

COME OUT FIGHTING

The Newspaper of the Lavender & Red Union



SPONTANEITY VS. CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP

DOES LA NEED A BAGL*?

*BAY AREA GAY LIBERATION

Throughout the history of the working class movement a struggle has raged between the reformists and the revolutionaries as to the relationship of the spontaneous movement on the part of the masses to conscious highly organized leadership.

What is the difference between spontaneity and conscious leadership? Spontaneous struggle on the part of the masses or some segment of the masses is an immediate response to oppressive conditions. The spontaneous movement does not grasp what is at the root of the problem, the economic base of society, but only strikes out at manifestations of these conditions.

In What is to Be Done Lenin says, "But there is spontaneity and spontaneity." He is referring in the first case to the spontaneous destruction of machinery by workers in Russia in the later part of the 19th century and in the second case to a later period of strikes which included definite demands and better planning.

"While the riots were simply revolts of the oppressed, the systematic strikes represented the class struggle in embryo, but only in embryo. Taken by themselves, these strikes were simply trade union struggles, but not yet Social-Democratic(ed, communist) struggles. They testified to the awakening antagonism between workers and employers, but the workers were not, and could not be, conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system, i.e., theirs was not yet Social-Democratic consciousness. In this sense, the strikes of the nineties, in spite of the enormous progress they represented as compared with the riots, remained a purely spontaneous movement."

This is analogous to the Stonewall riots and the Gay Liberation Fronts that developed after it that were the "class struggle in embryo." Bay Area Gay Liberation which has up until recently attracted large numbers of Gay left-

ists to its banner is an attempt to recapture the historic moment that was the Gay Liberation Front - an organization to harness the spontaneous desire of the masses of Gay people to fight their oppression. The history of the GLF and every other hitherto spontaneous movement is that unless revolutionary leadership emerges to guide them they either move to the right or they wither away. The anti-war movement was successful in bringing millions into the

streets to protest the government's policy and yet the legacy of this movement is small. Even before the war ended the movement began to wither away.

The L&RU has consistently put forward that our chief goal is to function as a revolutionary vanguard in the Gay community, to intervene in the mass movement but at the same time seeking to offer com-

munist leadership to it. Bay Area Gay Liberation on the other hand is an amalgam of radicals who organized themselves to fight against Gay oppression on a mass basis.

The L&RU on the one hand is a democratic-centralist organization which has the fullest possible freedom of discussion internally but has complete unity of action externally. BAGL on the other hand is open

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Sum Up

STONEWALL '76

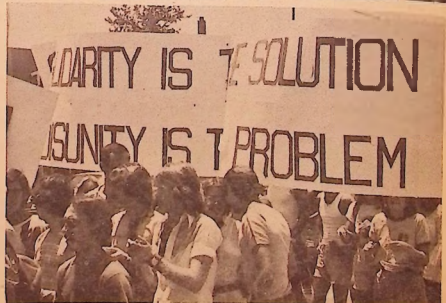
A PROTEST AGAINST 200 YEARS OF GAY OPPRESSION

Stonewall '76 was a modest success. Earlier on the L&RU stated that we considered the primary purpose of Stonewall to "consolidate the strength of the militant wing of the movement, to assert our leadership and to raise political consciousness." We saw as secondary "outreach" and attracting "as many new people as possible." We feel Stonewall was successful in attracting the most progressive sector of the Gay community to participate in the committee and to come out for the events. We were somewhat disappointed however, in the quantity and the quality of the response we received from the community.

THE EVENTS

The Union had said that if Stonewall brought out 250 people to the political/cultural evening(p/c e) and 400 people to the march we would consider the coalition successful in this regard. We did attract about that many people to the march even though we probably would have attracted 400 people to the march (250 attended march). But as

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STONEWALL '76

continued from pg. 1

we approached both events, as we began to pull things together, buoyed by the strength and momentum developing in Stonewall many of us had upped our expectations. We projected our own excitement onto the community.

The p/c e, march and rally were marked by strong collective enthusiasm on the part of the coalition. The politics rose to the level of revolutionary class consciousness which involves an understanding of the true roots of our oppression, our identity as workers and an understanding of the capitalist class as our enemy. The decision to develop the p/c e organically out of the coalition helped maximize the growth of the people on the committee. Our consciousness was reflected in the speeches, the selections of poetry and songs, in the skit, etc. The unity developed in the coalition translated itself into a strong collective effort that resulted in a program which was successful both artistically and politically.

