

Nearly buried among the issues of gay and women's liberation, the liberation movement of transsexuals continues to develop in several nations, including the U.S., Canada and Great Britain.

This movement is divided into two basic elements: one, the loosely organized groups of pre- and post-operative transsexuals, viewed as anti-Establishment and, in some cases, radical. Most of these generally seek autonomy from gay and women's liberation. Others are somewhat allied with gay organizations and, in a few cases, are only elements of gay organizations.

The second wing consists of the medical establishment — surgeons, psychiatrists, researchers — concerned with transsexuals and backup organizations and foundations. Some of these are "radical" in a sense, but most are ultra-conservative and, in some cases, strongly tied to police groups and federal agencies. This situation causes the transsexual liberation movement to be quite different from both gay and women's liberation. Of course, transsexuals are dependent upon the surgeons to accomplish their individual goals and must conform to some extent to the rules of behavior set forth by the medical establishment.

#### Surgeons

Radical transsexuals often confront this situation and have received minor support from more enlightened surgeons. Surgeons, in the eyes of transsexuals, often attempt to impose their views of proper sex-role behavior upon transsexuals, have far too much say over the lives of transsexuals in general and have been confronted about this by some transsexuals.

They are often viewed as far more than patients by surgeons and, in effect, become nonhuman examples of the surgeon's artistic abilities, a specimen of his or her ability as a surgeon. Thus, several of the basic goals of transsexual liberation include self-determination; in effect, surgery upon demand and freedom from control and abuse by the medical establishment.

One transsexual summed it up with, "Surgeons are our employees, not our gods." Generally speaking, the guidance offered by most surgeons is in the best interest of the transsexual but cannot be viewed as absolutely beneficial in all cases.

Of course, the emphasis on the financial aspects by surgeons in the U.S. is a

#### GUEST COLUMN

## Transsexual liberation: confronting suppression

continuing problem for all transsexuals. American surgeons do not back socialized medicine in general and tend to try to suppress transsexualist discussion of the benefits given to transsexuals in nations such as England having socialized medicine. Vital to the well-being of thousands of transsexuals, many are unable to obtain surgery in the U.S. solely due to financial considerations.

Rather than being an obstacle course, with the surgery as a final reward to "deserving" and financially well-off transsexuals, surgeons should provide far more real assistance than they have provided in the past. The Transsexual Action Organization (TAO) applauds the efforts of a few surgeons in this field, such as Dr. Len, who appealed to the U.S.S.R. to accept indigent American transsexuals for surgery, and a few others urging medicare help.

TAO received data from the U.S.S.R. embassy concerning transsexualism in that nation, and this has been fully suppressed by both the mass and alternative press. Such operations are routinely performed, and post-operative transsexuals in the U.S.S.R. are given all rights enjoyed by other Soviet citizens. Such surgery in the U.S.S.R. is not based on personal choice, however, and is determined by medical evaluation entirely.

One cannot simply ask for a sex change in the U.S.S.R. and get it, though; one has to be a true physical hermaphrodite or, in the case of male-to-female transsexuals, exceptionally "feminine." All others are viewed as being mentally ill. (In other nations, transsexualism is not viewed as a mental aberration per se but a possible hormonal or congenital problem due to maternal biological problems during gestation, affecting glandular situations of the child.)

#### Gay Liberation

Conflict between transsexuals and gay liberationists is due to a number of complex factors. Generally speaking, homosexual supremacists view the transsexual as a renegade homosexual, one who attempts to escape homosexuality by changing sex. This is utterly false and based upon not only ignorance

but also insecurity of homosexuals themselves. Of course, there are many "latent transsexuals" among homosexuals who, for one reason or another, have been unable to enter the experience.

Chauvinist gays tend to view transsexuals as a "type of homosexual" at best or as a subgroup, and this false view has been transmitted to the masses.

More serious is the situation involving homosexuals who try to "cure" persons seeking sex change surgery by various economic and other repressive actions.

