

Lady Maude French our indomitable socialite looks at the traumas of the servant problem and how to get over it without getting the vapours. Read on.....



MODERN MAIDS— AND WHAT TO TEACH THEM

A Plea For Simplicity And The Right Attitude To Take Towards Your Treasure

WHENEVER you see two or more married women in a huddle you would be certain, if you listened in, to hear something like this:

"I simply can't get a cook . . . I've been doing my own chores for weeks . . . Not a sign of a maid to be got for love or money . . ." Then, all together, they chorus, "What do they want . . . what do they expect . . .?" And the refrain is sure to go: "What are we coming to . . . Everyone will have to live in service flats if this goes on . . ."

My dear ladies, it's not a case of what are we coming to? It's a case of what have we come to! Because we have come to it, whatever it is, and whether you know it or not. That old institution, the domestic servant, as our grandmothers and mothers knew her in the old days, is as dead as the dodo.

The Right Attitude

THE maid of old has gone, never to return. Instead has come the modern maid, product of this modern age. A charming and efficient person, if you know the technique of how to deal with her.

But do you know how to deal with the modern maid? Or are you still resenting her new liberties, and sighing after the old days, when orders were orders, and amusements were for the master and mistress of the house, and no one else?

I sincerely believe that a great many housewives, who can afford to keep one or two maids, don't keep them long just because they haven't got the right angle on how they expect to be treated. And so, these good ladies, fuming against the modern help and all her ways, haunt the registry offices, and finally get a bad mark there, which they don't really deserve.

Now what is this angle which mistresses should get, without losing dignity or the headship of the house?

In my opinion, it is an acceptance of a great many things which govern this new relationship, whether the mistress likes them or not.

The New Charter of Freedom

THE new charter of freedom goes like this:

The modern maid wishes to live near her friends. And she also desires and resolves, if possible, to live near a cinema.

The modern maid will not consent to be in at ten o'clock, any more than the daughter of the house would, if she has passed her teens.

She will not wear a cap in the mornings, and only the slightest of "coronet-shaped" apologies for a cap in the afternoon.

The modern maid likes to plan the work her own way.

She will not stay long where the food is portioned out, and the groceries measured.

She will not be happy unless she has a wireless, and is permitted reasonable use of same.

She prefers a bed-room to herself, and that bed-room nicely furnished.

Is there anything wrong or really unreasonable in these demands?

Of course modern girls are modern, says the new school of thought, whether they are socialites, office workers, shop assistants, or domestic helpers. And, of course, being of their age and time, they like "perms," silk stockings, reasonable freedom, and friends, to say nothing of the wireless, that unseen companion of the leisure hours. And, goodness gracious, why shouldn't they?

Now about that "no cap" complex of the modern maids. Silly mistresses made it the badge of servitude, and thus started a prejudice. This is frankly a pity, as the covering of hair in dusting and sweeping is hygienic, and finds great favour with the younger generation of bright young housewives, who do their own housework swathed in gay-coloured handkerchiefs. But there it is. Or, rather, there it isn't, that discreet, some-times starched mob cap. The modern maid eschews it, and certainly doesn't fit well over shingled hair.



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Newell's film is guided by extraordinary subject matter -- the true story of Ruth Ellis, a nightclub hostess and mother of two who murdered her upper class lover in a storm of jealous rage outside a Hampstead pub on Easter Sunday, 1955. But it's the treatment as much as the subject, looking at passion with a cool and tragic eye, that makes this one of the few great English films of the last 15 years. (CHRIS AUTY - CITY LIMITS)

