

Coalition for Human Rights in American Psychiatry

P. O. Box 38302

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"The 1984 Olympics is not the only big event in Los Angeles next year: this city will also host the 1984 APA annual meeting from Saturday, May 5, to Friday, May 11" (Psychiatric News, December 2, 1983).

Los Angeles will also host the 1984 annual psychiatric inmate demonstration against the American Psychiatric Association. This letter is to inform you about this action and ask for your help in making it a success.

Beginning in the early seventies, gay people and women have demonstrated against the APA. Recently, in San Francisco (1980), Toronto (1982), and New York City (1983), past and present psychiatric inmates raised their voices in protest. Once again, in 1984, psychiatric inmates are planning to converge at the annual APA meeting to protest psychiatric oppression. The first planning meeting, attended by 16 movement activists from the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas, occurred on December 2nd in Berkeley. The Coalition for Human Rights in American Psychiatry, the name we chose for ourselves, will meet at another planning session in February in Los Angeles.

The APA epitomizes the dehumanizing attitudes and practices of institutional psychiatry: incarceration and forced "treatment", sanism, and the medical model explanation of problems of living. It is for this reason that we will demonstrate against the APA and continue to engage it in every way possible.

The APA knows we are coming. Already the chief of security of the APA has approached various groups in California to talk of more "appropriate" means of "consumer" input. Already the Chairperson of the Scientific Program Committee of the APA has written the Consumer Steering Committee, the California statewide organization of psychiatric inmates, asking it to "interface with other consumer groups throughout the United States in an endeavor to create some kind of dialogue between these groups and the APA."

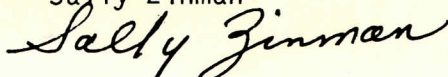
The stage is being set; the players are getting ready, writing their parts.

We need your help. We need MONEY to cover the administrative costs of organizing a demonstration and tribunal: typesetting, xeroxing, mailing, meeting space, transportation, and housing. And we need your physical help. Although San Francisco area activists will lend major support, most of the burden of organizing will fall on the Los Angeles activists. They need people who are willing to go to Los Angeles, especially as the time of confrontation grows nearer, to help. (Travel Tip : You can go from L.A. to Denver and the International Conference on Human Rights and Psychiatric Oppression.)

JOIN US. HELP US. The major event in Los Angeles this year should be past and present psychiatric inmates raising their voices in anger-- and truth.

Sincerely,

Sally Zinman



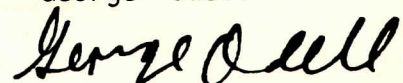
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