The following three pages are devoted to consideration of some papers received recently from the Southern Female Rights Union and a draft constitution of the Red Women's Detachment, a part of the Marxist-Leninist Feminist Movement. We are particularly interested in the role of the Red Women's organizational principles, the advisibility of willing a vanguard party into existence, or many other questions about women in a structure of a Marxist-Leninist party. We are interested in comments from other groups about the Red Women and the issues they raise.

While our internal criticism has been carried on continually, the growth of women's liberation has been happening in other groups in our eagerness to spread the word and promote consciousness as women. Some of the issues we should be speaking about have barely been touched in Ain't I A Woman, although they have been considered extensively in cell meetings and dispatch by the General Assembly Detachment which has been missing from the paper. One article on "The Lesbian in the Feminist Movement" (issue 2) raised the point that "It is a tool of the ruling class to say that the women's movement and then to turn to give their roller, their oppressor." The movement itself has never been a homophobia oppression. Red Women have made strong statements about the oppression. It seems to have experienced oppression simply because they don't need men and haven't been 'protected' by being treated as a privileged sex. Both of these statements seem politically wrong. The first because it sees individual men as the cause of oppression and avoids systemic causes; the second because it defines lesbian oppression as an exception to women's oppression. It says that lesbian oppression is political oppression by being exceptions to those things other women experience: lesbian oppression begins where experience begins and then when they give up the 'privileges' of other women. If the source of lesbian oppression is consciousness, then, the church, homosexual relations, say the Red Women's Detachment, were the basis for the existence of those organizations and the predominant form of homosexual relationship under feudalism and imperialism. In the case of feudalism, one man is dominant and one submissive or passive. Accompanying the rise of the feudal state, the sexual relationship under feudalism was the greatest slaughter and oppression of women in history—the witch hunts.

The Red Women's Detachment sees the same thing happening (that is the rise in homosexuality and the increased oppression of women) in contemporary society. They see such relationships as a social phenomenon applied to the Gay Liberation Front. The analogical rise in the oppression of women is what the Red Women's Detachment is afraid will happen if we do not stop the spread of homosexuality. The different patterns of sexual behavior between men and women do not need a definition. The Red Women's Detachment arrives at this conclusion by analyzing the revolutionary potential of the feminist movement. The Red Women's Detachment urges revolutionary feminists to organize themselves for the defense of women's liberation movement because they see Gay Liberation Front as being promoted by the ruling class to destroy the revolutionary potential of the feminist movement. The Red Women's Detachment urges an analysis of GLF by using two different definitions of homosexuality.

The pillar of their argument is an analogy between feudal times and present day Imperialist society. According to the Red Women's Detachment two things are common to both periods: The rise in homosexuality begins in the struggle of women. They say that in pre-feudal times homosexuality was not an issue. In pre-feudal days, it was a social phenomenon. It came to mean the social orientation of men in the organizations that sprang up at that time—the guilds, the knightly order of the headmaster towards his pupil, the army officer towards his subordinate, the boss towards his worker, the master towards his pupil, the husband towards his wife, the rich towards his poorer neighbor, the rich towards his poorer neighbor, the rich towards his poorer neighbor. They point out that the same thing is happening (that is the rise in homosexuality and the increased oppression of women) in contemporary society. They see such relationships as a social phenomenon applied to the Gay Liberation Front.
rendered by the oppressed to the oppressor.* The Red Women's Detachment concludes that since all these relationships are homosexual (social relations between males) in this society the dominant/submissive and since they are all based on one partner passing their labor force on to the other, these homosexual relationships are based on the class consciousness of this society and the homosexuality serves either one class or another.

We believe even begin to look at the logic of their argument, I want to know why they have inserted into a series of relations that are homosexual in the social sense (auntie/younger men) if the Red Women's Detachment has decided that word "homosexual" stands for a certain social relationship, then why are sexual innuendos and tirades sprinkled throughout the paper. For example, the following sentence which looks like it was taken from a Victorian textbook of sex education: "All of the following sentence which looks into a series of relations that I want to know why they have inserted into a series of relations that are homosexual in the social sense (auntie/younger men)"

People obtain power and worth in a society according to their relationship to the means of production. The husband/wife relationship can be easily analyzed from this perspective. The husband possesses a relation to the means of production (on whatever level) but the wife has none—her labor is considered non-productive and she is not paid for it. Therefore, there is material basis for saying that the husband wields power over the wife, as master to her as she is slave to him, and thus they consequently have a class relationship—being in a class over a class. The relations of the other couples in the series to the means of production are not the same as the husband/wife because unlike the wife all the others (with the temporary exception of the student) possess a relation to the means of production. Any domination by one member of the couple over the other as in the army officer/ orderly for example, is not based simply on class. Or to put it another way, the dominant/submissive roles they play aren't based on their relation to the means of production. The dynamics of all those relationships come from a number of different sources in the structure of society. These should be explored—not just painlessly and implicitly dismissed as class. Unpaid labor is not rendered by one partner to the dominant one in each of the cases. Thus it can't be said that those homosexual relations or presently Gay Liberation Front are based on the class contradictions in society and serve one class or another.