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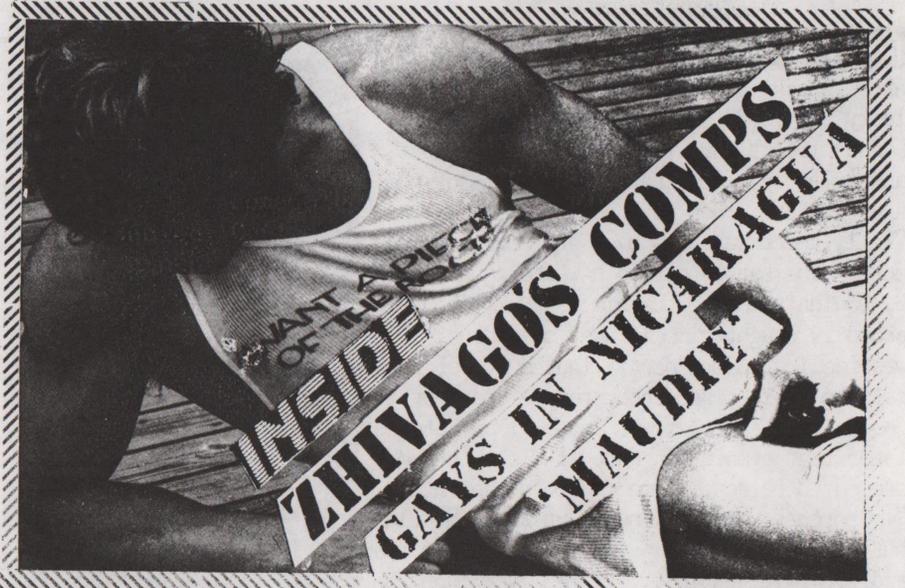
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GAY Nottingham!

No. 16, July, 1986. Deadline for August issue: 25th July, 1986.

Published by GAY NOTTINGHAM, Box 34, West P.D.O, Nottingham, NG7 2DL.



EURO MPs from various parties have demanded that charges against the directors of Gay's The Word Bookshop be dropped. A motion condemning the shop's prosecution has been proposed by East London MEP Carol Tongue. It is supported by Socialists, Communists, Liberals, Social Democrats, the Rainbow Coalition of green parties, one member of the Irish Fine Gael, and British Labour MEPs.

Carol Tongue claims that the charges against the directors of the Bloomsbury bookshop fly in the face of the European Convention on Human Rights and a resolution on discrimination against gays passed by the Council of Europe.

"Many of the titles seized are lawfully published in the United Kingdom", says the Labour MEP, "and none contravene the Obscene Publications Act."

The motion will be debated by the European Human Rights Committee, and "condemns the prosecution of the directors of the Gay's The Word bookshop as a vindictive and malicious attack on the lesbian and gay community in the United Kingdom, which further attacks the freedom and liberty of every citizen by censoring the printed word."

David Northmore of the Defend Gay's The Word Campaign is delighted by the news from Europe, and described the motion as "a very welcome step indeed in the direction of the campaign."

The nine directors of Gay's The Word are due to appear at the Old Bailey on October 6th.

New Chair elected

David Townsend is the recently elected Chair of the Gay Mens Forum. He is also Vice-Chair of the City Council's Gay Mens Sub-Committee which meets monthly. David said he saw his appointment as a new challenge and looked forward to the forthcoming year. "I hope I will be able to encourage more gay men to get involved so that we can make full use of the Council's facilities in the City", he said. (The Lesbian/Gay Sub-Committee met for the last time in May). From now on two separate committees, one for men and the other for women will exist. The City Council was not keen to continue the monthly meetings for both groups. The lesbians wanted meetings every second month but the gay men wanted to retain their monthly meetings' cycle. After intensive lobbying of the Council by the Gay Men it was agreed that the meetings would continue on a monthly basis as before.

The next meeting of the Gay Mens Committee takes place on Thursday 31st July at 7.30pm in the Council House, and is open to members of the public.



LESBIAN Bloody Mad

A lesbian blood donor is angry because she was told she was no longer acceptable as a donor when she turned up at the Nottingham Blood Transfusion Centre. Maureen McKenna asked her doctor to write to the Regional Blood Transfusion Service for an explanation. She received a reply from a Consultant Haematologist who said that whilst lesbians were the safest known blood group, the Transfusion Service's policy was a blanket refusal if people were known to be homosexual. Gay Nottingham got through to a spokesperson at the fourth attempt and a Dr. Vergi James, who wrote Ms. McKenna's letter explained that "we understand the behaviour of heterosexuals which is normal. We feel it is better to have a blanket refusal on taking blood from lesbians - we call them homosexuals - because we might find on counselling them that their partners had been promiscuous". When asked whether the service had been in touch with any gay or lesbian organizations Ms. James said that they had "talked to" many such groups.

