

## CONTENTS

- \* ABORTION AND HANDICAPPED WOMEN
- \* IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE CRIPPLE POWER MOVEMENT
- \* READING LIST
- \* CECILE'S LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM THE YSA
- \* LETTER TO THE BOSTON BRANCH EXEC

### ABORTION AND HANDICAPPED WOMEN

by Lorraine Maxwell

- (1) Why should abortions be done in hospitals while medical technology has been advanced to the point of having the abortion done safely in a local clinic even after the woman has been pregnant for 12 weeks?
- (2) It has a very bad psychological effect on the woman, especially handicapped women to have to have an abortion in a hospital where she can be psychologically embarrassed and is considered of inferior status.  
  
We handicapped people are not dead vegetables because we also have feeling and passions. I think it would be much better, more economical and less humiliating for women and handicapped women to have abortions performed in licensed clinics and doctor's offices.
- (3) It is important to have a licensed clinic with trained paraprofessionals, or a doctor's office for the protection of the woman.
- (4) Why should we women have to expose our own privacy in performing an abortion in a hospital?
- (5) I think hospitals are just trying to obtain our money and forget our psychological needs.
- (6) I am a Catholic and I am also an unwanted child of my parents. But my mother tried to abort me but she was unsuccessful and so I was born three months premature and I have cerebral palsy. It is no fun to have cerebral palsy as I feel that one is the prisoner of oneself because one just can't move as one pleases.

Here I must stress the importance of ending the growth of an unwanted living organism before it develops into a feeling, human being with the passing of years. If the parents or the woman does not want a twenty-weeks old child or an organism, why force it on her? It will only prove cruel to the child because he is unwanted and will be neglected in the future.

I am a Catholic but my moral code is one of love and compassion for all living people, young and old. I believe that Catholicism should mean love to all mankind. Unknowingly, many Catholics have neglected the to-be child in the womb by not thinking of its future, whether the organism will be looked after in the future. Instead, we blindly say that it is murder to abort any organism which is in the womb. Wake up, all we Catholics and protect and love the unwanted child by terminating its development before it comes to this world, where there are no provisions and love ready for it.

It is very easy to say that "thou shalt not kill" but can we Catholics bear the responsibility of the slow death of an unwanted child? By slow death I mean the psychological effects of lovelessness and cruelty to the unwanted child. And child grows up in a conditions of hatred and bitterness.

I implore you Catholics to open your eyes, to see the future of the unwanted children. Open your hearts to feel. Open your ears to hear and converge your sensitivity with the needs of others instead of judging and condemning them.

- (7) Abortion must be legalized everywhere.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE CRIPPLE POWER MOVEMENT

### WHY CRIPPLE POWER?

The Cripple Power movement arose out of the need for handicapped people to fight our severe oppression under the normal-dominated society in which we live. We recognize that we share a type of oppression which applies to all of us as a group. Learning from the examples of the feminist movement, the gay liberation movement, and the liberation movements of oppressed national minorities, we realize that we must organize ourselves on the basis of our own needs, to fight our own oppression, because if we don't nobody else will do it for us.

### WHO ARE WE?

There are several million totally disabled people in the United States. In 1969, about 3,000,000 people received federal aid because of disability; the categories were 803,000 on Aid to the Totally Disabled (ATD), 80,300 on aid to the blind and 2,076,000 on old-age assistance. In addition, there were about 1,500,000 people in institutions because of physical or mental handicaps or chronic diseases. Another 800,000 were in nursing homes and 1,775,000 people over 55 years of age were receiving health care at home. There are as of May, 1971 240,149 disabled Vietnam veterans. The (so-called) Goodwill Industries employ 18,000 handicapped people. In 1970, 241,390 people were placed in jobs through the Federal-State Rehabilitation Service (FSRS). At least two million people require sheltered or home-bound employment. Total veterans on disability compensation and pension is 3,215,951.

