

Women came to Atlanta the 10-13 of August with guitars and wooden flutes and shirts, skirts, jackets, pants and yards of colored threads and embroidery needles stashed in little tin boxes. Women from Weather, YIP, YAWF and Mayday, women's gay groups and liberation collectives and others from no groups at all came, wanting and needing to be with other women, to exalt in shared womanhood, to touch with and know one another more fully, to share ideas, thoughts, skills, feelings, to deal with community interests such as women's health clinics and collectives, women's printshops and women's garages. Women also came wanting to discuss and discover ways women can be strong together and trusting that strength, live it and act on it. Other concerns not to be separated from these were the need and desire in some women to develop a political perspective and thru a women's viewpoint beyond the insufficient and partial understanding of the Vietnam struggle. Some women came to understand the military, political and diplomatic aspects of the situation, wanting to bring understanding and appreciation to the Vietnamese culture into the anti-war movement's perspective and wanting to analyze the forces of racism, imperialism, sexism and capitalism as those that create oppression and genocide in Indochina. Women also thought there was a need to change perspective from an anti-war movement to a revolutionary movement and wanting too, to fuse our political experience with our personal experience as women.

With the evening designs, needs and desires and thru the days to be there, there developed a sense of the conflict shops and... Meanwhile, in the morning, we were caring and playing with our children and at the Free Baptist Church other men were preparing food for our dinner. Friday, in a workshop on the struggle attended mostly by women, some gay men in the form of the workshop was dominated by women. One sister who was so far apart, how not many were talking and sharing information. We talked about this and began to realize how swimming and playing and dancing and exalting cannot be excluded from meetings and how proposals and

needles and crochet hooks moving swiftly, precisely. In the small group discussions we talked about gayness: what it is to be gay, to be straight; how we are kept in oppression from being gay and working together with straight women... The workshop was a main workshop for gay men and straight men came to this workshop, the gay men felt they shouldn't teach about sensitivity and feeling others man's without being uptight. The straight men felt this was necessary also, and they broke down into groups of two, just touching and feeling without any heavy rhetoric or any type of talking. While this went on,

analysis cannot be excluded from swimming, dancing and rapping together. We all felt the need to share together, to teach, to encourage and to initiate new ways... The workshop was a main workshop for gay men and straight men came to this workshop, the gay men felt they shouldn't teach about sensitivity and feeling others man's without being uptight. The straight men felt this was necessary also, and they broke down into groups of two, just touching and feeling without any heavy rhetoric or any type of talking. While this went on,

whatever the actions this fall we must emphasize the 7-point Peace Proposal, by educating people about it, encouraging people to recognize it and act on it, as the only honorable and reasonable way to end the war yet proposed. As Friday night approached and the straight men were arriving and the MD Conference (MayDay/Male Dominated) was beginning, the women felt the need to form a caucus to enable them to continue meeting -- we had much more to share and to create, and new songs to sing. It became clear that an inter-communal women's gathering should be held this Winter during one of the vacations for a week to thoroughly discuss in workshops: health care and the establishing of women's health clinics, women's printshops, history of the women's movement, how the Vietnamese deal with racism, cuba, and other revolutionary movements in Latin America, on building strong women working/living collectives, on establishing a revolutionary party that deals with us as an attitude in us and as a destructive force in this society, on leadership -- what is it, what are correct methods of leadership, how do we as women handle leadership. In the meantime there will be a conference on Health in late September-early October in North Carolina. Midwifery, forming health clinics, etc. will be talked about and taught about. Watch for more thorough information.



Free MayDay

A conference among gay people was held at the same time as the women's conference in Atlanta. Many groups representatives and people attended: the Purple Star Tribe from Texas, the GLF from Washington, D.C., the Psychedelic Soapbox from Detroit and began their gatherings by freeing a gay brother from an Atlanta jail who had been arrested for dancing the streets in drag and continued to gather while trying to free the Mayday men from their oppressive selves.

We talked about straight men -- "Being around straights makes us straight. We can only change together with other gays by going swimming or sitting in meetings? But sitting in meetings is too intellectual, no practice. To struggle over playing is really important for coming together in a natural state

but how do we deal with the outside world through struggle, do we only deal with what's outside among ourselves? " We talked about contradiction -- "We attack the war of war by dealing with those who have the privilege to justify it and talk about themselves. The outside is not affected from the front it. " "I feel that the conference was very helpful to the gay men because the struggles that we fight against ourselves very quietly and successfully. I feel that not too much rhetoric came down in the conference, when the so-called straight men were supposed to have a right that when people, especially gay men began to deal with their own selves and began to deal with their own brothers, they found themselves and then acted less oppressively to

the gay men and to the women. I hope that the next conference will not be as racist as this one was. I do hope more Third World people begin to relate to the conferences and I do hope that the straight white males begin to relate to inviting and relating to the black people and the Third World. " Coming Out Workshop For... which men and straight men came to this workshop, the gay men felt they shouldn't teach about sensitivity and feeling others man's without being uptight. The straight men felt this was necessary also, and they broke down into groups of two, just touching and feeling without any heavy rhetoric or any type of talking. While this went on,

the gay men left and went into another room to talk about the vibes that we had gotten from our brothers. Some of them were good, some of them were bad. Later we went back into the room and asked our brothers who were having a sensitivity group among themselves about how they felt. Most of them said they felt more free to relate to another man as a human being instead of as a sex object or instead of having to use a woman as a sex object. Most of the brothers learned how to hug and kiss another man as a human being without feeling uptight about how the so-called society had taught us how wrong it is to hold and kiss another man. I feel that this played a very important part in the conference. This brought people closer. But there were still some bad vibes about this workshop that the gay males had. Some people felt that this was forced by gay males, to make the straight men become gay. But the brothers who were in the sensitivity group (I don't want to call them straight) said, "It was good for our heads". They felt they had gained a whole new life out of this. I hope someday that people will have more of these groups the way that our brothers did. I don't think our brothers were the only people who gained something from this workshop. I feel that the gay men also received a lot of good things and a lot of good feelings. So you see it was not only a consciousness raising for our brothers, but also for the gay brothers.