EARLIER CRITICISM

At the May 11th meeting of the Committee to Build Stone-

wall '76 the L&RU presented a paper which concluded that Stonewall was headed for a fiasco unless it corrected several serious mistakes. We harshly criticized the subjectivism being manifested by people. An important turnabout began at the May 11th meeting. We began to get down to business. The overall needs of the coalition began to take precedence over the needs of groups and individuals within it. We began to raise the level of political discussion that was taking place in the Committee, and the committee showed a willingness to subject itself to the proven leadership of the Lavender and Red Union.

Many people in the coalition learned important lessons about the nature of criticism and political struggle growing out of this turn of the coalition. People saw that mistakes must be exposed and corrected. People must not be paralyzed by embarrassment over past mistakes. Past mistakes will be buried by future successes. It is only people who refuse to open themselves up to criticism, who are only concerned about the way they will look that are condemned to repeating these mistakes.

This turn of the coalition created new contradictions. Whereas, L&RU's leadership was being largely ignored before the May 11th meeting it became fetishized after it. It suddenly seemed that no work could be done without consulting L&RU and the leadership of L&RU in particular. Rather than power and authority circulating throughout the coalition it all seemed to move

toward the center and to exclude those who were furthest from it.

In the abstract we should be able to receive and digest any criticism no matter in what spirit it is given. But in reality if we have a real interest in helping people to change and grow we must be sensitive. We must deliver criti-



DOES LA NEED A

continued from pg. 1

to anyone, has no unified political or overall strategy.

It is in the very nature of the mass movement and the communist movement to come in waves, to go through highs and lows. The difference, however, is that a revolutionary vanguard is guided by a theory, by an overall plan for bringing about social change. In periods of restricted mass activity an organization like the L&RU or to an even larger extent a revolutionary party can use these intervals to strengthen itself, organizationally and theoretically.

BAGL includes a great many radicals and even communists but this does not alter the fact that BAGL does not educate the masses of people or even Gay people themselves that the only way for them to achieve their liberation is through socialist revolution. BAGL is not helping to develop socialist revolutionaries. At best an organization like BAGL can bring people to the point of having an interest in radicalism or maybe even in socialism but it can bring them

no further which ultimately brings about demoralization.

This article is provoked by discussions that grew up in the Committee to Build Stonewall '76, the militant celebration of the anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. Many people feel that LA needs an organization like BAGL. They feel that there is a need for an organization apart from the L&RU or coalitions such as Stonewall to coordinate mass Gay liberation activity in LA and to give displaced Gay radicals a place to be involved. The Union takes a strong position against Gay communists taking a leading role in bringing such an organization into existence, for the following reasons:

1) While the emergence of an LA based group along the lines of BAGL might be desirable in terms of the opportunity it would provide to advance the struggle for democratic rights and the opportunity it would provide to communists to organize, it is not the prime work of communists to instigate the mass movement. If some independent (non-communist) force brought such a group into existence then it would

be the obligation of communists to seek to give revolutionary leadership to it. But the primary task of communists in general, must be to bring Marxism to the workers and in particular in this era to build a vanguard party.

2) The existence of an organization like the L&RU and BAGL are both expressions of the political exile which Gay people suffer. The necessity for autonomous organizations whose sole constituency is among Gays speaks to the fact that there are no other organizations who are willing to fight aggressively for the liberation of Gay people. It also speaks to the fact that Gay radicals and Gay communists have been denied the fullest participation in the overall class struggle. The L&RU has not given as much attention to the struggle in the Gay community as we have because we believe this to be the most important work that needs to be done. We have always emphasized the importance of trade union work. We have been so active in the Gay community because there was no other forum that we could effectively intervene in.

3) The situation in LA is nothing like SF. The political milieu, in general, in LA is more reactionary than San Francisco. The environment in SF is conducive to the formation of a group like BAGL. SF is a haven for displaced radicals. The whole political power structure is geared to granting reforms which are the fuel that groups such as BAGL are propelled by. In LA on the other hand bringing such an organization into existence, drumming up interest in it and maintaining it would require a great deal of energy.

