of our continued existence. We say so in our language. We love music. We love humanity. We love our parents, fathers as well as mothers. We love our friends. We love Cervantes and Tolstoy, Karl Marx, Shakespeare and Freud. Whom we love tells us a great deal about who we are.

We humans fear animals, today as well as our most primitive ancestors, especially the ones that will kill and eat us when they are hungry. But we do and always have loved and admired them as well. We love their beauty, we admire their strength, their grace. Their struggle to survive is very much like our own only we are better equipped for survival.

We do not, and I believe never have, enjoyed taking life, male or female. We do not have to fight against our animal nature to achieve a harmonious socialist society. We have to liberate our animal nature from its class distortions. Our need for togetherness, our "herd" instinct, must overcome capitalist fragmentation of society. We must give our social instincts, those of men as well as women, a chance to flourish, grow, enrich our lives.

### ***Speciecentricity***

The notion that cannibalism consisted of a natural male urge to kill and eat his own kind is assuaged, in the view of Reed, by the notion that primitive man could not or did not

differentiate between himself and other animals. His human victim was not human but belonged to a subspecies.

"The primitive barriers between kin and non-kin, however, came from the dangerous conditions of life in the primeval epoch. Our earliest ancestors, just emerging from the animal world, were unable to distinguish between themselves and other animal species. Since kinship alone marked the dividing line between humans and animals, those who were non-kin were non-human and therefore dangerous to the humans."<sup>22</sup>

Not all non-humans, animals, were dangerous. Certainly not the rabbit, the mouse. No need to tremble because they're around. And not even the lion is dangerous unless it's hungry. And farther on Reed tells us that:

"Cannibalism could only be conquered one step at a time, beginning with its total exclusion from the primal horde. . . . The problem [of cannibalism] was magnified in the earliest period by the notion that those who were non-kin were non-human."<sup>23</sup>

The most primitive horde, regardless of its sophistication or lack of it in matters of species identification, was not even carnivorous, let alone cannibals. These people were vegetarians, gatherers of fruit, vegetables and nuts.

But why was it impossible for early man to "distinguish between" himself and "other animal species"? The lower animals regularly make such distinctions. A sheep doesn't run in fear from a goat, nor a deer from a moose. But the presence of a lion or a pack of wolves in either case will cause alarm. They recognize other species by sight, smell and sound. Early humans must have had equally good sense. An upright two-legged creature was clearly not a bear, but, if unknown, could be considered equally dangerous or evoke cautious curiosity and interest.

Lumping strange humans with all other animals is well known. We see it today in the phenomenon of nationalism. We are somehow better than *they*, more deserving of life. Strange

22 Ibid., p. 175.

23 Ibid., p. 205.

humans may have been feared. But that does not mean that they were thereby a good solution to the next meal. In my opinion, primitive men did not relish the notion of taking any life and probably did so only to survive. To identify non-kin as another kind of animal was not to degrade the human for lacking specie consciousness, primitive people lacked superiority consciousness as well. Bears were bigger and stronger. An antelope more fleet. A goat more sure footed, etc. In fact Reed cites an interesting case of human-animal confusion. George Catlin, searching for evidence of cannibalism in America asked some Tupinambas Indians of South America if they knew of any men around who ate men and were answered in the affirmative.

"Yes. . . there are some such persons farther down the river. He will find some white men living in two or three wigwams on the left bank of the river, who eat the flesh of their own relations, and what was worse, they sell their skins!"

Catlin went down the river to investigate and had to report:

"... we found these cannibals, several Frenchmen and Americans killing monkeys and sending their skins to Paris for the manufacture of . . . gloves."<sup>24</sup>

In addition there is plenty of evidence that primitive men did not hunt alone. The women also hunted. If it were necessary to hunt to survive, or even desirable to add meat to the diet, all the community joined in the work. The mythical Greek god of the hunt was a woman, the magnificent Diane, with her bow and arrow and her fleetness of foot. Why blame the men, or give them all the credit, however one views the matter, for our carnivorous twist?

### ***Women Give Birth to Society***

All this oversimplification of our primitive past gave rise to the notion that women should get the credit for human society that was built by our ancestors who left the trees. And surely women deserve far more credit than our patriarchal contemporaries care to give. But the whole ball of wax? Reed wrote

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 32-33.

during the course of the Bustelo controversy in her article "The Myth of Women's Inferiority":

"... However, as Marx and Engels have demonstrated, all societies both past and present are founded upon labor. Thus, it was not simply the capacity of women to give birth that played the decisive role, for all female animals also give birth. What was decisive for the human species was the fact that maternity led to labor—and it was in the fusion of maternity and labor that the first human social system was founded.

"It was the mothers who first took the road to labor, and by the same token blazed the trail toward humanity" (p. 24).

We didn't need a Marx or an Engels to "demonstrate" that all societies are based on labor. A small child will do. Even a banana has to be peeled. But why should maternity lead to labor? It does. But so does all of life. Only the rich in civilized society don't have to work. But they would if they couldn't get others to work for them.

And what were the men doing during all those thousands of years of blossoming into humans? Lallygagging around in the meadow? Surely primitive women were not that dumb.

Let me end this treatment of anthropological musings with Evelyn Reed's concluding paragraph in the above-cited article:

"It is therefore unscientific to discuss the superiority of men or women outside the framework of the actual processes of history. *In the course of history, a great reversal took place in the social superiority of the sexes.* First came the women, biologically endowed by nature. Then came the men, socially endowed by the women. To understand these historical facts is to avoid the pitfalls of arbitrary judgment made through emotion or prejudice. And to understand these facts is to explode the myth that women are naturally inferior to men" (p. 41 italic mine—MTW)

What is Reed saying here? Is it not that men today are superior, not naturally, of course, but actually? Women once were, thanks to our ovaries. Now men are—thanks to their—brains?

In fact Reed refers to "female inferiority today" in her introduction to her book, p. xviii:

"...The knowledge that female inferiority today is not biologically determined, that it has not been a permanent fixture throughout history, and that our sex was once the organizers and leaders of social life, should heighten the self-confidence of women who are today aspiring for liberation."

This was written, not in 1954, but in 1974 after the bloom of the feminist revolution. And Reed clearly still did not understand that we women, today, in the present, are not inferior in any sense of the word. We are only treated as if we were. That's what makes us so angry. And that's what we intend to put a stop to. In 1974, the SWP still had not caught up with the feminist revolution. What a difficult leap that is to make!

Reed accepts the male notion that men are superior, and perhaps that's why the men chose to publish her, despite the obvious contempt she had for the male creature. Male "Marxists" were still running the show. So, "call me what you like. As long as dinner is on the table on time."

Like my mother before me, and my grandmothers before that, I *know* I am inferior to no one. And I regard no one as inferior to me. I am inferior only to myself, like everyone else, to my unrealized capacities. If women were not suppressed as well as oppressed, they would be as visible as the men. But they are suppressed, from black veils in which they are physically hidden to the kitchen and the secretarial desk where they do the drudgery for the men.

Reed's contempt for men probably stemmed from their success in convincing her of her "inferiority," not naturally, but "socially." For she was not inferior. Her contempt for men was probably born in her feminist anger at male oppression, regardless of her theoretical posture. The macho male too is the result of rage at the social assault on the male personality in our hostile and competitive social disorder.

If I had any question of our equality, all humanity answers it. Every day we declare our equality, as Marx, in fact classical political economy, taught us, with the labor theory of value. Commodity exchange is based on the universally accepted principle of human equality. Turn and twist as we might the commodity will not tell you whether its value is based on the labor of women or men, blacks or whites, Jews or gentiles, homosexuals or heterosexuals, etc. We could not exist as a society without the notion of equality. No longer slaves nor legally attached to the land as serfs, modern class inequality arises with the

transformation of the laws of value, based on equality, into the laws of profit, based on inequality.

But if we were to answer the question of which sex is superior to which, naturally, historically, socially, or any other way, I would have to differ with Reed there as well. No one was superior to anyone else in primitive communist society. But women are socially superior in the modern world, in my view, as the working class is superior to the capitalist, as the oppressed are always superior to their oppressors.

## THE DISPUTE TODAY—1986

**F**IRST it is necessary to straighten out an obvious little error in regard to Marxist economic theory. Several times Mary-Alice Waters in her 1986 introduction to the Bus-telo dispute speaks of the value of women's labor power as being less than that of men. What she should have said is that the *price* of women's labor power is less than that of men. If the value were less, then the demand for equal pay, an equal wage, would be a demand that women get paid more than they're worth. Women's labor power is bought below its value. That's one of the things we mean by the *super*exploitation of women. Of course, all wages are below the value created by labor. That's where profit comes from. But the lower women's wages give the bosses extra profit. Sexism puts an extra jingle in the pockets of the capitalists. The demand for equal pay is precisely that: equality, at least, in exploitation. It's not a demand for special treatment.

In a footnote the editors quote Marx in the hope of blaming him for this notion that the value of women's labor power is less than that of men. The sexist language in this quote, almost universally used in Marx's day and only now getting a correction, is taken literally as an explanation of the value of only men's labor power whereas Marx was actually talking about the determination of the value of all labor power. Let us look at that quote substituting the female pronouns for the male:

"The value of labour-power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production, and consequently also the reproduction,

of this specific article. In so far as it has value, it represents no more than a definite quantity of the average social labour objectified in it. Labour-power exists only as a capacity of the living individual. Its production consequently presupposes her existence. Given the existence of the individual, the production of labour-power consists in her reproduction of herself or her maintenance. For her maintenance she requires a certain quantity of the means of subsistence. Therefore the labour-time necessary for the production of labour-power is the same as that necessary for the production of those means of subsistence; in other words, the value of labour-power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of its owner. However, labour-power becomes a reality only by being expressed; it is activated only through labour. But in the course of this activity, i.e., labour, a definite quantity of human muscle, nerve, brain, etc. is expended, and these things have to be replaced. Since more is expended, more must be received. If the owner of labour-power works today, tomorrow she must again be able to repeat the same process in the same conditions as regards health and strength. Her means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain her in her normal state as a working individual. Her natural needs, such as food, clothing, fuel and housing vary according to the climate and other physical peculiarities of her country. On the other hand, the number and extent of her so-called necessary requirements, as also the manner in which they are satisfied, are themselves products of history, and depend therefore to a great extent on the level of civilization attained by a country; in particular they depend on the conditions in which, and consequently on the habits and expectations with which, the class of free workers has been formed. In contrast, therefore, with the case of other commodities, the determination of the value of labour-power contains a historical and moral element. Nevertheless, in a given country at a given period, the average amount of the means of subsistence necessary for the worker is a known *datum*."