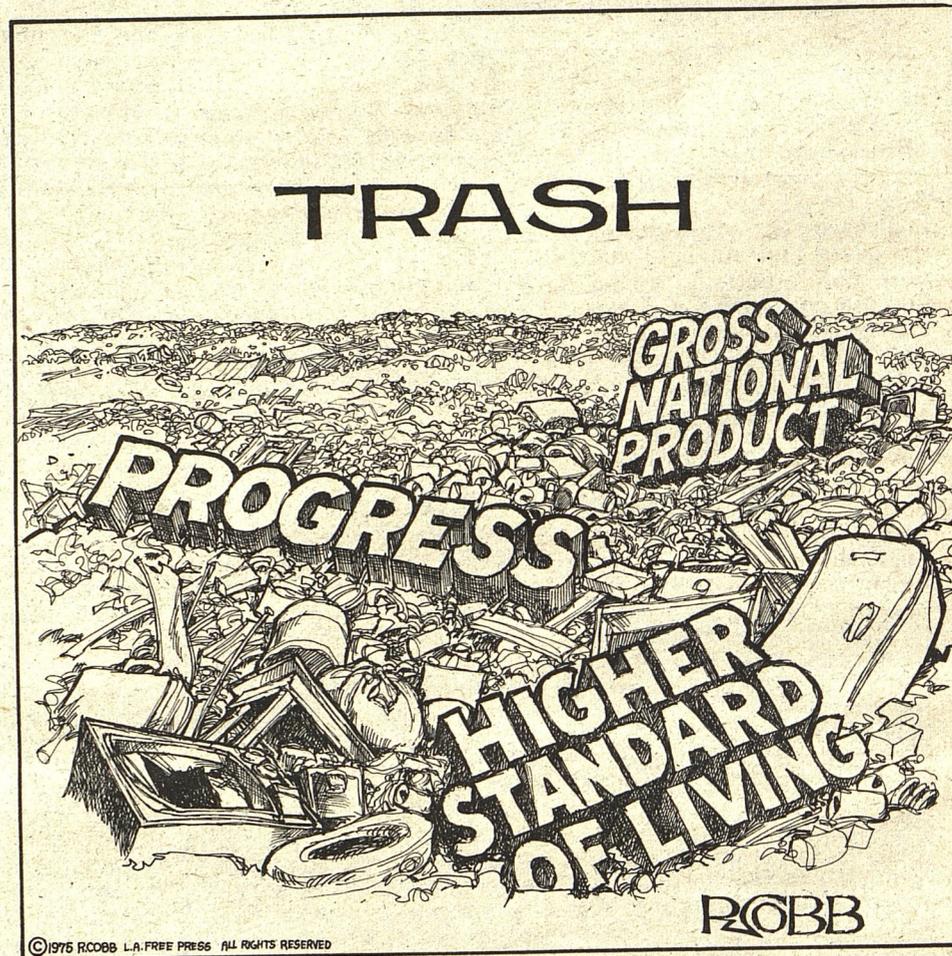
Although it is correct for transsexuals to ally with some gay groups on certain occasions, this cannot be done on a con-

tinued or permanent basis. Movements should be separate.

#### Women's Liberation

The feminist movement appears to be divided into two wings concerning transsexualism; one in favor of permitting transsexuals access to the feminist movement, and another represented by Robin Morgan ("transsexuals are like whites wearing blackface"), who questions whether transsexuals are really oppressed. Feminists have failed to familiarize themselves with transsexualism beyond the superficial, readily recognizable aspects concerning sexism and antiquated sex roles, which, we again emphasize, are thrust upon transsexuals not only by society but by many surgeons.

On the other hand, some feminists such as Kate Millett feel that transsexual women should have access to feminist awareness and take full part in feminist activities. Transsexuals themselves are



WASHINGTON — A move to clean up the throwaway cans and bottles that litter America has been sabotaged in the backrooms of the Environmental Protection Agency. Every year, an astounding 60 billion throwaways are scattered across the American landscape — tossed in trash cans, strewn along roadways, dropped into lakes and streams. This not only is a staggering waste but a stupendous pickup problem.