If we educate the workers in socialism that will bring with it mass uprisings against particularly oppressive aspects of capitalism itself. On the other hand if we only encourage the workers to rise up for immediate demands they will never be educated to the need for socialist revolution.

Of course it is easier to fight for immediate demands. It is difficult for a multifaceted movement without common leadership, or a vanguard party not to fall

isrs in such a manner that
 ey can be heard. Many of
 e criticisms given in the
 alition smack of elitism
 d one-up-personship. Few
 us can accept criticism
 at seems to have an edge
 it that is saying we were
 upid for having made the
 stake in the first place.

ILDCARE
 On of the more serious mis-

akes made in the planning for
 the Stonewall events was our
 neglect of childcare. This
 showed a callousness to the
 needs of people with children
 who are excluded from partici-
 pation in the struggle because
 of responsibility for their
 children. It is a bourgeois
 notion that children are prop-
 erty and therefore the respon-
 sibility of their owners. From
 a revolutionary perspective

the care of children and of
 all people is part of the col-
 lective responsibility of
 society.

OBJECTIFICATION

Another backward tendency
 was manifested in the sexual
 politics of the coalition. The
 fact that the coalition was
 all Gay and predominately male
 created an arena for acting
 out sexual objectification.
 Sexual attractiveness creates
 hates and have nots. The fir-
 tations and instant relation-
 ships which grew up with
 Stonewall served to establish
 an ad hoc communication net-
 work where sexual attractive-
 ness was the primary basis.
 Those people who were not seen
 as prospective sex partners
 were excluded even in cases
 where they were doing more
 work than others who were a
 part of this unofficial com-
 munication network. If you
 were not sleeping with or
 otherwise relating with the
 "right" people you would
 probably only be clued in to
 the broadest outlines of what
 was happening in the coaliti-
 on.

CONCLUSION

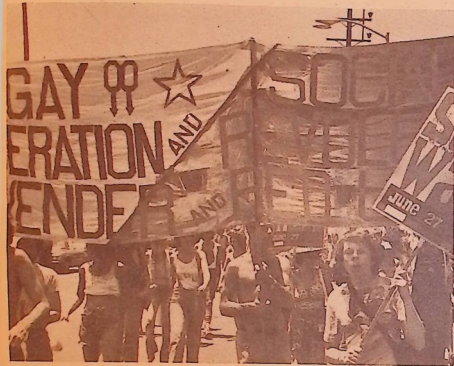
In the last two years the
 organized core group of people
 who are willing to work for a
 revolutionary program within
 the Gay Liberation movement in
 LA has increased by quantum
 leaps. But the mass of people
 who are willing to support us
 has not kept pace. This con-
 tradiction was most glaring at
 the political/cultural evening
 where there was a big gap be-
 tween the audience and the com-
 mittee. A tremendous amount of
 time and energy was devoted by
 this committee to bringing out
 a relatively small, and not

always so enthusiastic, group
 of people. We must learn for
 the future that we will
 actually be addressing our-
 selves to a limited audience
 unless events intervene to
 change that. We can expect the
 phenomena of the growth of a
 more and more solid, committed
 progressive vanguard without a
 very large following, to con-
 tinue.

The Stonewall Riots and the
 Gay Liberation Front that grew
 out of it represented an his-
 toric moment. GLF represented
 a spontaneous upsurge brought
 about by the repression of the
 state and the general state of
 social upheaval created by the
 war in Vietnam. The historic
 moment that was Stonewall can-
 not be recaptured. It is ap-
 propriate to remember it, to
 commemorate it, and to cele-
 brate it but it is neither
 possible nor desirable to res-
 trect it.

The original GLF, while it
 was far to the left of the
 present reformist movement, was
 an anarchic, eclectic mass
 without revolutionary leader-
 ship or a program. A mass
 movement without revolutionary
 leadership is like a chicken
 with its head cut off. The
 biggest political lesson that
 L&RU takes away from Stone-
 wall is the need for a rev-
 olutionary workers party to
 lead all aspects of the strug-
 gle for freedom.