It will be noticed that nowhere does our substitution of female for male pronouns run into difficulty in this quote, as surely it would if Marx had a masculine subject in mind. While Marx uses the male pronouns, nowhere does he use the noun "man" or "men" which would mean that he meant to define

only the value of male labor power. The nouns he uses are "individual," "owner" and "workers," and the adjective "human." Now we have a definition of the value of women's labor power—the same as for men.

Furthermore, when Marx talks of the "historical and moral element" in value determination, he's talking about national differences in wages—not two different wage scales within one country.

However, with this error it is possible to then shift the blame for wage inequities from capitalism to "all class societies":

"This inequality is part of the 'historical and moral element' that Marx refers to in the determination of the value of labor power. It is due to the legacy of women's economic oppression throughout the history of class society, which is based on women's economic dependence on men... But eliminating the historic legacy and creating the social and economic conditions for real equality between men and women can only be accomplished through complete incorporation of women into economic production and the socialization of domestic work. These goals cannot be completely achieved short of the victorious working-class struggle to overturn capitalist property relations on a world scale."

An utterly false assertion! We are talking about wages and the determination of their value. Wages are strictly a capitalist phenomenon, of course, with a hangover manifestation in societies transitional to socialism. Wages were not paid to the feudal serf, nor to the slave before. The historical and moral forces Marx talks about are the degree of capitalist development and the extent of proletarian organization that enter into the value determinants. The degree of capitalist development affects the prices of consumers goods. Unionization acts to limit the control of wages by the capitalist class.

We have here another attempt to tell the women to wait. The adjective "complete" and the adverb "completely" do not save this advice from its integral incorporation in the theoretical position of Reed: First socialism. Then equality. Class comes

25 *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1986, pp. 130-31.



first. The truth is that economically capitalism can survive without the superexploitation of women. And if it can't, so much the better. We still won't wait and in our fight against our extra suffering perhaps we can get socialism!

And before leaving this economic confusion, let us take note of the very peculiar "explanation" of women's oppression. According to the author(s) of the footnote, women's oppression is "based on" women's "economic dependence" on men. Where, how and why have women been "dependent" on men? Women in slave society, together with the men, were denied ownership of their labor product. But they produced all they consumed and in addition met the consuming needs of slave owners. Women in feudal society worked the land and were legally tied to it along with the men, producing their own sustenance, and working the land of the lord as well. And under capitalism, first, women as well as children, were a part of the working class the moment the system was born. They were only excluded from the more remunerative occupations. Even where women were entirely excluded from wage-earnings, the housewife, her unpaid labor sustained the man as well as herself.

The *only* economic dependence society has known is the dependence of the ruling classes on the producing classes in all patriarchal societies. The special oppression of women is due to the fact that women not only suffer class oppression, but in addition have been *excluded* from the paid sector of the workforce. She has been subjected to male domination as well as class domination. She labors, and labors hard, for the rich as does the man, but also for the patriarchal male head of the household who is lord and master of his realm however poor and ignoble that may be. The housewife is "dependent" on the male for whatever remuneration her labor brings. But that is not "economic dependence" any more than the working class is economically dependent because the boss meets the payroll. If he didn't, it would be just plain robbery. Let the men do all this work without pay and listen to them howl—and they should.

### ***Resistance to Women's Liberation***

It is extremely difficult to realize how deep, how difficult to dislodge, is sexist prejudice. The effect on women is devastat-

ing, deadly. But the resistance of men to women's assertion of equality is far more stubborn, pernicious, in both its flagrant and subtle manifestations, than any of us could have dreamed. Who could anticipate the wave of divorces, the painful destruction of our most intimate relationships, painful to both sexes, that rolled like a tidal wave over the entire country? Who could guess the need for battered women's shelters in almost every major metropolitan area? Who could believe the extent of human misery in the midst of capitalist decay that has people, including the youth, resorting to drugs as an escape from frustration, rage and fear?

We have seen that the first major breakthrough for women came in the Russian Revolution of 1917. There was great resistance not only in the working class but even in the Bolshevik party which led the revolution. As difficult as things were in European Russia, they were magnified a thousand times in the Eastern Soviet provinces where feminism had barely made a start. And it is of utmost importance today if we are to understand the struggle that goes on in Afghanistan. Once more, we turn to Dr. Hayden's account of the struggle. Quoting S. Liubimova, a director of the Zhenotdel in Central Asia in the 1920's, we learn:

"The position of the women of the East in pre-revolutionary times was hopelessly difficult. According to the old customs and regulations of the Moslem religion, she in general was not considered a human being. She was bought and sold for the *kalym* [price of a bride]. Parents often gave very young girls into marriage. The husband had unlimited power in the home. He could murder his wife without punishment for being unfaithful, drive her out of the home, subject her to corporal punishment, take after the first wife, a second, third, or fourth.

"Sold for the *kalym*, the woman did not have the right to determine her own fate even after the death of her husband. According to custom she, together with the livestock and other possessions of the dead husband, was transferred in inheritance to his closest relative. Turkmen and Kirgiz women carried on their shoulders the basic burden in the economy of the nomad, but they did not have the right to sit at the same table with the man."

Hayden continues the description, citing other sources (footnote references omitted):

"In Azerbaijan, Tadzhikistan, and Uzbekistan women lived in separate parts of the house, could not show themselves in the presence of male visitors, could go out in the streets only with the husband's permission, and then they had to cover their faces with a veil. Among the Uzbeks the woman had to wear a tightly braided black net made of horsehair (the *parandzba*), covering her from head to foot. Among the eastern minorities literacy was very low (practically zero among women); women gave birth under the most unsanitary conditions; there were no doctors, and disease was common.

"The work of the Zhenotdel among women of the East was made even more difficult and dangerous by the violent opposition of Moslem men. Zhenotdel delegates and organizers were slandered, intimidated, and beaten; even murder was not uncommon. In Turkestan a *delegatka* was tortured and murdered in the night by four men, led by her own brother, who felt obligated as her oldest male relative to avenge the disgrace she had brought upon her family. A woman delegate enroute to the first Congress of Soviets of Uzbekistan was ambushed and hacked to death with sabres. A Zhenotdel worker examining the police records in the Turkmen Republic for 1925-26 discovered thirty uninvestigated cases of murder of Turkmen women. The causes for the murders were such acts as leaving the family to study, refusing to be sold in marriage, or involvement in Zhenotdel activities. . . ."

The overwhelming majority of the Russian people, before the revolution, were burdened with the hardships of peasant conditions of life. But in Central Asia, existence was even more stark. It was extremely difficult to find a way to bridge the gap. As Hayden describes the dilemma:

"From the very beginning of its activities in Central Asia in the early 1920's, the Zhenotdel carried out its assault on women's oppression in basically two ways. First, Zhenotdel activists attempted to approach Central Asian women by setting up new social institutions for women—women's clubs, literacy classes, women's *arteli*, 'red yurts' (information and aid centers for nomadic women); these institutions were designed to serve as an intermediate step

in the path from the seclusion of the traditional Moslem home to a fuller participation in all aspects of social life. The women's clubs were particularly successful, since they maintained segregation of the sexes and thus provoked the least resistance from Moslem men, while allowing the women to begin to come out of seclusion in relatively comfortable and nonthreatening surroundings. In the women's clubs, Moslem women were offered child care services, legal counseling, literacy education, instruction in hygiene and medical care, and many new opportunities for self-expression. Beginning in the early 1920's, hundreds of these clubs were set up by Zhenotdel organizers and *delegatki* throughout the Central Asian republics.

"Secondly, the Zhenotdel also mobilized large numbers of women for dramatic and sometimes massive acts of defiance and opposition to the old social norms and ways of life. The most visible of these expressions of defiance were the mass unveilings, which sometimes involved gatherings of thousands of women. Less visible, but also disruptive of social stability, was the aid and encouragement which the Zhenotdel offered to Central Asian women to get them to exercise their new rights under Soviet rule. These actions included encouraging women to refuse to be sold into marriage by their parents and relatives (opposition to *kalym*), encouraging wives to sue their husbands for divorce, division of property and child support, and also encouraging wives to take their husbands to court for practicing polygamy. These latter types of actions, which all included female defiance of male supremacy and patriarchal and religious tradition, often placed Central Asian women in great physical danger, since they frequently became outcasts from their communities with nowhere to seek protection against the revenge of outraged husbands and other male kinfolk. Sometimes this violence was not merely personal revenge, but took on a general political character."<sup>26</sup>

It is not hard to imagine the ease with which Reagan's CIA gangs can find supporters in such an environment in Afghanistan. The U.S. had even less success in its small influence in the opening stages of women's liberation in Iran. We women have a

26 Op. cit., pp. 337-38.

lot to worry about when Reagan and the Soviet bureaucrats start to "deal" with the knotty problem of Afghanistan.

### ***Resistance among Radicals***

Of course we radicals are not about to be chopped up with sabres by the men in the movement. Nor do we usually need the shelters for battered women. But to find a bold, new direction for the social changes that must be made, we have to at least be aware of the dragging of feet along the revolutionary road. If we women in the SWP when it was still a revolutionary movement had so much trouble as was evidenced in the Bustelo controversy, it shouldn't be difficult to imagine how much trouble the women today encounter when that organization has been transformed into its opposite, into a bureaucratic prison. Why is it so important to dredge up the old arguments against feminism that were evoked in the Bustelo dispute? The feminist revolution for a time flooded the SWP with militant women aspiring to change the world. And where better to go than to a party whose record in the struggle for feminism was second to none? In addition the SWP had an unblemished record in the struggle against imperialist war. And most important, it was born in the struggle against bureaucracy, both capitalist and soviet. Dobbs and his heir, Jack Barnes, now National Secretary of the SWP, had transformed this once grand organization into its opposite. Bit by bit, expulsion after expulsion, the screws and bolts were finally tightened until the last vestiges of the old cadre were out and workers democracy even less than a memory in this organization. There are left, however, women whom it is still hard to control. We hear of them in the complaints of the Barnes' machine.