It is true as the Red Women's Detachment points out that the bourgeois media views gay liberation and women's liberation as part of the sexual revolution and thereby uses them to exploit women into thinking that in order to be free they must put out. But just because the media uses gay liberation and women's liberation in a counter-revolutionary way doesn't mean that they are in fact counter-revolutionary.

One last point that the Red Women's Detachment makes about Gay Liberation Front is that it is "based on the reactionary line that passivity, submission and masochism are like it was taken from a Victorian textbook of sex education: "All of the following sentence which looks into a series of relations that I want to know why they have inserted into a series of relations that are homosexual in the social sense (auntie/younger men)"

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The Red Women's Discussion of Feminism, Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation creates a dichotomy between the necessity of waging an armed struggle and the necessity for desired cultural changes, many of which women's liberation has been concerned with. Red Women see to be saying that waging a cultural revolution is to wage a counter-revolution to the armed struggle for the creation of a socialist/communist society. They see no hope for Gay Liberation to be anything but counter-revolutionary and they view feminism and women's liberation as divided into two camps. The revolutionary feminists ally themselves with the proletarian women to wage an armed struggle. Women's oppression they define at the point of work, at the point of production, and in terms of masculine tasks. The Women's Liberation Movement, as they see it, is a narrow political reformism, "...that propels to tack on an extra point or two to a world already long accepted." I question their conception of the women's liberation movement as one they can exemplify by electoral campaigns waged by the Socialist-Workers Party/Young Socialist Alliance. Is an electoral campaign waged by the TSA indicative of the women's liberation movement? Most of women's liberation has not spent their time on such obvious examples of American Liberalism, or cooptation. Clearly, the Red Women's Detachment are not dealing with women's liberation but with obvious examples of campaigns waged by others in the name of the rights of women. In this case, a campaign by a group which has not even begun to understand the validity of the issues raised by women's liberation. We have spent time questioning the cultural position of women and in doing this recognize that not only must the labor of women be valued and women be in control of the means of production (along with men) but that certain cultural stereotypes and power relationships be destroyed. A wife is a subordinate, paid or unpaid. Revolutionary feminists, say the Red Women's Detachment, are concerned with the fundamental question of marriage as an institution based on slave labor while women's liberation can see marriage only in terms of rights and legal provisions. Again, the Red Women have drawn a false dichotomy, implying that women's liberation simply wants to make marriage a more equitable relationship. We also see the need to do away with marriage. Doing away with marriage, then, is a first step to the real battle unless of course we believe in the cliche of the inevitable post-revolutionary utopia theory in which the household work of women has never been related to the means of production? Do women become part of the working class by magically passing into the labor force? In this case, we do not have to do much of anything but train to fight when the inevitable mass revolt of proletarians occurs and be prepared to join them (or lead them). We believe in revolution as not something that just happens, but as something we are bringing about. Some things are probably necessary steps to waging a revolution, for example, day camps and educating releasing them from the sole responsibility for child raising. And we do not accept the bourgeois definition of feminism that would have us content and placid once granted those things we see as necessary for women before the real revolution to take place. We are not interested in working collectively and attacking feminism and hierarchical structures, to question the family structure or to try to understand the role sex plays in our lives as viewed as liberal and reformist. Giving attention to any of this is often seen as a privileged indulgence when there is a revolution to be waged. Usually this criticism comes from leftist men who have lost their typists, but we should treat this criticism differently when it comes from other women. Most of us active in Women's Liberation have questioned our priorities. We want the liberation of all people and have been afraid of the tendency we have to deal with all these issues by proposing personal solutions or fighting for reforms which could be granted under a capitalist society and would benefit an already privileged class of women. We are painfully aware that there is a tendency to forget that the questions we raise do not always speak to the immediate needs of the poor women struggling to exist, not to mention the freedom or time to seek the solutions that many of us find available through class privileges. We want to insist that women in any class have special problems and women in any revolution will have special problems, color aside, but we will not simply disappear by defining women and blacks as workers.