It was not enough in '69 nor
 is it enough in '76 to simply
 build the movement for Gay
 rights. We must build the
 movement for socialist rev-
 olution - a movement which
 subjects itself to the leader-
 ship of a communist vanguard.
 (From a paper presented at
 the final meeting of the
 Committee to Build Stonewall
 '76.)



BAGL?

to reformism. It is dif-
 cult for individuals or
 all groups to see how ed-
 ucating a few individuals or
 filling a few newspapers could
 be multiplied into a
 worldwide socialist revolution.

it is easier to fight for
 paltry reforms which give
 immediate results. But
 this has nothing to do
 with communism and this
 alone has no potential to
 overthrow capitalism.

L&RU SPEAKS OUT ON FREEDOM

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE LAVENDER AND RED UNION AT THE STONEWALL '76 POLITICAL AND CULTURAL EVENING

Since this is the bicenten-
 nial year and supposedly the
 celebration of our freedom, and
 since certain members of the
 Gay movement have seen fit to
 estow upon us a Gay bicenten-
 nial celebration, the L&RU
 wants to address itself to
 freedom: what it is, what
 it isn't and how to get it.

In capitalist America the
 ain freedom we have is the
 freedom to sell our labor. Of
 course we also have the free-
 dom not to sell our labor
 which is also called the free-
 dom to starve. We have free-
 om of movement, but there is
 no place we can go in this
 country where we will not be
 exploited and oppressed. We
 supposedly have freedom of
 assembly, speech, press, life,
 liberty and the pursuit of

happiness, but this should not
 be confused with the freedom
 to control our lives or to
 change anything or with the
 freedom to be happy.

In this bicentennial year
 freedom must be packaged, mar-
 keted, distributed and adver-
 tised like egg substitutes, imi-
 tation mayonnaise, deodorants
 and non-dairy toppings. We
 must be reminded we are free
 lest we forget.

The people of this country,
 women and men, adults, chil-
 dren, Blacks, whites, Brown,
 Asian, Indian, Gay and non-
 gay everyone is a prisoner of
 necessity and of scarcity. We
 suffer from a scarcity of mat-
 erial things like good food
 and good housing and decent

health care. We suffer from
 a scarcity of creative out-
 lets, of physical affection,
 of emotional nurturing, of in-
 tellectual stimulation, but
 most of all we suffer from a
 scarcity of freedom. No one can
 be truly free until that scar-
 city is eliminated. While
 there is scarcity there must
 be a state apparatus to decide
 who will get and who will not.
 The whole course of human his-
 tory has been a process of
 conquering the forces of
 nature in order to bring about
 this freedom from need. But
 society has reached a point in
 its development where there is
 a contradiction between further
 growth-the elimination of scar-
 city-and the ownership of the
 means of production by a small
 group of capitalists. There-

fore there is no way we can
 talk about freedom in an imper-
 ialist society because we can-
 not be free until we are free
 of profit and profiteers.

To gain our freedom Gay
 people must fight for our
 rights. And do it in such a
 way that makes it clear to all
 who will look that we can only
 achieve Gay Liberation through
 the whole course of human his-
 torical revolution.

We must overthrow the re-
 actionary leadership of the
 Gay Liberation movement who
 seek to deliver us into the
 hands of our oppressors.

We must work along with all
 other sectors of our class to
 build a party which can lead
 the working class to victory.



ON THE ELECTIONS

COME OUT FIGHTING!

the newspaper of the Lavender and Red Union - a Gay liberation/communist organization

Lavender & Red Union
PO Box 3503 L.A. 90028

The 1976 presidential primaries have caused a great many self-appointed "leaders of the Gay liberation movement to focus their energy on some meagre kind of political concession from the Democratic party. Although from differing political backgrounds, these mis-leaders have been building a drive to receive concessions in the name of the Gay community.

From Troy Perry of the Metropolitan Community Church, to the ever-present political chameleon Morris Kight, to the "all-american" publisher of the *ADVOCATE*, David Goodstein there has been a race to assure the Gay vote for hopeful Jimmy Carter. All that the Democratic Gays were hoping for was a Gay rights plank in the party platform. Morris Kight would have loved nothing better than to have presented the plank to the convention - but the Democrats would have none of it and to ensure no embarrassment, no Gay rights plank was included.