### ***From Makeup to Babies***

Mary-Alice Waters made a report to the 1985 National Convention of the SWP on "Preparing the Election of the National Committee," adopted in its general line by the convention,

thereby becoming the "line" of the Party. Reviewing some SWP history, we learn the following interesting facts:

"The 1977 convention debate headed down two false tracks. On one hand the argument was advanced that there were too many 'white males' in the leadership, and that was a problem for the party. . . .

"Secondly, there was an assumption running through the 1977 convention deliberations that electing somebody to the National Committee was the way to make her or him a leader. That is, if we put more comrades who are Black or female on the NC, we will then have more leaders who are Black or female. . . ."

An "assumption," of course, is assumed. Maybe the "assumption" was that more women and Blacks might bring the "leadership" a little closer to the on-going social revolutions of Blacks and women. That "assumption" would at least be less insulting to the women and Black members. But, back to the problems cited by Waters:

"Another interrelated problem surfaced at the 1977 convention—a 'third-world-comrades-only' social was organized one evening there. It was not an event scheduled by the convention. . . ."

Good heavens! Trying to exclude Barnes? The male head of the Party? What is the world coming to? Third-world workers, like the women, aren't allowed to caucus in the SWP. They already have equality, don't you know? It's a "revolutionary" party. Therefore no inequality exists. Poor Stalin got the lumps from Trotsky because Stalin thought we could have socialism in one country. Stalin was a piker. The SWP thinks it can have socialism in one party! [What happened to the Bustelo-Reed postulate that equality could not be realized except through socialism?]

According to Waters, there are three reasons for dredging up the old Bustelo conflict: the first is that women are having babies. Saints preserve us! Not that! Women not only *adapt* themselves to bourgeois pressure by using makeup. They also have babies! But listen to Waters:

"As Evelyn put it, so long as capitalism survives, so long as the bourgeoisie remains the ruling class, workers

will always have to abide by and make some concessions to the economic and social conditions we are struggling to change. But even when we *adapt* [italic in original]—which we do all the time—we have to be conscious that this is what we're doing, and not pretend we're advancing the working class along its historic line of march. You don't have to turn make up into something progressive, into a right as opposed to a social compulsion, just because you want to dye your hair so you look younger!

"This is also relevant to the decision individual comrades make about whether or not to have children. . . . The party couldn't possibly have a political position on so personal a question. But for the same reasons, it's an error to try to find political rationalizations for whatever one decides. . . ."

Of course the party "couldn't possibly" have a position on whether or not a woman should have a baby. But what kind of pressure is the party applying if one has to find "rationalizations"? Waters here equates the use of makeup, clearly a "yielding to bourgeois pressure," with a decision to have a baby. The bourgeoisie needs future proletarians. So the pressure is on. But don't pretend that it's revolutionary, that it's as important as selling *The Militant* on a street corner. Bending before the bourgeoisie is bending! Let's have no doubt about that.

Any woman in her right mind should flee for her life in the face of such sectarian stupidity. The book on sectarian politics is not yet finished. It is still being written. And it's a book about a virulent infantile disease that attacks very big and very old babies.

If anyone set out to deliberately wreck the SWP, thoroughly isolate it from the working class and from women, what better way to accomplish this than make the reproduction of the human species counterrevolutionary, yielding to bourgeois pressure? It was bad enough that Bustelo-Reed frowned upon the use of makeup by millions of women. Now Barnes-Waters want us to frown also on the pregnant woman. Capitalism makes it hard enough to bear children in this ugly world of war and fascist dictatorships without "revolutionary" organizations adding to the woe.

Now I am fully aware that some young women, especially those who decide to make revolution a profession, may forego the pleasure of babies. And some may not have the courage to try to have both, especially under conditions where the pri-

mary burden falls on the woman. We had a full discussion of this problem in the Los Angeles movement in the mid-forties as World War II came to an end, with our first formal post-War discussion of the "woman question." One young woman proclaimed it counterrevolutionary to have children. Yet there were other women present, who were no less ready to serve the cause, who had children. We worked our way through the problem then and there. We came to a mutual understanding that our movement was part of the working class and would experience all the hardships as well as pleasures of our class. We didn't want to set ourselves apart, as some kind of freaks of nature. We could not afford to isolate ourselves from the problems all women face. Our revolutionary task was to struggle for solutions to life's problems, not to turn our backs upon them. Our job was to unify, not divide women. The revolution must involve all women.

The "hated" Los Angeles organization also asked the parents to organize child-care facilities for all city-wide gatherings to make it possible to have maximum attendance and participation of all members, including mothers. And always we posed the problem as one of parental sharing of the responsibility.

### ***No Nursing Allowed***

According to my latest information on the SWP today, the women there have been fighting for the right to nurse their babies during meetings. I understand that they have temporarily lost this fight. I say "temporarily" because historically women will win and those who stand in the way of the feminist and social revolutions, no matter what their rationale, will be gone and forgotten before the socialist congress convenes.

In discussing this issue with radical friends I have been shocked at how little is understood, or, perhaps I should say, how deep is the anti-feminist prejudice that still exists even after more than a decade has passed since the start of the women's movement. One radical male friend exclaimed, "How sectarian can you get?" I agreed heartily. He was surprised, having expected my all-too-frequent disagreement. "You agree it is sectarian?" he asked incredulously. "Of course," I replied. "The refusal to permit women to nurse at meetings will certainly alienate nursing mothers, those who have nursed, those who expect that they might want to nurse, and finally the fathers

who want their babies fed." Actually the problem in this discussion was that he thought that discussing the *issue* was sectarian while I thought the refusal was sectarian.

Another male friend laughed uproariously at the news of the dispute and exclaimed "How petty can you get!" I replied that there was nothing petty about discrimination against women. Any practice which would exclude any category of member, nursing mothers, or whomever, from participating in political life was damned oppressive. The women wouldn't engage the men over an issue that was petty. Prejudice is never petty. It's so habitual it becomes invisible. People offend other people without even realizing that they're offending. But prejudice and the struggle against it are never petty.

I asked the first man quoted what possible objections could be made to a mother nursing her baby at a meeting. He replied, laughing, that he "might get a hard on." And I, also laughing, said we had a simple solution to that problem. We can keep a bucket of cold water at the rear of the hall, and when a man gets sexually aroused he can stick his head in the bucket. Recommended immersion time—four minutes.

And through all this angry (on my part) banter lies the fact that men look at women as sex objects. She's not a woman doing what comes naturally, feeding an infant. She exists to satisfy him sexually. Beyond that she has no interest for him, and sex should not be permitted to intrude itself into a political process. It is sexist prejudice, the substance of what the women's revolution is all about that is at issue. Nursing an infant is not a sex act for the woman. It is a part of caring for a child, one that only she can do. It cannot be delegated to the father or to a babysitter. But there's no need for this fact to interfere with her political functioning—if only the men can get their heads on straight.

Any motion, resolution, or what-have-you that excludes or limits any category of people from functioning politically to the fullest extent possible only works to preserve the status quo. In the late Forties while attending the first Trotsky School in New York I ran into just such a problem. We had a branch of seamen. Their wives belonged to that branch and being on shore all the time were able to provide consistent leadership in all the routine activities. In fact the organizer of the branch was a woman. But the men passed a motion that only seamen could be elected delegates to the National Convention. That automatically excluded all the women of the branch. Naturally the women objected and told me about their problem (I was functioning on

the national Political Committee at the time, not in any local body). I raised the matter with the men involved and they got very angry, accused me of "interfering" in local matters and promised to bring me up on charges in the Political Committee. They did. I defended myself on democratic grounds. It was unconstitutional to pass any motion which would exclude any member from being a delegate. Jim Cannon, at that time the "head" of the Party, defended me and did so by flatly accusing the men of male chauvinism. "Seamen are notoriously chauvinists," he charged and the matter was dropped. But I often wondered if anyone had learned anything from the incident. Discussion of it simply went underground.

Thanks to the feminist revolt of the Sixties, we began to see young couples bringing their children to the demonstrations—the man with the baby strapped to his back. If the woman can't nurse in public she can't demonstrate. But that's becoming a problem of the past. The younger generation is beginning to acquire a taste for real sharing that makes the heart leap with hope for the future of humanity.

### ***Trashing the Critics***

The second reason for dredging up the old Bustelo fight is a necessary concomitant to the first, for on their own women naturally would be too weak to resist the pressure to, use makeup and have babies:

"It is useful to consider the 'Bustelo controversy' from a second angle: the role of the party in helping all of us to think objectively and politically about the conditions that shape us personally. This is hard to do on our own. Each of us needs to be part of an organized, conscious vanguard party in order not to be just pulled along—adapting, not opposing."

Again, matters are put entirely upside down. It is not the "leaders" who put revolutionary pressure on the members. It is just the opposite. The members put revolutionary pressure on the "leaders." And if the "leaders" listen, we just might be able to remove the quotes.

And the third reason was in order to "trash" the Weisses,<sup>27</sup> the group struggle that surfaced at the beginning of the Bustelo controversy. Why "trash" the Weisses? We had long since left the SWP and moved on to other arenas of revolutionary struggle.<sup>28</sup> But a warning had to be issued to all who were discontent as to how troublemakers would be dealt with. "Trashing" people, the feminist term for this political method, is the final weapon of bureaucrats interested in silencing critics, not convincing them. But I shall spare the reader the details of this sordid and worthless recitation of character assassination charges that are totally out of place among socialists, however deep their differences. They are all too familiar from the charges of Stalin against Trotsky to the less spectacular and less consequential slanders against the Weisses. These are the weapons of the bourgeoisie, unworthy of revolutionary activists of whatever persuasion.

Before leaving the "SWP Today," let me express what I hope is a general feeling of solidarity with the struggle of the women in the SWP. We are certain that they fight with some male allies too. For there are some, perhaps more than we know, who share our revolutionary goals. And with that we can proceed to a general review of some of the things feminism has accomplished and what feminists are trying to teach all revolutionary forces.

