

EDITORIAL

ON REVOLUTIONARY MORALS

In the last edition of OEM we published the first part of an article developed by our Women's Commission which was entitled "Women in the Revolutionary Process". In this edition we print the last segment of that two-part article.

Both segments of the article attempt to bring fundamental aspects of the Women's Question beyond the realm of abstraction, which has characterized its discussion in a number of "leftist" publications, while at the same time the article addresses itself to the real problems that arise when the revolutionary movement and its organizations objectively disregard vital questions on the participation and role of women in the struggle. Touching on various aspects, the article focuses on two manifestations of the oppressive reality confronted by women, namely sexual oppression and the view that children are "only the responsibility of women". Both these aspects reveal and manifest the domination of the ruling class ideology in the society at large and most significantly, its presence and influence among the ranks of the revolutionary movement. Therefore, in order to deal with the Women's Question in all its ramifications and to attack the roots of women's oppression in bourgeois society, the article points to the need of developing a new morality among our ranks, internalizing the theoretical premises and translating these into social practice in our daily experiences among the people.

The history of successful revolutionary movements has shown that the capability of giving real leadership to a process for social transformation is determined by the extent to which women are active participants within the process, in our case the incorporation of working class women is of particular importance. This axiom is generally accepted and, as a theoretical premise, understood by most revolutionary organizations. Yet all too often, as with other fundamental questions confronting the revolutionary movement, the theoretical premises are not translated into social practice, either in the internal organizational relations or those with the masses. Both of these omissions have serious consequences. On the one hand, many seriously committed women, and men, have bitterly expressed that to a certain extent the Women's Question has become another "burning question", topic of abstract debate—particularly around March 8th (International Working Women's Day)—or has been totally disregarded by organizations which have included the point in their political program as "one of mere formality". On the other hand, divorced from the reality confronting the masses, and at times not truly internalizing the tasks determined by the theoretical premises (the recruitment of women, their political and ideological development, their selection and participation in leadership roles, etc), some sectors of the revolutionary movement disregard the fact that if the process for social transformation in capitalist society is to lead the working class to the seizure of political power, it is fundamental that the organizations that proclaim the task of leading the class struggle establish their political influence and prestige among the workers and the people in general. This will not be achieved merely with a "correct political program" nor by having "the

most correct political position" but with the implementation of a scientifically guided, principled and consistent, social practice. Within this context, the leaders of the class—the revolutionary cadre—must internalize that a fundamental aspect of our formation is the development of a completely new set of values in all level of our lives: a new morality.

The development of a new morality among our ranks is an important tool and is as valuable to the victory of the working class and the oppressed, as the ideological, economic and political struggles; it is an integral part of these, and at the same time this new morality could only be developed within the struggle itself. This dialectical process determines that we cannot wait until we live in a "socialist society" in order to develop the "new man and new woman"; that process, which develops itself to the fullest under socialism nevertheless has its roots in these moments of struggles, in moments of transitions.

The political and moral formation of cadres and militants has been an essential component in all truly revolutionary organizations. Shining examples of this have been the Workers Party of Vietnam whose moral integrity, as manifested by its fighters in their relations to the masses, was a confounding characteristic to the imperialist forces, as well as providing many lessons for revolutionaries the world over.

Recently, a well known leader of the independence movement in Puerto Rico expressed in a newspaper article that Puerto Rican women were oppressed mostly as a result of their consent, and that in his view this was the quid of the problem. This unexplained half-truth, which among things serves to place the burden of oppression on the victim (as well as covering the writer's own immorality) has seriously negative consequences to the struggles of the working class and the oppressed, since if we were to follow this logical form of thinking "consent" becomes the principal aspect in the relationship between the exploiter and the exploited. The absurd remark by this "leader" nevertheless points out the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie within revolutionary organizations, as well as, negative aspects of a cultural character.

In this respect, we must be constantly on the lookout for these manifestations, never losing sight in our overall struggle against oppression of the particular form of oppression endured by women. Since our founding assembly two years ago, an integral part of our organizational tasks has been our work among women and the development of their leadership potential. To a certain extent, and in accordance with our own development, we have been relatively successful in these tasks as demonstrated by our composition at all levels of the organization. Nevertheless this relative success cannot be equated with total consciousness, important remnants of insensitivity and unconsciousness about the real oppression of women still exist within us. In particular, we have failed to broaden our struggle against private property, not only in its economic manifestations, but in the realms of the family. This struggle must be waged within our ranks, if we are to create a complete human being and a new morality.