More than a hundred million people in the U.S. have some sort of health problem. Five million people have diabetes, a disease which does not qualify them for any medical aid from the government. Ten years ago, 14,621,000 had diagnosed heart disease, 13,000,000 were suspected of having heart disease; 17,008,000 had definite hypertension (high blood pressure), 16,182,000 had borderline hypertension; 44,072,000 had arthritis. These figures have increased steadily since then. Thirty-two million people wear dentures and 86,000,000 wear corrective lenses. Also, about a quarter of the population is injured each year (50,000,000).

### HOW DO WE RELATE TO THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION?

Obviously, not all of us are conscious revolutionary socialists. In fact, our overdependence upon the most reactionary institutions of capitalist society—the family, the government, the church—tends to make us politically conservative. Our social consciousness, too, is apt to be backwards because we cannot afford to offend anyone. We must constantly depend upon the goodwill of those around us to help us with the everyday needs of survival, anything from transportation to picking up a dropped pen. However, we are docile and conservative out of necessity, not out of complacency. Underneath our smiling exterior there is usually a raging anger at the indignities, dangers and hardships we are forced to suffer in order to survive at all.

As handicapped people we are under fewer illusions than most about the true character of the government and private industry. We know that the typical government definitions of total disability exclude many of us who cannot possibly find work. We know that employers do not hire the handicapped despite the signs you may see in buses. Most of us are used to constant poverty. Too many of us have experienced the prison-like nature of institutions for the physically handicapped and mentally retarded, and the rest of us know about this and sympathize.

The Cripple Power movement is learning that handicapped people are potentially very radical. Our highly developed sense of social cooperation combined with a conscious disillusionment with capitalist society will make us a very enthusiastic revolutionary socialist force.

We realize that as lumpen we will not be the prime movers in making the socialist revolution. In fact, under capitalism we are generally useless and powerless. **THE CRIPPLE POWER MOVEMENT EXISTS TO MAKE SURE THAT WE WILL NOT BE USELESS AND POWERLESS IN A SOCIALIST SOCIETY!**

#### WHAT IS THE CRIPPLE POWER PROGRAM?

The Cripple Power movement will develop demands which seem reasonable and necessary to the crippled community. To win these demands we will have mass demonstrations, pickets, strikes and we will cooperate with existing groups that are fighting for specific legislative reforms.

We will develop a program for consciousness-raising, education, and nation-wide coordination. We will have rap sessions, nutrition classes and exercise classes. We will publish a newsletter and magazine as soon as possible, and intend to write a Handicapped Handbook within a year.

The Cripple Power movement will also deal with the special problems of handicapped females and will relate to other political movements as a constituency.

Our first demonstration will be this spring. We will coordinate it with the anti-war movement, the women's movement, the gay movement, La Raza and anything else that's going on. We will have actions in as many cities as possible, preferably all on the same day. Tentatively, the activities will include teach-ins and a picnic preceded by a march not more than one block long.

Demands which have received support so far deal with transportation, medical care, nutrition and employment.

Probably we will demand free public transportation for handicapped people, half-fare on airplanes and no architectural barriers. There are plenty of precedents for this. For example, nuns, policemen and firemen ride buses for free in San Francisco, and students ride airplanes for half-fare. In Europe and Russia, buses have special seats for pregnant women and disabled war veterans. Successful actions have already been taken against architectural barriers. A blind picket line, with support demonstrations by disabled groups in L.A., succeeded in getting elevators built into the BART (underground train) in San Francisco.

Handicapped people fight constantly to get adequate medical care. Cripple Power's first medical demand will be for free and immediate reconstructive surgery or prosthetics for amputees, including congenital conditions, wherever this would be useful. Other demands will be worked out.

One of our most urgent needs is to have enough money to buy health foods and vitamin and mineral supplements. As handicapped people, we need a better diet than average and almost always our diet is worse than average. Lack of control over our food supply often leads to lack of control over our lives. For example, "innumerable brilliant, fine individuals suffering from epilepsy are literally held prisoners in our degrading mental institutions, and are receiving the most inadequate diet imaginable. Many states still have laws forbidding anyone once diagnosed as an epileptic to marry or drive a car. Yet physicians give antibiotics and diuretics which, by destroying vitamin B<sub>6</sub> and increasing the urinary losses of magnesium, actually induce convulsions. Seizures have also been produced by inadequate baby formulas recommended by pediatricians." (Adelle Davis, Let's Eat Right to Keep Fit, p. 173).