27 The Barnes-Waters machine denounced the Weiss group as a "clique," i.e., an unprincipled combination. No one in 1954 made this charge against us. But Barnes-Waters don't even attempt to prove the charge. They just make it. No matter that a terrible injustice is committed. That's politics! Macho politics, not feminist. Murry Weiss was absolutely incapable of unprincipled politics. The truth is that he genuinely hoped to pull his colleagues together for a collective leadership. And perhaps that could have happened if he hadn't been hit with a stroke in 1960, especially as the upcoming feminist revolt put a damper on chauvinism. An explanation for the anti-Weiss group is another matter. We thought at the time that it was really an anti-Cannon group (James P. Cannon, one of the founders of American Trotskyism), for it was Cannon, "retired" to California, who persuaded Murry and me and some of our younger cadre to transfer to the center in hopes of improving the situation there. As strong a leader as Cannon was in that small movement, he could no longer count on winning the majority of the leadership in any given dispute with Farrell Dobbs. For example, Cannon, in alliance with Vincent Dunn of Minnesota, could not get a majority vote in the National Committee for their nomination of a woman, this writer, as U.S. Vice Presidential candidate to run with Dobbs in the 1952 election. They were able to win only after taking the problem to the floor of the

## WHAT FEMINISM MEANS TO MARXISTS

**A**S we have seen, Marxism gave to feminism its first clout on a state-wide basis with the Russian Revolution of 1917. The women had a powerful ally in the Russian working class and its political head, the Bolsheviks. However, we only got a start there. The decline of that movement and the growth of bureaucracy in the working class on a world scale brought frustration and defeat in the advanced economies of the world for the next half-century, making possible a new outbreak of world war, this time with the terrifying U.S. introduction of nuclear weapons.

Now what the feminist revolt of the Sixties and Seventies brought, sparked by the Black liberation struggle, was a world struggle against bureaucracy, the deeply embedded roots of which lie in male supremacy over women. And it was the second stage in the development of the world revolution that Lenin and Trotsky had foreseen, but not necessarily in the form expected. The first stage was the proletarian upsurge that followed World War I and deepened with the world-wide depression of the Thirties. The women's revolution was also a phenomenon that affected the world population. It has not been restricted to any national people.

The revolutionary programs of Marxist organizations helped to spark the struggle. But none of these organizations brought it into being. All were taken by surprise and to one extent or another stood as obstacles to its development while trying to use the mass struggle to fill up their ranks—to serve the male bureaucracies in these organizations.

Bureaucracies of all varieties, governmental, industrial, institutional, are all based on the tier, the pyramidal structure of society. These tiers are layers of people labeled inferior-superior,

National Convention. (There was no opposition to my nomination in 1956 and 1960.) Years later both Murry and I concluded, in retrospect, that the anti-Weiss group was also based on the hostility of the center to the pro-feminist position of the Los Angeles movement. It was with the Bustelo dispute that the "group" charges were first raised.

28 We helped to organize the School for Marxist Education, the New York Socialist Feminists, and finally the Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party (CRISP), an attempt to bring splintered groups together, starting with four, then five separate groups. We were able to function on the basis of consensus for several years.

with the latter holding power over the former. The destruction of bureaucracy was the target of the feminist revolt from its inception. And its elimination is the necessary prelude to the communal society of equals that all socialist-communist formations want. It is the preparation of people for the socialist democracy to come.

This fact should come as no surprise to anyone. The turbulent years of the Thirties were in the first instance a struggle against bureaucracy. Revolutionary ferment always begins with the cracking of the bureaucratic crust that covers the working class, holding free action in check. The workers rise and the bureaucrats on their backs lose their seats. And there were two sets of bureaucracy feeling the quake: the industrial management machine under the direct supervision of the bosses and the labor bureaucracy of the craft unions which dominated the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

No one who participated in the great struggles of those years will ever forget the job actions that became a part of the organizing of the new industrial unions, both CIO and AFL. All the capitalists could think of was how to take decision-making off the plant floor, the dock, or the deck of the ships, and put it behind closed doors for the quiet, effective, at first slow choking death.

It was no different with the women. True, some men, those who also hated the status quo, urged their female friends to rebel, men like the brilliant Lenny Bruce. And the ruling class also was prepared to open the patriarchal wall a small crack to swell the class that worked for it for a new government-sponsored and paid-for period of economic growth. The capitalists had done this earlier to meet the needs of its war economy. But rebellion for most women meant confrontation with the men in their lives—even though women strove to hold the struggle to the issues.

The working class throughout the world, and most especially in the advanced countries, needs two things: An advance in political consciousness beyond the bureaucratically constructed boundaries; and secondly the unification of the class, the labor movement, and its fragmented radical structures. The feminist revolution began to open the doors to a solution to both problems. Let us start with the first.

## ***Consciousness Raising***

Politicalization of the working class, the mass of the American people, began to take place in the thousands of consciousness-raising groups that sprang up all over the country. Realizing the enormity of the social changes that had to be made to throw off the yoke of male supremacy, women drew back from their initial confrontational initiatives to begin to consider the nature of the struggle, the causes of the oppression, and the direction in which it was all heading. For the first time women began on a mass scale to understand that the inferiority they felt was a social product imposed on them by a patriarchal system that had existed for centuries. And the sense of inferiority was replaced by an enormous anger and outrage at the perpetration of these crimes against roughly half the people in the world.

At the same time, the women came to understand that it was not the oppression of women alone that had to be combated. All oppression would have to come to an end. To put a stop to men bashing women, we also had to stop men from bashing men. As the women began to gain self-confidence, the human possibilities loomed large. But from the beginning the women appeared to be divided in answering the question of how this was to be done.

It is not my intention here to go into the history of the feminist movement. But some of its important high points, in my opinion, must be touched on if we are to begin to understand what feminism means to Marxism. And I can think of no better place to start than with the 1968 split that occurred in the big, new women's "union," the National Organization of Women, NOW. Ti-Grace Atkinson resigned her post as President of the New York Chapter and other offices on October 18, 1968, with the following explanation:

"The leader of N.O.W. (Betty Friedan), in the discussion of feminist goals, said 'I want to get women into positions of power.' "

"Some of the rest of us saw this statement as representative of the opposite side to our differences. We said, each in our own way, 'We want to destroy the positions of power. To alter the condition of women involves the shifting of over half the population. We complain about the unequal power relationships between men and women. To change that relationship requires a redefinition of humanity. We want to get rid of the positions of power, not get up

into those positions. The fight against unequal power relationships between men and women necessitates fighting unequal power everywhere: between men and women (for feminists especially), but also between men and men, and women and women, between black and white, and rich and poor.'<sup>29</sup>

Atkinson regarded these differences in NOW as constituting an "irreconcilable ideological conflict" and I believe she was right. It was part of the more generally stated Marxist contradiction between capitalism and socialism-communism, a contradiction between private property and socialized property, between class society and the classless society of equals, not merely in the "eyes of the law," but in the substance of social existence. Atkinson and her associates in the struggle had the theoretical depth to see the essential features of the struggle, its core, its heart.

But that doesn't mean that Friedan was wrong. Einstein's theory of relativity negates the physical laws of Newton only in the sense of encompassing and overriding them. With an irreconcilable contradiction a change is inevitable. But that change takes place through a process, a becoming and a ceasing to be. It takes a struggle for power to eliminate power. The overwhelming majority of the women rose up against the inequities of the present. No more second-class citizenship was the battle cry. And the struggle for power is confrontational as the proletarian struggle has demonstrated throughout bourgeois history.

But the profound theoretical insights of the feminist left wing helped to direct the course of the struggle from the beginning in a revolutionary direction.

### ***Participatory Democracy***

The oppression of women always included silencing us. The ways in which this was done were myriad. The broad historical ones we are all familiar with. It is like the suppression of the working class. The bourgeoisie has the power. It controls the media. It can and does say what is to be published, seen and heard. To this we can add that men predominate in these posi-

tions of power and all others—the labor bureaucracy, the Churches and other cultural and scientific institutions. So women get a double whammy. All this affects the most ordinary human relations in our patriarchal society, even our conversations. The men are talking and a woman says something. The talking politely stops until she finishes. Then it resumes as if she had not spoken—as if the discussion had just experienced an interruption. The men address each other and just ignore the women present. Or if the woman expresses a disagreement, dares to contradict the men, she must be prepared for a real bashing. And so her participation finds a thousand defensive clauses to ward off the blow. I may be wrong. Of course, I'm not sure. It may not pertain. I hope I don't sound silly. You may be right, but. And when a woman meets the man as his equal or superior in whatever field, all the alarm signals go off. It's not just ordinary competition. From a woman self-confident assertion is almost castrating to the male—as if sexual competence is threatened unless the man is confident of his "superiority."

The first task in a C.R. (consciousness-raising) group was to convince ourselves that no one need to apologize for our thoughts. Certainly that no one need to suppress them. And for that achievement, it was absolutely imperative that the discussants be restricted to women. For this alone segregation of the sexes was necessary—although segregation was not our goal. Separate organizations for women were absolutely essential. Even so, it was sometimes hard to get some of our sisters to speak up. But time was taken to assure us all that no opinion was missed. And I think the time was never wasted. The suppressed thoughts often proved to be the best ones.

I remember one gathering where various feminist groups had come together to plan an action when one of our sisters entered in the company of an affable young man. She explained that he was really with us and had access to media connections as well. Quite politely the chair replied that this was a deliberative meeting for women only and he was asked to leave. Suddenly he ceased to be so affable and, taking a mockingly feminine stance, said something sarcastic in a high-pitched voice. Just as he had been transformed suddenly from a friendly sympathetic male to an MCP (male chauvinist pig), reeking with contempt, even hatred, so the audience of women was transformed. To a woman they rose to their feet, filled with a rage so immense it seemed to gush out of centuries of pain. The man

<sup>29</sup> *Amazon Odyssey*, Ti-Grace Atkinson, Links Books, 1974, pp. 9-10.



fled for his life—all dignity gone like a puff of steam from a teapot.

One can only just begin to comprehend the anger of women when one hears gentle nuns, who live in a centuries old patriarchal environment, talk of plans to put an emetic in the soup of the bishop, their guest, think better of it, and finally settle for figuring out ways to force him to do the dishes.

To achieve a participatory democracy where it was possible for all to take part in reaching decisions required a whole new method of discussion. The old ways were carefully reviewed, critically examined, so that the faults could be weeded out. And the worst of these was, and is, the technique of “trashing” people. The most common of these methods is to put someone in a cubbyhole, slap a label on, and that finishes off the individual. He/she is properly disposed of.

In the broader society this often takes the form, when meeting someone, of inquiring about her/his occupation. Interest then cools if that is not so prestigious. But it has other forms in the radical movement.