As the first step toward reducing the debris, the EPA drafted new guidelines on June 2. These would require customers to pay a deposit on the beverage containers they purchase on federal premises. To get their deposit back, they would have to turn in their empty beer bottles and coke cans.

Although the rules would apply only to national parks, military camps and other federal facilities, the intention also was to encourage cities, counties and states to adopt similar measures.

But if this seemed a simple, logical solution, the advocates at EPA didn't reckon with the greed of the manufacturers, who rake in huge profits from throwaways. Nor did the advocates take into account the political power of the likes of the U.S. Brewers Assn., Aluminum Co. of America, Reynolds Metals, Can Manufacturers Institute, National Soft Drink Assn. and Glass Container Manufacturers Institute.

The story of what happened has been carefully locked in EPA files, where it was supposed to be hidden from the public.

### JACK ANDERSON with Les Whitten EPA's throwaway plans



But we have obtained the suppressed memos and letters. The manufacturers of cans and bottles are spending \$20 million to thwart the EPA clean-up scheme. Even more dismaying, the container tycoons have been able to pull strings inside the EPA and to get inside information for their lobbying campaign.

For example, the June 2 guidelines were supposed to be kept secret until they were published in the Federal Register. The purpose of this rule is to prevent undue political pressure at the planning level. But on June 19, copies of the draft guidelines were slipped to the can-and-bottle lobby. The official who leaked the material was EPA's solid-waste director, H. Lanier Hickman. We have a copy of his transmittal letter asking the industry for its "review and comment." None of the material was leaked to the environmentalists, who were equally interested in the guidelines.

Armed with this inside information, the powerful lobby began to mobilize against the EPA plan even as EPA chief Russell Train was proclaiming his public support of "a mandatory deposit measure."

The U.S. Brewers, for example, distributed a costly, 38-page lobbying package to beer wholesalers. They were

urged to write their local congresspersons. Legal opinions, economic arguments and other helpful letter-writing hints were included. The names were also listed of every senator and congressperson who might conceivably have anything to do with the throwaway problem.

Already this lobbying campaign has stimulated a flood of letters to EPA from Capitol Hill. More than 200 members of Congress have written to EPA about the guidelines.

Yet Hickman, far from being punished for alerting the industry, has been promoted. Other EPA officials met privately on Aug. 13 with representatives from Reynolds Metals, American Can, U.S. Brewers, Coca-Cola, Bethlehem Steel, Owens-Illinois and related unions.

The confidential minutes show, incredibly, that another top EPA official, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator Robert Colonna, slipped the lobbyists "copies of the comments made by other federal agencies during our agency review." These comments, which are supposed to be strictly private, can now be used by the throwaway lobby to bring pressure on the other agencies that support the deposit measure.

The confidential minutes also note: "It is no secret that most of the people present would like to quash the beverage-container guidelines completely."

As a result of the pressure that the industry has been able to mount behind the scenes, the EPA has now knocked out of the guidelines the recommendation calling for state and local governments to join in the battle against throwaways.

Footnote: Hickman explained that he and Colonna had merely meant to get the objections of the industry so that the final guidelines would need fewer changes. There was no intent to favor industry, he said, nor was it illegal to give them the documents.

#### Fighting Congresspersons

With flying fists and feet, half-a-dozen members of Congress will battle for the karate championships of Capitol Hill on Sept. 14 at Washington's D.C. Armory. The Senate will put up Sen. Quentin Burdick, R-N.D., vs. Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska. Burdick has been trimming down for the bout, and Stevens has been receiving daily private lessons from karate master Jhoon Rhee.

From the House side, Rep. Tom Bevill, D-Ala., will fight Rep. Floyd Spence, R-S.C., and Rep. Walter Fauntroy, D-D.C. will square off against Rep. Willis D. Gradison Jr., R-Ohio. The proceeds will go to a legal defense fund to help investigative reporters.

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