Full employment within our capabilities has long been recognized as a basic need of the handicapped community. We demand that all handicapped workers be paid at least minimum wage, and that we get equal pay for equal work. In 1968, blind shops in California struck successfully for better working conditions, insurance benefits and a more equitable wage scale. Cripple Power will encourage and support further strikes by handicapped workers.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE CRIPPLE POWER MOVEMENT AND TO SEND DONATIONS CONTACT:

Diane Cecile  
27 Norfolk St.  
Roxbury, Mass.  
02119

Howard Segars  
52 Garden St. #4  
Boston, Mass.  
02114

Abby Vincent  
1143 $\frac{1}{2}$  Lucerne Ave.  
Culver City, Calif.  
90230

Lorraine Wong  
Lone Mt. College  
2800 Turk Blvd.  
San Francisco, Calif.  
94118

#### READING LIST

Let's Eat Right To Keep Fit, by Adelle Davis, paperback, Signet W4630, \$1.50, 1970, 334 pp.  
This is the best basic book on nutrition.

Let's Cook It Right, by Adelle Davis, paperback, Signet W4384, \$1.50, 1970, 573 pp.  
After you learn what to eat this is how you should cook it.

Let's Get Well, by Adelle Davis, hardback, Harcourt, Brace & World, \$6.95, 1965, 580 pp.  
If you're already unhealthy you should read this after reading Let's Eat Right To Keep Fit. It covers all common conditions, such as heart trouble, high blood pressure, ulcers, obesity, skin problems, diabetes, arthritis, etc.

Vitamin E for Ailing and Healthy Hearts, by Wilfred E. Shute, M.D. and Harald J. Taub, hardback, Pyramid House, 444 Madison Ave., N.Y.C. 10022, \$6.95, 208 pp.  
This book explains in great detail how to use Vit. E to help prevent the nation's number one cause of death.

Body, Mind and Sugar, by E.M. Abrahamson and A.W. Pezet, Henry Holt & Co., 1951.  
Raw or refined, sugar is sugar, and too much is very bad for you, especially if you have low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) which maybe one out of ten people have, or if you have diabetic tendencies.

Feel Like A Million, by Cathryn Elwood, paperback, Pocket Books, 77320, \$.95, 1970, 366 pp.  
This is another fine nutrition book. It contains rejuvenation diets, among other goodies.

There are many good books on nutrition. Check out your local health foods store.

Stigma, by Erving Goffman, paperback, Spectrum S-73, \$1.95, 1963, 147 pp.  
This is a fairly good book written by a self-designated normal. It contains many good quotations from handicapped writers and references to their works.

I Wanted To See, by Borghild Margarethe Dahl, hardback, The MacMillan Co., 1944, 210 pp.  
This is the autobiography of a blind woman who wanted to be a teacher. Blind people weren't allowed to get teaching certificates so she faked them out for quite a few years. It's very interesting.

"Up From the Butch Trip" (or something like that) by a Gay Feminist,  
The Second Wave of the New Feminism, July, 1971

Committee for the Rights of the Disabled Newsletter, 2992 Pico Blvd., L.A., Calif. 90006, monthly. Information of interest to handicapped people in California.

Pot, by John Rosevear, paperback, Lancer Books, 447 77712-100, \$1.00, 158 pp.  
This is an objective, factual introduction to the use of marihuana. The author is in favor of legalizing pot. There are many other books on the subject. Check out your local head shop.