I recall the puzzlement and dismay I felt when I first came to New York. At a leaflet distribution or some such activity, I got into a discussion with a man. One of my comrades whispered to me not to bother—he was a Stalinist! But that was even more reason to “bother.” We had so much in common. And perhaps I could help him understand more, armed with Trotsky’s explanation of the bureaucracy. His experience should be very instructive to me. That’s the whole purpose of a discussion, an exchange of political views. I will listen carefully to him in the hope that I can learn something new and interesting, but also in the hope that he will listen carefully to me.

This problem exists even now, in 1986. The men are slow to learn from women—even women making revolutions. I mentioned to a very bright young man that I had a discussion with another man in a different radical group. Quite patronizingly he informed me that “we are opposed to that group.” Of course, I knew that. But what difference did that make? Belonging to a different group meant he had different ideas and that should make for an interesting exchange. Furthermore, two groups can one day be one group. But this will never be so if opposition means no discussion. People are not treated as people, but as labels to be smiled at, ridiculed, or shouted at, and this is political life? The fact that a person has joined some radical group means that he/she has already arrived at some elementary notions, at least, of what the struggle is all about. It is to her/

him that we should want to discuss. If our ideas are too weak to meet the contest, then we have something to learn.

And there is the old, old technique of oversimplifying an opponent’s argument and thereby distorting it, in order to more easily dispose of it. It only angers the opponent and rarely teaches anyone anything. A good discussion always consists of reaching back to the shared points and then examining how and why differences emerge. This method both assumes good intent and shows good intent. Mutual respect must be the rule, not the exception, in political exchange.

One must take the trouble not to offend people while struggling against a view with which one disagrees. Marx was exemplar in this respect. He was careful to make it clear that he meant no insults even to the capitalist as an individual. In his preface to the first edition of *Capital*, he said:

“To prevent possible misunderstanding, a word. I paint the capitalist and the landlord in no sense *colour de rose*. But here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class-relations and class-interests. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them.”<sup>30</sup>

And who is a better teacher than Marx? As a candidate for mayor of Los Angeles in the period immediately after World War II, I had no trouble avoiding offense to any of my bourgeois opponents because we were really addressing ourselves to different agendas. But I was very grateful to each of them when I unwittingly walked into a meeting organized by one of the groups responsible for the anti-Japanese-American terror in Southern California. These people attempted to physically eject me from the hall but gave up the idea when *all* of my bourgeois opponents came to my defense, refusing to speak until I had been given the floor.

Intraradical relations, unfortunately, abound in the use of trashing techniques. The terms “sectarian,” “ultra-left,” “petty-bourgeois,” “opportunist,” etc., lose all meaning when addressed to people rather than positions or actions. No one is

30 *Capital*, Vol. I, Karl Marx, Kerr ed., p. 15.

any of these labels. All people are very complex creatures and while each may err on one side, the error can be in the opposite direction on another occasion. That pertains also to organizations as the history of the Communist International proves.

And then enters the government agent, our class enemy. The Thomas P. Griesa decision in the SWP case, August 25, 1986, makes this meddling into proletarian affairs on the part of the bourgeois government with all its resources illegal—as it always has been. And when we catch them at their meddling we now have at least the possibility of financial compensation—which we have to pay for as taxpayers. These agents however are expert at the trashing technique and use it with relish, exacerbating the internal and intra-radical relations. Feminist opposition to the trashing style is the only way to disarm these disrupters and provocateurs. Disrespect for the individual is their method, not ours!

Jim Cannon several times called me an “anarchist.” I didn’t mind. Some of our greatest proletarian heroes and heroines were anarchists—Sacho, Vincenti and Emma Goldman, to mention a few. But anxious not to offend, like the good revolutionist he was, he always added, “but she’s our anarchist,” which made me, I suppose, an “anarcho-bolshevik,” to keep the labels straight. In my opinion Cannon leaned on the side of centralism in this polar relation of organizational concepts. I leaned on the side of democracy. But neither of us collided organizationally in those years. We both lived in the same movement.

Besides, as I have so often explained, our revolution will be quite a new phenomenon. From the beginning there is every likelihood that our socialist democracy will have many parties, many expressions of different views. An advanced economy provides the base for full participation of all in a mosaic, friendly exchange of views with the possibility of each minority becoming a majority as we learn from each other. And an advanced economy can provide the leisure time necessary for full participation and the technical means of conducting discussion on a mass scale. Not a one-party system, nor a two-party system, but a many-party system like a rainbow. At least this is one variant in the organizational quadrant. I kind of like that idea. But the future will decide.

## ***The Personal Is Political***

All of the foregoing found expression in the brilliant dialectical slogan of the early feminists—the personal is political! The unity of opposites posed in this sentence gives us the basis of communist society. The concern for one is the concern for all. And the concern for all must be the concern for one. It is the notion of collectivity versus capitalist individualism that is so destructive of the individual. It is a positive, more general statement of the old Wobbly slogan, designed to organize the working class—an injury to one is an injury to all.

It is also a reply to the male contention that personal problems are just that and should not be permitted to interrupt political processes. This argument is another device for suppressing women. It says your grievances are out of order. Leave the “personal” home.

The political process must include the personal. Macro phenomena are composed of the micro world. The whole is contingent on the part. If the general is unhealthy, the particular must be examined as well. The individual, her/his needs and wants must be seen to. Personal relations are something each and every one of us can do something about right now and therefore are the starting point for more general change. As the women move into society in their struggle for equality they bring with them new ways of relating to each other, men and women. And it is already having a profound effect on society. I am only one observer, but I see it everywhere I go—among my neighbors, on the buses, on the highways, etc. While poverty and crime are on the rise because of the economic crises, there are also on the rise a new consideration for others, a politeness, offers of help, and a shielding of others against harsh treatment, or even indifferent treatment. People get aggressive against aggression. It’s quite heart-warming to me and while hard to measure is quite discernible already in general political phenomena. Take the current debate at the end of 1986 on the President’s budget. The form of the debate is where to cut expenditures. Reagan says cut services to people; liberals say cut the arms program, at least a little. In reality this is a partial expression of the popular opposition to war which has driven the administration to restrict its military function to ever more secret territory, only accidentally escaping control of the “intel-

ligence" community. If fully formulated the debate must be described as a debate over war and peace—make love, not war!

Reagan's talk about human rights, totally alien to him, are nonetheless a reflection of the feminist demand for a human, not macho, approach to people and nations. Like all good bourgeois politicians he tries to speak the words he thinks his audience wants to hear, with a sometimes outrageously funny result—like his comment this year that people are really equal on election day in the voting booth. And all the rest of the year we are not?

To destroy the layered social structure of society, we must begin with the first layer, the power of men over women. The notion of male superiority must give way to the notion of equality just as the notion of bourgeois superiority—proletarian inferiority—must give way to the notion of human equality.

### ***Rotation of the Chair***

Women experimented with different methods of conducting meetings primarily with a view to avoiding the pyramidal structure. We rotated the chair. We took turns with minutes. We all set up the hall, setting up chairs, where possible, in a circle instead of facing a podium which already divides a gathering between head and body. All these techniques proved helpful at equalizing relations and increasing participation. And they reminded me of experiments we conducted in the Los Angeles branches of the SWP in the Forties and early Fifties.

Sometime in the late Forties, to upset stereotypes, we arbitrarily, and unanimously, decided that for a year only women could be elected organizers and only men could hold the secretary's job. At another point we noticed that executive committee meetings, where policy matters were hashed out, were lively and interesting while branch meetings appeared to be dull. For awhile, I thought quite successfully, we decided that executive meetings should be limited to discovery of differences, not their resolution. Instead of voting different positions up or down, we took them to the branches unresolved—there to be discussed and decided. That changed branch meetings considerably and gave fuller participation to the members. When things got too busy short-cuts had to be made. But we always tried to overcome the gap between "leaders" and members, knowing that

these poles should be interchangeable. All of us lead and all of us are led.

Internal Bulletins were never internal in the sense of who could read them. They were internal only in the sense that they were written on a more advanced level than public material—assuming socialist conclusions already reached. In fact we urged friends to buy them so that they could follow more closely the problems we were trying to solve. Any other course is ridiculous in my view. We have absolutely nothing to hide from anyone in the working class. Only an underground movement, necessary in totalitarian societies, needs secrecy. All doubt on this score was removed, finally and forever, after we learned that the perennial agents had reproduced our bulletins in L.A. and freely distributed them to the labor bureaucrats—several of whom informed us of this fact.

It is interesting to note that in the most advanced class action in the world today, in the struggle of Solidarity in Poland for workers' democracy, one of the main slogans is an end to all secret negotiations. This demand is key in the struggle for winning workers' control, for we have to be informed in order to know the issues and their possible solution. If only the struggle for arms control, the struggle against nuclear war, would understand the need to eliminate secret negotiations, we would all be a lot closer to making the world a little safer for life.

### ***Feminist Conclusions***

After almost a decade of intense consciousness-raising efforts, the Matriarchists, in collaboration with other feminist groups, called a general meeting in New York in the late Seventies. All of the speakers spoke for socialism as the necessary solution to the problems confronted in the feminist revolution. They made explicit that which was implicit in the beginning. No particular socialist-communist organization was recommended as the means for achieving our socialist goal. I believe the feminists expected that a struggle would be needed in all radical formations to achieve a more democratic, representative and participatory structure. Certainly women cannot move too far ahead of the men. The men must be won as our allies as we get past the bashing stage and the men start to listen.

And the radical movement didn't look too good as democratic organizations. The Communist formations had lived too

long in the straitjacket of Stalinism to recover quickly from the 20th Congress in the Soviet Union where Stalin's crimes were confessed. How was it possible for such a splendid and dedicated workers movement to succumb to such blind, uncritical obedience to bureaucratic, monolithic dullness, if not brutality?

And the Trotskyist movement, in historic struggle against bureaucracy, itself became a victim of bureaucracy. And it has been shattered into fragments, at least in the United States, into at least eight different organizations—with the last expulsions immediately giving birth to triplets. Each patterned to one extent or another on what is conceived to be the "Leninist" organizational principle of Democratic Centralism. And all but one dominated almost totally by men.<sup>31</sup>

Both these major radical tendencies advocate "democratic centralism," so it is not surprising that this organizational concept became the subject of much discussion among socialist-feminists. However, the men have a wide variety of interpretations of what Leninist organizational principles really are, quite inevitably, in my opinion, as the history of Lenin's organization also had a wide variation in structure—from periods of total illegality to top leadership of the majority of Russian workers and peasants, in all kinds of conditions—war, revolution, economic hardship, and slow recovery. Lenin understood quite well the need for organizational flexibility. Organizational structures have to meet different political needs.

