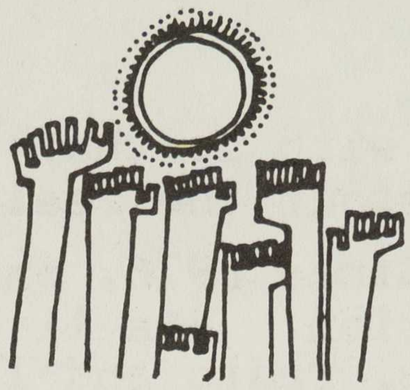
ALMP

THE ALLIANCE FOR THE LIBERATION OF MENTAL PATIENTS
1427 WALNUT STREET, 4TH FL.
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19102 • (215) LO 3-3828



October 12, 1980

Dear Friend of the Alliance,

How time has flown! The Alliance, believe it or not, is now in its fifth year of activity by and for current and former "mental patients." In our half-decade of existence we have left few stones unturned in our efforts to combat psychiatric abuses on all levels, and to create voluntary, user-controlled alternatives to the "mental health" system. We have challenged the psychiatric establishment in public forums, in the media, in the courts, and in the streets. The year ahead should prove to be no exception, and we hope that you will join us in our struggle.

ALMP opened its first office in September, 1976. Since then, we have met with some encouraging successes in our endeavors to defeat psychiatric tyranny and to educate the public to the real needs of those of us who have been labeled by psychiatry as "mentally ill." But, as you probably realize, we still have a long road ahead of us before we have accomplished our main goals, which remain

1) to abolish all involuntary psychiatric incarceration ("hospitalization") and "treatment" (i.e., drugging, electroshock, solitary confinement, physical restraints, behavior modification, etc.);

2) to relace the "mental health" system with non-medical, non-"professional," and voluntary systems of support for people in distress which are controlled by the people who use them; and

3) to do away with the concept of "mental illness" as a way of explaining (and invalidating) people's feelings of fear, pain, frustration, and rage; and to advance understanding of the political, social, and economic roots of behavior often considered to be indicative of "mental illness."

We are writing to ask for your support.

Need any of us be reminded that forced incarceration, forced drugging, and other psychiatric tortures continue today as much as ever? Every year millions of people nationwide (and worldwide) are incarcerated in psychiatric facilities--most of them against their wills. And even though "medications" such as Thorazine are widely known to cause tardive dyskinesia--<u>permanent brain damage</u>--in large percentages of those who use them, the routine and forcible administration of these psychiatric poisons continues unchecked. In state and private "mental hospitals," prisons, and other institutions which demand firm control over inmates, these deadly chemicals constitute one of the chief weapons for repressing for those who will not conform to desired forms of submissive behavior.

Since most likely you have been in touch with the Alliance already, the above information comes as no suprise. Like most people who are aware of situations such as those described above, you probably

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