#### MOVIES & RECORDS

"The Circus" by Charlie Chaplin

"At The Circus," "A Day At The Races," "A Night At The Opera" by the Marx Brothers

"The Clowns" by Fellini

"Horseman" with Omar Sharif

"Tommy" by The Who

CECILE'S LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM THE YSA

Dear friends,

June 16, 1971

I have resigned from the YSA as a result of having been kicked out. This is what happened. The organizer-to-be of the South Boston local came to me and said "they" had irrefutable evidence that I had compromised the YSA on the issue of drugs. I said that's strange, what is the evidence? We're not going to tell you, the organizer said, we want to know if it's true. If what's true? I said. This went on for three days during which I decided that I couldn't stand to be straight any more.

I had already given considerable thought to the drug question so this was not a snap decision. I left the YSA primarily because I am a materialist. I believe that drugs are material like food and air, and just about as important. Possibly when we have good organic food and completely natural air we won't want to ingest any natural plants to feed our heads. Although I doubt it. But from now until then, we have a badly messed up material ecology in which to live, and we must all do what we can to survive in it.

I'm not saying that heads are better than anyone else. I'm saying we're as good as anyone else, that we now suffer oppression all over the world, and that I for one am going to raise the slogan "No revolution without us!" if that ever becomes necessary.

All my research shows, however, that heads are a rapidly increasing minority. Here are two examples of head expansion. 1) up on a mountain in New Hampshire, I met two families out on a picnic with their kids. They looked straight working class except that they were passing a water pipe around. They were life-long New Hampshireites, from some small town. 2) One day I went to a movie. There were soldiers turning on in the back of the theater. I think it's quite clear that masses of people smoke marihuana.

Are people radicalized by smoking marihuana? Yes. Yes. Yes.

They're radicalized the same way women are radicalized when they want to get an abortion. Women don't enjoy meeting criminal elements when we're seeking an abortion, and heads don't enjoy meeting criminal elements when they're trying to find some smoke.

Heads are radicalized the same way that gays are. We both have to hide the real meaning of our lives. We must hide our love or our state of mind, and more and more of us are becoming doubly oppressed and have to hide both.

Heads are radicalized like children. When we're feeling good we want to play, and we realize that the man's system doesn't allow us to play. Many children and most heads don't capitulate. They get mad and become revolutionaries.

Heads are radicalized in Viet Nam.

Finally, heads are radicalized in the ghetto. I don't want to say much about this because I wasn't raised in a ghetto and I don't think I'm a qualified spokesperson. I do know, however, that quite a few Third World people would rather smoke than anything else if it were cheap and legal.

At the very least, we can say that grass is a simple intoxicant similar to alcohol but less damaging to the body. As such, a movement to legalize pot would be a democratic reformist affair which would not interest overworked revolutionaries. At the most, we can say that turning on is a massive illegal seizure of material wealth by youth and as such should be supported just as surely as if millions of people suddenly started demanding control of their food supply.

Sooner or later we will have to deal with the question, is there a difference between stoned consciousness and straight consciousness? If there is, is one good and the other bad? And if this is true can the two states of mind coexist peacefully? I think there are significant differences between straight identity and stoned identity. I think the ruling class knows this unconsciously, and the smartest ones know it consciously. I will expand on these ideas after I have done more research on the subject.

I've noticed that whenever people have to do something, we tend to build an ideology around what we're doing. This is the main reason why I think it's essential for the revolutionary vanguard to be able to use drugs as soon as possible. I fear for the hegemony of the SWP in the world socialist revolution if it must function with a totally straight consciousness for the next few years while everyone else is learning how to function high.

I believe there is a real danger of the YSA building up an anti-drugs ideology out of frustration from its isolated position in this arena. The truth is that marijuana first offense isn't treated much different than parking in front of a fire hydrant.

Don't get me wrong. YSAers are my heroes. The only reason I left was that I thought one more miserable comrade or less wouldn't make all that much difference at this point in time and history, and I am rather confident that I can be of help to the socialist revolution on the outside.

I intend to remain active in gay liberation, gay women's liberation and the SMC Gay Task Force. I intend to pick up on the movement to legalize grass, and propagandize such concepts as "Heads Against The War," "Gay Heads," "Stoned Feminists," etc. I will also be doing research to help formulate demands for a forthcoming Cripple Power movement.