And for the record, I consider myself an advocate of democratic centralism, defined of course as I understand it (see Appendix D). No one can seriously quarrel with the organizational necessity of permitting the majority to decide policy and action no matter how much we strive for consensus. There can be no organized effort without it. The labor movement from its inception was built on that principle. But the rights of the majority are also restricted. It cannot decide everything. It must guarantee the rights of minorities. The democratic part of this polarity is the protection of the rights of minorities. That is where the organizational struggle comes in. How far is a major-

<sup>31</sup> The Freedom Socialist Party, the exception, is predominantly composed of women. In fact it played a leading role in the feminist revolution in Seattle, Washington, and assembled a splendid cadre of audacious, articulate, and devoted revolutionists. Murry Weiss joined that movement, despite differences, before his death in 1981, considering it his statement of solidarity with the women's revolution.

ity *required* to protect minority rights? This is key because all truth starts as a minority position, *always*, just as human beings always begin as babies.

In the labor movement one cannot be expelled except for streak-breaking or non-payment of dues. And the latter would never bar one from rejoining. Until the monstrous McCarthy period, it was almost impossible to expel anyone for political views, although it was often enough hard to get them heard.

In the early Trotskyist movement the organizations were required to give proportional representation to all minorities on all committees and delegations. No one could be expelled for an opinion or by merely a vote with which the "leaders" disagreed. No one could be expelled for any kind of vote. One had to break ranks, attack the organization politically, strike-break, if you will, in order to justify expulsion. It wasn't until the 1965 Resolution on organization in the SWP that the attempt to create "disloyal" opinions as punishable crime became the grounds for disciplinary action—of course bringing forth a "proletarian" version of the bourgeois witchhunt. And it wasn't until that resolution that the SWP considered monolithism as possible, even desirable.

In my opinion Cannon had a healthy and very real contempt for "corridor" warriors instead of up-front and in-the-open opponents within the movement. But he tried to prevent this kind of warfare with restrictions on discussion. And that kind of solution only ties the hands of principled fighters, never the corridor gossip. The sneak attack can only be limited by education; by raising the level of consciousness; and above all by example. It is very dangerous to depress discussion in any fashion. That means depressing thought.

Anyway restriction on discussion was piled upon restriction. "We are not a talk-shop." No? Why not? Talk is the way we relate to each other. There is all too little communication in society as a whole as well as in the radical movement. Talk is thought articulated. And thought is the commodity most needed in the world today. Our strength lies in our ideas and talk is the expression of ideas.

Women, the most suppressed in "democratic" processes that poorly conceal prejudice, are most sensitive to all suppression, blatant or subtle, and today have little tolerance for it. Under whatever label organizational concepts are dealt with, the prime object is to assure the maximum freedom and participation possible.

Those feminists who joined one or another radical group had their work cut out for them. They have battled long and are

still struggling to transform the movement into the instrument it must become to make a revolution. And while I have shown many symptoms of bureaucratic decline—there are also very heartening signs of feminist progress beginning to appear on the horizon.

Even more important the socialist conclusions of the early feminist leaders assured a move in the direction of the class struggle where a force is naturally assembled that can change the world. The class struggle is not the only arena for feminist activity, but it is a central one, and one in which women constitute today nearly half the population. And as every place else, it begins with the struggle against bureaucracy. Put positively, it is the struggle for genuine democracy, a society of collectivist equals.

### ***The Struggle for Unity***

The second great need the women's revolution began to resolve, the need for unity, was truly spectacular. Women from all industries came together in feminist conferences, seeking to find the commonality of their grievances, an understanding of their sources, and solutions that might be found. The working class was divided by industry or trade, each competing with the others and minimally collaborating for common goals. The women however were not involved with all these male dominated structures. It was easy for them to come together, relate to each other, and open struggle for some of their common concerns.

The entire spectrum of the radical movement, communist, socialist, anarchist, etc., came together, tolerating differences, learning to discuss them in friendly fashion, realizing the extent of shared programs and goals. Even in the small New York Socialist Feminists, which came out of a feminist struggle in the School for Marxist Education, we had representation from all the radical movements, and while the going was sometimes difficult, our discussions were always on the highest theoretical level, and in time, by and large, we learned to trust each other, certain that regardless of the differences we could count on a comradely and thoughtful discussion of them.

It was like a giant cauldron in which great heat mixed all the old ingredients, creating new combinations of elements. It couldn't last long. Revolution is an exhausting activity. But it

was a foretaste of things to come, the creation of a force which can and will overwhelm the bourgeois order and begin the construction of the new.

### ***Consensus***

Feminists understood right from the start that differences exist among all of us on all questions. But these differences should not prevent joint action, or even common organization. If they do there can be no action at all. So we start with the notion that we must find the areas of agreement for most if not all participants. Consensus is the way this is done.

Actually consensus is a new and broader term for the old Trotskyist notion of the United Front for which we fought in the Thirties, unsuccessfully, as the means to defeat Hitler. No one was required to bury their banners. All could fly them freely. But all would unite to defeat Hitler's attacks against any one group or organization.

Consensus was lodged in the strategy Murry Weiss proposed and fought for in the SWP in 1958 which brought a big effort, if only temporary, at collaboration between the SWP and the people around the *National Guardian*, and almost won socialists a permanent place on the ballot in that state.

The feminists used the notion of consensus to bring together women of many different political persuasions for common feminist action. And consensus can be used to unite every radical movement in the country for a more representative democracy—on the road to workers' control of the human destiny.

### ***The Road Ahead***

There are no problems that we cannot solve. The capitalists say we need them because we need capital. And capital is in their hands. But they are wrong. Capital is not a thing, as Marx taught us. Capital is people. It is a social relation. It does not consist of factories, commodities, or money—although it takes all these forms. All these things are produced by people, by

workers, now being thrown out of jobs by the millions while our social needs diminish not a whit.

The military complex that is the U.S. government and its proposed trillion dollar budget look like an invincible fortress at first glance. It is not. In the twinkling of an eye, all the people who constitute that fort can step aside and leave the top teetering precariously in the sky. We have seen it happen over and over again in history. It may not be a Watergate or a Conragate that causes the pause and forces the honest look. But the inconsistency, the stupidity and greed—and the terrifying reality make it inevitable. And just as the bemeddled and bedecked General Kornilov shouted "Give me one loyal regiment and I'll..." But there was not one.

The power lies only in people. They have but to know it. And the women are taking giant strides in that direction. All our energy must be turned outward to explain our concept of socialist democracy. Martin Luther King had a dream? So do we. He did something about it. So can we. We can negate the fragmentation and learn to work together, discussing our differences with pleasure—it really is fun! We can build alliances and find the resources to reach millions more with our critical views and hopes and plans for a world at peace. The message will be welcomed on this war-weary planet and the stars will belong to lovers, not missiles.

The youth will not have to join the military in order to work. Pretty soon they will be mustering out of the army, the navy and the marines to help build our new world and the pentagon will be practically out of business, rattling around in a near-empty eight-sided structure trying to remember its illusions of power and dreams of conquest. The energy and ingenuity of the people will be activated. Planners and engineers will come to the fore to volunteer their training and skills. And all decisions will be democratically arrived at.

A pipe dream? Not at all. We don't have to wait until we convince the ruling class that our way is better. And we don't have to engage them in civil war, unless they choose that course. We can even invite them to participate with us in the new building, instead of just enriching themselves. Profit will soon be illegal and private ownership of the *social* instruments of production, on which all depend for a livelihood, unthinkable.

Rebuilding America, we will soon be helping to rebuild the world. We will come to other peoples, not to exploit them, but to trade with them, on a cost basis—utterly fair, supplying to

them what they need and getting from them what we need. War will forever be but a horrible nightmare which our descendants will read about with incredulity at the foolish and fearsome past. Aghast at how close we came to total nuclear destruction of our small planet.

The ruling class in the United States has good reason to try to tout itself as the providers of freedom, democracy and concern for human rights to the world, the total fraud of which becomes ever more glaring. But it is we Marxists, picking up the insistent pleas of the women, who must begin the demonstration of how free people work—for the common good. It is we who must provide the socialist education to a hungry and desperate populace. It is we who must learn to practice democracy and tolerance of differences so that all can speak up in confidence. Trotskyism began as the historical struggle against bureaucracy in the workers movement. This was our specific historic mission. And it still is our most urgent task.

December, 1986

## APPENDIX A

### Sagging Cosmetic Lines Try a Face Lift

By Jack Bustelo

Have you noticed lately that there are fewer girls around with skins you love to touch?

It's not something the matter with your eyes. It's really so. The Toilet Goods Association reports that after 13 years of steady gains, cosmetics manufacturers' sales suddenly plunged in the first quarter of 1954—right when unemployment took a steep jump. The figures haven't been revealed, but they must have been startling, for the unexpected decline in the use of lipstick, face cream, rouge, powder, eyebrow paint, hair set, fingernail enamel and pimple killers sent a scare through the industry.

However, don't get alarmed. The school girl complexion, unlike the cigar-store Indian, is not yet on the way out. Gallant champions are rushing to the scene of danger, prepared to give their all for a great American institution.

To save the \$1,000,000,000 a year market, and perhaps win the biggest share of it at the same time, three manufacturers alone, Hazel Bishop, Inc., Revlon Products Corp., and the Toni Division of Gillette Co., are dumping more than \$33,000,000 into ad programs for their products this next calendar year. And that, according to the July 16 *Wall Street Journal*, which is breathless with the news, is an estimated 30% over last year.

Other champions of beauty are equally eager for the honor and profit of rescuing American womanhood from dishpan hands, oily skin, stringy hair, tell-tale flakes, wrinkled necks and double chins. The list includes Warner-Hudnut, Inc., Lehn & Fink, Procter & Gamble, Helena Rubinstein, Helene Curtis Industries, Harriet Hubbard Ayer and Elizabeth Arden.

#### Operation Big Push

Operation Big Push among these competitors is being readied right now for next month. Already a few beachheads have been taken. Toni, for example, has announced its third

new cosmetic in three months, a face cream that no words can describe except Deep Magic. That follows a shampoo christened, Pamper, and a sockeroo in lipsticks, Viv.