Would they continue to take blood from straights, known to be higher risk than lesbians in having contaminated blood? She said she did not foresee a change in their policy. Ms. McKenna said that their double talk was interesting. "Clearly the transfusion service is in need of a trans-95

GAY PROTEST MEETING

Attacks claimed



Several attacks on gay men by bouncers at the monthly Astoria gay disco have been reported to GAY NOTTINGHAM recently. At the April disco, Pete Johnson, a gay man, says he witnessed a gay man being repeatedly kicked to the ground and then being thrown out by the scruff of his neck, for no apparent reason. Another man, Kevin Powell said he saw a bouncer beating up another gay man at the May disco. "He was thrown out the back door. I asked for the manager who wasn't available so I saw the head bouncer who told me that all gay people carried knives and that we were all the same and he didn't care a damn". Commenting on the incident, Cllr. Richard McCance said: "This has got to stop. We hope that the meeting will result in a positive relationship between the gay community and the Astoria staff in future". Club Manager, Steward Biddulph said he had checked with staff and police and could find no record of the complaints.

The public meeting is on Monday 23rd June at the YMCA, Shakespeare St, at 7.30pm.

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YOUNG GAYS SEEK PLACE IN NICARAGUAN SOCIETY

(CONTINUED FROM Page 2.)

seize the opportunity, another chance may be a long time coming.

Most Nicaraguan young people, gay or straight, live with their parents out of financial necessity. Conducting a gay relationship takes a lot of ingenuity. Walter is atypical, in that he shares an apartment with two other men. His place has become a center where a close-knit group of young gay Managuans meet.

Gay life in Nicaragua is mostly contained within such small social circles. An American lesbian living in Managua observes that life for these young people is different from that of older gays who have established their careers and can afford their own homes. The older gays may work in such settings as the Ministry of Culture, where being discreetly gay is tolerated. And they certainly have more access to privacy. Still, there are no open meeting places, like bars, where these various small social circles might interact.

And for the young, gay life can still be a struggle. Rosa (not her real name) is shy, closeted and anxious about being interviewed by a foreign journalist. There are no gay rights organizations in Nicaragua, but Rosa is part of a small group that has been meeting in Managua for several months to form the very first one. Age 25, she lives with her mother and must help support five younger siblings. She works full time in a government ministry by day and studies at the university at night. She's active in her union and in the Sandinista Youth. She's also a member of the Militia, a civilian organization that backs up the army when the war with the U.S.-backed Contras heats up. Then, there are meetings of the fledgling gay rights group. Also, "we have to have our parties," she says of her gay and lesbian friends.

While time may be in short supply, Rosa feels that only a group of people as active as she can succeed in building a gay rights movement. "We can't let ourselves be marginalized," she insists. "Only a group of people who have strong roles in organizations of the revolutionary process," she adds, will be seen as legitimate.

The war also makes her group's task immeasurably harder, she says. The fight against the Contras is seen in Nicaragua as a question of national survival; all other questions take second place at the moment.

Rosa stays in the closet out of fear of disapproval by her family and neighbors. She says she wouldn't lose her job, her standing in Sandinista organizations, or her right to a free university education if she came out. But the informal social censure would be devastating to her. She also believes the government will be far more tolerant of a gay rights movement than the hidebound general population.

I asked Rosa if Nicaragua could turn out like Cuba, where many gay people have left because they have been persecuted and denied basic rights.

"How could it turn out that way?" she answered. "There were so many Sandinista commanders who were gay. One of them, Dora Maria Tellez, is now even Minister of Health." Just as in the United States, within the gay community it is common knowledge that certain public figures are discreetly gay, often because a friend knows someone who knows someone who was once the lover of the figure in question. Rosa is sure these people will be supportive when the time comes. (In other countries, of course, this has not always been the case.)

Rosa is realistic about the obstacles that poverty, war and a socially conservative population place in the way of gay rights. But she's known hard work and tough odds all her young life. Her dark eyes sparkle with optimism when she says, "We're bound to win something. It will take a long time, maybe until I'm old. But I do it for the next generations."