I want to make one thing clear. I'm clean and I'm going to stay clean until I can go to the corner store and buy a package of joints, above the counter. If anyone wants to grow any grass at my place they'll have to plant it themselves. My reason for this is not moral. It's because my body would fall apart on prison food.

I deeply regret that the Boston branch of the SWP voted not to invite me to Oberlin or to let me attend pre-convention discussion. I know I have a lot to learn. Listening to people talk is one of the best ways for me to do it since my eyes are screwed up and I can't read very well.

Recently revolutionary socialists have been told that gay is good, gay is proud, gay is angry, and gay is beautiful. We all accept this now on principle but I'm sure most of us didn't used to believe it. We're beginning to see long time revolutionary socialists coming out of the closets all over the place, now that there's enough leeway for us to be open.

I want to help create enough leeway for heads to come out too. Heads are good, heads are proud, heads are angry, we're beautiful and a hell of a lot of us are anti-war activists feminists, Third World activists, gay liberationists and revolutionary socialists.

LETTER TO THE BOSTON BRANCH EXEC

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

July 10, 1971

I consider it a very serious matter that you have voted to exclude me from preconvention discussion and the SWP convention. I don't think you have a legitimate basis for doing it and I urge you to change your minds.

What harm could come of it? Are you afraid I will hear things and repeat them in such a way as to harm the party? There's not very much worse I could say than that I was asked to resign from the YSA on the basis of evidence that you would not reveal to me, and then excluded from Oberlin because I had resigned.

I was kicked out of the YSA on the basis of a rule which is unevenly applied. I can document this if you wish. I did as much research on the subject as I could while I was in the YSA. We have learned from our experience with gayness that whenever we have a membership rule being unevenly applied we're in trouble.

Perhaps some of you don't know the facts. I did not resign from the YSA so that I could smoke dope. I resigned from the YSA so that everyone can smoke dope as soon as possible. While I am involved in the movement to legalize grass I will have to stay as clean as any YSAer. I also need time to help start the Cripple Power movement.

Although nothing was ever officially reported back to me, it is my understanding that the reason given for your first decision was that I am not recruitable in the near future. This is a sorry excuse.

First of all, nobody asked me whether or not I want to rejoin the YSA and if so when. It's entirely likely that I will be back in the YSA within two years and if so it would be my highest priority to attend the SWP convention this year.

Is there any basis for not wanting me as a comrade other than that I might blow a little weed? I think not. While I was in the YSA I took as many assignments as I could considering my health, carried out every assignment, paid money regularly, sold a lot of Militants, subscribed to IP and read as much as my messed up eyes would allow. I don't think the marijuana question is going to be an insurmountable problem in the coming months and years.

As a hemiplegic with congenital lymphedema and spastic paralysis I am well acquainted with severe oppression. I know very well that severe unique oppressions are often misunderstood. It is hard for us to comprehend something that is strange and alien to us. We'd rather forget about it. Large groups of people suffering the same type of oppression have the power to make us face facts, but oppressed individuals who don't fit into a large group are at a disadvantage.

It never occurred to me that handicapped people must become organized until after I became a revolutionary socialist. Capitalism had brainwashed me into thinking that society always has been normal-dominated and always will be normal-dominated. We cripples must find our own power.

I am deeply indebted to the worldwide cultural youth radicalization. Without it I would not have been able to maintain my health and function in the organized revolutionary vanguard. I could not have sat on the floor, worn healthful clothing, eaten well or relaxed. I am a part of this radicalization and I want to fight along side my friends. On principle I must defend the gains they have made toward establishing a healthful life style. Very likely culturally radicalized youth will be among the strongest allies of the Cripple Power movement.

Please answer as soon as possible.

Comradely,  
Cecile

Author's note: This letter was sent special delivery Monday, July 12.  
As of Monday, August 2, I have received no answer from the Boston branch exec.