A cool \$5,000,000 has been earmarked to blast these over radio and TV, the aim being to pound into the head of every girl and woman in the land the fundamental principle of the cosmetic industry: namely, that good complexions, fair hands and lovely hair are not born, they're made.

Revlon, too, has entered the fray, banners flying. Lanolite lipstick is their battle cry, two tints, one for morning and one for evening. And to keep your hair just where it should be on that moonlit beach, air-bomb your head with Silken Net.

Hazel Bishop, not to be mousetrapped, has a liquid rouge, Complexion Glo, to put the right color in your cheeks. And the company announced secret weapons, soon to be unveiled, for reprisal against Max Factor's Cream Puff and Pond Extract's Angel Face.

#### "Chameleon-Like"

Hudnut's new products include Quick, a home permanent that will crimp your hair in nothing flat; Hair Repair for use if something goes wrong or you get bleached out in wind, sun, sand or rain; and Bloom, a rouge so out of this world it can only be described as having a "chameleon-like quality."

Procter & Gamble, one of the high and mighty in the kingdom of soap, is punching into the cosmetics fight with Lilt, a home permanent. And against Toni's pincurl wave, Bobbi, it is giving test runs on Pin It for range, speed and fire power.

On the unwanted hair front there's exciting news. Arden is already opening up a barrage on TV for its new hair-removing cream. Sleek, which helps you keep up that sheer and lovely look by keeping down ugly stubble and five o'clock shadow.

In the nail enamel sector of the battle for beauty, Revlon holds the lead at present, but others promise fierce competition. Revlon's big reserve battery is a list of 7,000 hues. Twice a year it picks out a new tint and spreads it from coast to coast on millions of fingertips and toes under such delectable names as "Fire and Ice," or "Kissing Pink."

#### Queen Bee Cream

In face creams, General Beauty Products Corp., a subsidiary of Coty, has come up with what promises to be a blockbuster, if not an atom-bomb: Queen Bee Cream, a cream based on the substance bees feed selected larvae in the hive to make

them become queens. It's especially designed for girls with that worm-like feeling.

In the struggle to save the American girl from lapsing back into the barbaric customs of the past, when soap and water gave a complexion that clean look on week days, and a touch of strawberry juice and rice powder that extra finish needed at the Saturday night dance, the cosmetic manufacturers have mobilized some of the country's top advertising generals.

#### Put Over Scrutan

One of the most dreaded by other manufacturers is Hazel Bishop's ad expert, Mr. Spector. He was the one who took a simple but sure-fire laxative and made it a nationwide habit by merely spelling Natures backward. Since 1950 he lifted Hazel Bishop from a debt-ridden status to sales of \$11,000,000 last year and a projected \$18,000,000 for this year.

Against him are ranged such figures as R.N. and Irving Harris who developed a home permanent-wave kit in 1944 and in four years built it into a \$20,000,000 a year business with the aid of such dazzling slogans as "Which Twin Has the Toni?"

With brains like that working on the problem, with all that competitive interest, and with all those millions pouring into advertising channels, I think we can all feel safe—well at least half safe. They'll convince America's women to stay beautiful.

Please, girls, don't let a cutback on the job mean a cutback on cosmetics. If you take a layoff, don't lay off the lipstick. Remember, to keep up prosperity, keep up your make-up.



## APPENDIX B

### Letter from Marjorie McGowan

Los Angeles, California, August 30, 1954  
To the Editors:

I wish to enter the discussion in the paper on the subject of cosmetics with the blunt statement that I found Jack Bustelo's article "Sagging Cosmetic Lines Try a Face Lift" both offensive and presumptuous in tone, and false in content and implications. I believe that the editors should exercise more discrimination in the publication of articles concerning which there may be controversy—or quite possibly what is indicated is a controversy which will clear up for the editors in what way they should be discriminating. At any rate, it seemed clear to this reader that the Bustelo article was sharply out of place in the paper with its high standard of revolutionary journalism. Bustelo's subsequent letter of August 16, a fabric of half-truths laid out in a pattern of fancy but meaningless prose, only carried to its logical conclusion the implications and undertones of the first article, and for this reason, I wish to deal with the letter rather than the offending article.

His entire August 16th letter is rooted in an erroneous assumption: that the revolution will create, out of the whole cloth, entire new standards of morality and beauty, and that "not much in the lumberroom of bourgeois morals and beauty will prove very useful." I believe this to be both false and unscientific.

The revolution in technology and science which reached its highest development under capitalism in the last 40 years or so, has wrought a partial revolution in all phases of life—in the relation between the sexes, in sexual morality, in medicine, in nutrition and health, in architecture, in art, in beauty, in hobbies for leisure, in city-planning, in child-rearing, in methods of education, in psychology—a revolution in life and in living which

cannot be completed and consummated until released from the restrictions and bonds imposed by the private ownership in the means of production. These new, progressive and highly creative developments in all phases of life stand in sharp opposition to and are caught up in dynamic contradiction with the antiquated economic system of capitalism. They cannot be deepened and extended throughout the entire social body and find their expression as the new and modern way of life until freed by the world-wide socialist revolution. Only then can the new and revolutionary developments expand unhindered throughout the world.

It is unscientific to conceive, as does Bustelo, that socialism will throw out everything which it inherits from capitalism and create everything new starting from the beginning. Rather, socialism will keep all that is revolutionary and progressive and all that men and women by their demands and desires wish to keep as good and worthy of further development. In my opinion, there will be a vast indebtedness which the socialist world will, in hindsight, accredit to capitalism, including much of its "lumberroom of morals and beauty."

Socialism, for instance, will not throw out the morality of bourgeois society in toto and create a new one out of the whole cloth. Morality has been in the process of evolution during all of the centuries of mankind and the socialist society is not going to write off a part of the historical heritage of the human race as being totally useless. Rather, socialism will extract the hypocrisy and the mysticism out of bourgeois morality and leave the universal ideals of human brotherhood and make a reality of the Golden Rule.

Nor will socialism throw out the revolution which is taking place in modern architecture, with its unity of the natural and the man-made; nor the trend toward the decentralization and planning of cities going on before our eyes in the creation of tracts with their schools, stores and social services—anarchistic, to be sure, at the hands of the builders and realtors. Rather, socialism will free this revolution from the bonds of the profit system, and cities will be planned for the use, convenience and beauty of living, rather than for the profit of the realtors, investors, speculators and contractors.

Nor can we conceive of socialism rejecting the revolution which is taking place in art. Art has pervaded all phases of life. Pots, pans, fabrics, furniture, lamps, stoves, landscaping, architecture—all objects in the environment have become mediums for the creative expression of the artist and the designer. Art is

no longer restricted to formalistic classifications, as sculpture or pictures hung on the walls of the wealthy or in museums, but is diffused and coordinated in the beauty and the unity of *all* objects in the environment of the wealthy, the upper middle class, and even in the homes of some of the more privileged workers. Socialist man is not going to dismiss these manifestations of new and vitally progressive art forms, starting all over with something new and different and inconceivable to our minds because unknown and unrelated to its past development. Rather, the revolution in art forms will no longer be just for those who can afford them, or be shackled with mortgages and time-payments, but will be the rightful heritage of every citizen in the communal world. Communist man will make an art of his way of life, surrounding himself with the creative outpourings of his inherent talent.

Nor will the socialist world create entire new forms of occupation for leisure hours out of the whole cloth. As an example, Comrade Cannon's theory of the resurgence of handicrafts is taking place on all social levels in the tremendous boom in the do-it-yourself crafts. The revolution will complete and free this trend which clearly expresses and fulfills a driving need in man, and will make it economically possible to have both the leisure and the material means to engage in craft activities.

These are only a few examples of what is meant by the revolution in living. We could go on with further illustrations, but suffice it to say that socialism will not create entire new standards in medicine, health, nutrition, child-rearing, psychology, methods of teaching, etc., unrelated from their historic past and their present development. Instead, it will extend and continue the revolution which capitalist technology has already commenced, but freed from the contradictions and restrictions imposed by a decadent, reactionary political-economic system.

What holds true for the rest of life also relates to beauty in the female form around which the discussion on cosmetics revolves. The development of the future must be sought out in the seeds of the present. The beauty of tomorrow will not be created out of nothing, but out of the living forces and tendencies of today. This is the only scientific way to proceed in any question; we do not engage in a star-gazing or crystal-ball divining. Jack Bustelo, however, didn't look at what 40 or 50 million women want today as a basis for deciding what they might want in the future. Rather, in pompous disregard for the aspirations of modern women, he rejects these aspirations as false

and depicts the women as mere ignorant dupes of the capitalist hucksters.

I personally find it inexcusable that column space should be given to a self-appointed judge of what constitutes feminine strivings and what constitutes a social norm of female beauty all under the pretext of a survey of one phase of the American economy. I wholeheartedly endorse the right of self-determination in the very personal matter of what strikes the individual as beautiful, but *social* norms of beauty are determined *socially*, not be the dictates of some individual or other. Bustelo has a right to his own opinion of what he considers beautiful. However, involved here is not his opinion, per se, but the fact that he has set up his opinion against the strivings of millions of women in capitalist society and said, in effect: "The well-scrubbed look shall be the standard of tomorrow and should be the standard of today. Let us not gild the lily. I see all this in my crystal ball."

Not only does he show a remarkable ignorance of female psychology, but as remarkable an ignorance of the history and meaning of cosmetics. As he points out with considerable flourish, the mores in beauty change, evolve and grow along with developing civilization. However, all of this change and the course of its development cannot be reduced to one source as he attempts to do—to the dictates of a ruling class in a class society. However the mores might change, the strivings for beauty are the product of profoundly powerful forces implicit in the human personality and in the relation between the sexes, and have a more direct relation to the forces of reproduction than to those of production. The use of cosmetics and other means of bodily decoration are older than written history and women were gilding the lily long before the class struggle came into existence, and from all the signposts of today, they shall continue to do so long after the class struggle has passed out of existence. As such, this is a question which both transcends the confines of the class relationships, and, at the same time, is contained and determined by it.