There were demonstrations by Gay people outside Madison Square Garden in New York while the convention was going on - basically calling on the Democrats for some kind of inclusion in the bid for the presidential election.

There has been little or no push for recognition by the Republican Party. The Republicans, at this time, are showing a conservative face.

In reality the parties are just different sides of the same coin. Both party's programmes are geared to demanding "faith" in God, electoral politics and "smooth" racism. Neither offer any real alternative to the crises of capitalism. Neither can offer any substantial change for the specially oppressed sectors of American workers (Gays, Blacks, women, etc.) much less offer any solution to these forms of oppression. And above all neither bring into question the basis

for all oppression and exploitation in these United States - the system of private ownership of the means of production - the capitalist system.

In essence both parties represent the capitalist class and neither question its rule over the masses in this country. The self-appointed "leaders" of the working class - the union bureaucrats - play one side against the other to have a greater amount of political clout rather than achieve an independent role for the workers. The same is true for specially oppressed sectors of the masses like Gay people, Chicanos, Women, etc. What all the supposed leaders of the oppressed do in the end is to link the interests of the oppressed to the capitalist class. This in actuality is political suicide.

The independence of the proletariat is essential for any kind of fundamental change. Marx put forward that the proletariat must consistently maintain its independence - even when it seems that a more reactionary force might win. In Address to the Communist League he says, "In this connection they must not allow themselves to be seduced by such arguments of the democrats as, for example, that by so doing they

are splitting the Democratic party and making it possible for reactionaries to win. The ultimate intention of all such phrases is to dupe the proletariat. The advance which the proletarian party is bound to make by such independent action is infinitely more important than the disadvantage that might be incurred by the presence of a few reactionaries in the representative body."

The reason these two parties maintain hegemony over the masses is that there is no alternative. What is essential is that an independent party of the proletariat be constructed to lead the struggle against all forms of oppression and against the capitalist system. There is no actual alternative in the elections - no such thing as "lesser evilism."

A proletarian vanguard party must be built so the working class has a voice independent of the capitalist class. This revolutionary party's emphasis would not be on the bourgeois elections but its historic role will be to bring the science of Marxism-Leninism to the class and educate it to its historic role; the overthrow of capitalism, forming its own class rule and the establishment of the classless society of socialism.

-----BECOME A SUSTAINER-----

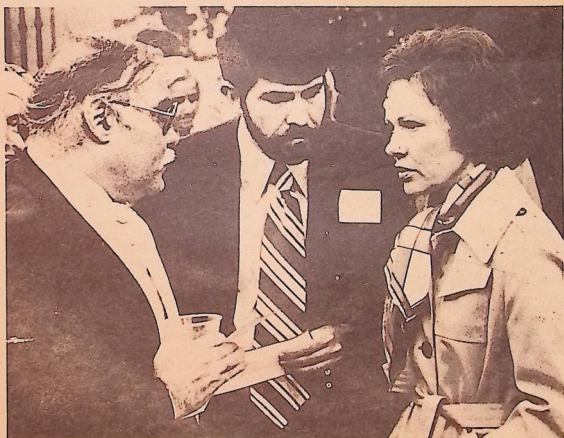
Help us to continue to spend our time and energy in the struggle and not in constant fund raising efforts by becoming a monthly sustainer.

-----LAVENDER & RED STAR PINS-----

Enamel star pins - \$1.25.

CONFUSED?

In recent months we have been alternating between single monthly issues of *Come Out Fighting* (#9 and #4) and double bi-monthly issues (#10&11 and #12&13). This has created confusion in people's minds. To clarify, we publish double issues because we have an abundance of material at one time or because we wish to skip over a period of time in which we anticipate a lot of other work. A single issue consists of one sheet of paper (4 pages) and a double issue is two sheets of paper (8 pages).



Rosalyn Carter, Jimmy's wife, discussing community issues with Dr. Newton Deiler (left) and Rev. Troy Perry (center).

NewsWast May 28 - June 11, 1976

Rev. Troy Perry:

"I am strongly supporting Jimmy Carter because of his

commitment to civil rights for all people and because of his opposition to non-job related employment discrimination."



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A GAY LIBERATION/COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION

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