

FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION WHICH APPROACH

MARXISM OR FEMINISM

Once again, as has happened so many times in history, a progressive mass movement, with tremendous revolutionary potential is in danger of being co-opted by the establishment.

Women's Liberation is a giant fact of political life in America today. The ruling class is well aware of this, and just as it has done to other movements, it is trying to turn it around and divert and dissipate its energies.

The ruling class is not seriously opposed to a feminist movement as such. But it is opposed to a women's liberation movement which sees the ruling class as the basic source of its oppression. The difference is a profound one.

Feminism teaches that the primary cause of women's oppression lies in her relationship to man; man as the oppressor, woman as the oppressed.

Marxism teaches that the source of women's oppression lies in the class structure of capitalist society and that male supremacy, like white supremacy, is a principal instrument of the ruling class to retain its domination.



All Sisters?

Feminists say that all other forms of political, economic and social struggle should be subordinated to the struggle against male supremacy. It therefore follows from this that all women must unite against all men; that, for example, Golda Meir, Indira Ghandi, Madame Binh, 'Happy' Rockefeller, Pat Nixon, and Afeni Shakur are all sisters. Of course it is true that all women suffer from male chauvinism. But is this a sufficient bond for all these women to struggle in common against male supremacy first, and subordinate all other struggles to this. The utter ridiculousness of such a notion should be apparent to all.

Is it not true that class oppression (of which racial oppression is the most virulent) divides these

women far more than their sex unites them? In any case it is hardly likely that Pat Nixon or 'Happy' Rockefeller are apt to subordinate their struggle against the oppressed in the interest of fighting male chauvinism.

Many feminists will certainly grant that this is true, but they say if we take a class approach we necessarily subordinate our struggle to the struggle against class oppression. Our struggle will then be last again.

Marxists say that it is false to counterpose the Women's Liberation struggle to the general class struggle. One does not have to be subordinate to the other. The two struggles are intimately connected.

Women's Liberation struggle is a political struggle, and every political struggle is at bottom, according to Marx, a class struggle. It only remains to unmask the real enemy—the ruling class—the class that holds all the levers of power and sources of domination.

For a steadily increasing number of women, the struggle for Women's Liberation is the paramount struggle in the same way that the Black Liberation struggle is paramount for the Black people.

We certainly all agree that a consistent effort must be made to develop it, pursue it, broaden it and deepen it on all levels.

But because feminism does not focus on class, its followers can adapt to the system, can be taken over by it and can become a prey to racism.

Marxism is an ideological weapon that enables us to fight against the system of class oppression and exploitation, which generates and perpetuates male chauvinism, subordination of women as well as white supremacy. Each oppressed grouping must strike its blow for freedom so the imperialist monster can be toppled and freedom for all advanced.

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