The fact is, as in all other phases of life in capitalist America, a revolution has been going on in standards of beauty side by side with and flowing out of the revolution in technology. This revolution is more than cosmetic-deep. It involves the glow of physical health and good nutrition which stands in direct relation to the higher standards of living of the American economy. It also involves the freer and more informal mode of attire, the more natural gestures and grace of movement, which

flow out of and parallel the concurrent revolution in sexual morality of the last 35 years or so. The long-stemmed American beauty, full of natural vitality and physical grace, with shining hair, clear eyes, smooth skin and natural cosmetics with a trace of accent here and there, is no fiction but an American commonplace. This type of beauty is the American social standard, whatever Bustelo might think of it, but by and large it is the exclusive property of first of all youth, and secondly of wealth. If this American beauty is also neurosis-ridden, as our observant Bustelo comments upon, this only demonstrates that things are considerably more complicated than they seem. But why throw out the baby with the bath?

The cosmetic industry and their hucksters do not thrive on the natural beauty which is the birthright of youth of whatever class. It thrives on the lilies who have begun to fade, a phenomenon of nature which strikes every woman in her thirties. And in days of yesteryear, a woman was rated old by the time she reached her forties. It is an inherent part of every normal female ego to strive toward the preservation of youthful beauty, and this is a proper female goal worthy of the considered attention of a revolutionist. The goal of preserving youth as long as reasonably possible has always occupied the attention of the human race, but for the woman of the working class to achieve this goal, considerable effort and expense is entailed. Once the fresh bloom of youth is gone, the working-class woman has neither the means to patronize the beauty shops nor the energy after wrestling with pots, pans and children to devote to the preservation of personal beauty, and soon she has joined the ranks of the drab millions, cheated of a good part of life's thrill. But one look at the radiance of movie stars in their middle forties, achieved solely through a higher standard of living and the alchemy of the modern beauty temples, is enough to convince millions of women that this is something they want too. Who, we may ask, is Jack Bustelo to leave us with the implication that this is something ridiculous? And who is he to set himself up as a self-styled authority on the merits of soap and water (not to speak of rice-powder!) as opposed to all the women who find that creams and lotions do a better job? And who is he to say that the quest for personal beauty is not a legitimate goal of all women; that character is more the ticket?

This finding of beauty in the spirit and character of the working class woman is legitimate for a revolutionist. But let us not confuse means and ends. There is nothing beautiful in the

dishpan hands, the premature wrinkles, the scraggly hair, the dumpy figures in dumpy housedresses, the ugly furniture and the hodge-podge accessories of the working-class woman and her home. To find beauty there is nothing other than the ultra-leftism of the radical snob—an affectation—belonging to the days when long hair and dirty ears were the hallmark of the real honest-to-goodness radical. If the hungry spirit of the working-class woman did not yearn for the beautiful surroundings which are the exclusive property of the leisure and upper middle class; if the women did not hunger for personal beauty in their bodies, in their clothes, in their environment, there wouldn't be any struggle, nor any revolution, nor any socialism. The spirit is, indeed, a beautiful thing because it is alive, vital and progressive. But the spirit moves out and away from the dirt, squalor and the grind of today toward the beauty of the free world of tomorrow. He who finds magnificence in squalor, or even satisfaction in it, will never rise above it. But he or she whom the spirit moves shall find at the end of the struggle the true goals of the human race.

Marjorie McGowan

## APPENDIX C

### L.A. Anti-Fascist Struggle

Reprinted here is an excerpt from the last open letter I wrote to the Socialist Workers Party, dated October 3, 1983, which was never answered, of course, like all the others Murry and I sent. There was a time when not responding to other radicals—or people in general—was absolutely unthinkable as far as I knew. But Dobbs and Barnes were not Cannon. In this part of the letter I was arguing for a far more democratic understanding of our organizational principles. In addition, the reader should know this history of the much maligned L.A. movement in the Forties. It has been buried by the SWP today.

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When we move into action we generally need all our forces, not just some. But even this is not a hard and fast rule. It may be in a strike situation, but strikes are not a part of everyday life. We, in Los Angeles, even permitted our comrades to differ in action. One example:

In my opinion, the most important contribution the Los Angeles Local of the SWP made to the movement as a whole and to the country as a whole was our 1945 struggle against fascism, the fight against Gerald L.K. Smith. In this fight, leaning heavily on Trotsky's anti-fascist theories, and the experience of the Thirties, we had to develop that theory to the post-war, the so-called "war against fascism" reality. Smith emerged on the L.A. scene as a fascist demagogue well-financed for a blitz campaign. He soon grew from small meetings on a par with us to the point where he could rent large auditoriums and attract fascist crowds in the thousands. Finally he announced that he would speak in the Philharmonic Auditorium, not the largest hall, but big enough. The left, of course, was alarmed. The Communist Party began an idiotic campaign to force the landlords to deny him rent. Or the mayor should proscribe him. The rest of the radical movement, as if by reflex, jumped from the position we held in the Thirties—a united front of the radical

movement should be organized for a picket line. The majority in the SWP took a different position. This country had just completed a war that was supposed to be anti-fascist, at least it was to its proletarian supporters. Would a meeting of some 5,000 fascists in the Philharmonic picketed by a few hundred radicals outside be a proper representation of forces in 1945? We thought it would not. Of course we rejected the policy of the Communist Party. To demand that the civil rights of the fascists should be violated by their friends, the landlords and capitalist politicians, would only give the latter the chance to violate ours. But to deny the call for a united front of the other radical groups, of which we were the largest, was not easy to do. But, we decided, the time had come for the labor movement as a whole to take responsibility for the anti-fascist struggle. We should open a campaign for a united front of labor to meet this fascist challenge.

Due to the smallness of our forces, with at most two hundred members and close friends, this seemed to be a perspective that lacked realism, at least in the short run. We were not able to convince the minority in the SWP that our course was nevertheless the only correct one. So we agreed to separate in action. The minority could picket the Philharmonic while the majority took its campaign to the labor movement. We were not happy with this division. But it could do no harm either.

Our national office also got nervous about our decision and sent us tactfully a letter asking us for an explanation of our policy. Murry and I both expected trouble from that quarter, and if we couldn't produce some progress toward our goal in the immediate future, we would be in trouble. But as Jim always liked to say—if you live right you get the breaks. We were astounded at the success that followed. We were able to get motions passed in one union after another proposing the formation of a united front of all labor to fight Smith, most importantly the auto and steel unions. Within these motions we put a clause to send representatives to other locals and councils to get support. We were thereby empowered to really move all over the labor movement with the demand. To this day I don't know how word of our campaign spread so rapidly, but within days every anti-fascist organization in the city—the B'Nai Brith, the NAACP, the Workmen's Circle, etc.—was calling our headquarters to find out what to do next. We first got our resolutions to the auto and steel councils and from there to the CIO Council. A similar fire was being built in the AFL and Railroad Brotherhoods. And the united front of labor was born (the Stalinists

tried to conceal this fact by dubbing it the Mobilization for Democracy). When it actually convened, the united front consisted primarily of the Communist trade union fractions and ours; but we met as the united front of labor, sponsored by the CIO, AFL and the Brotherhoods (now being also the Sisterhoods). And we had the resources of the labor movement—its offices and its loud-speaker trucks.

But now the debate over anti-fascist strategies between us and the Communists had direct substance, not the indirect debate in the respective journals. We proposed that the united front picket the next meeting of the fascists. The Communists proposed only a counter-demonstration. And they won that round. So the fascists had their biggest meeting ever and the anti-fascists met some ten blocks away with Gregory Peck and other celebrities gracing the stage. We built this meeting despite our differences over strategy. And it was a huge success but it didn't accomplish its goal. So at the next meeting our policy won the day and a picket line was scheduled. Twenty thousand picketed. The police had its biggest mobilization ever. But the fascists didn't meet. Then Smith left town for greener pastures. But the precedent had been set. Wherever he went the labor movement organized the picket lines—in Chicago, Detroit, etc. And Smith's usefulness to the bourgeoisie was over. That bourgeois experiment in racist hate was stopped dead.

Our minority in the SWP was convinced that the majority had been right and the majority was convinced that doubts should never be permitted to determine policy. Every single member of our small organization contributed to this tremendous victory—the minority no less than the majority. And when it was over and we celebrated, packed solidly in our headquarters with the union sound trucks parked outside, we sang Solidarity Forever at the top of our lungs. Many years later I heard from a source that should know that the Communist workers told their bureaucrats that they would never again refuse to collaborate with Trotskyists. At last we were beginning to break down the Stalinist wall of lies that kept Communist workers divided from us in the working class.

On a small scale we had demonstrated the possibility of achieving a united front, despite political differences, to fight fascist aggression. Imagine how different the history of this

century would have been had Hitler met with such forces in 1932.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another action in this anti-Smith fight, not mentioned in this letter, should be mentioned here because it had a lot to do with subsequent policy in our anti-fascist strategy:

Smith was scheduled to speak at a Los Angeles high school. The students did two things: they demanded that the mayor revoke the permit and they went on strike. We moved in to support the student strikes (two schools). But we did so expressing our disagreement with their demand on the mayor. "Don't look to the government to defeat fascists," we said. "The mayor will only deny us our right to use our public facilities. The defeat of fascism is our responsibility. You already know that as shown by your strike action." The leaders of the high school strikes were expelled, or suspended, from school. And we had to mount a campaign to get them reinstated. We won very quickly and then faced the problem of convincing the youth to return to school. They were enjoying the unscheduled holiday.

Later on, in the Sixties, this opposition to demanding violation of civil liberties was transformed by the SWP into *defending* the civil liberties of the fascists, along with the American Civil Liberties Union. I don't blame the ACLU. Civil liberties are its business. And we could always count on them to defend us when ours were threatened. But fighting fascism is ours. And in my view, to defend the civil liberties of fascists is to defend their "right" to advocate genocide, or at least to malign, insult and threaten racial and religious minorities. This is *not* a civil right. That is why we have a right to prevent them from meeting, certainly a violation of their right to assemble. The majority, let alone a minority—no one has a right to demean, slander, intimidate and threaten any minority, let alone urge another holocaust. That is an absolute limitation on the "rights" of a majority. No one can suppress prejudice. That is something that must be debated. Only education will eradicate that. But threat to the existence of any minority is not tolerable. All minorities have a right to live without fear.

No general formula can be served up as a guide as to how to proceed in any particular situation. Strategy and tactics must flow out of the concrete needs of the moment which will always vary. But neither should any generalization *preclude* a course of action.

For contributions, or for comments,  
agreeable or otherwise, write to:

Myra Tanner Weiss  
Onward Press  
P.O.B. 30054-0101  
New York, NY 10011

Response promised.