

NOGSOG NEWSHEET
DECEMBER 1984

SOCIAL PROGRAMME

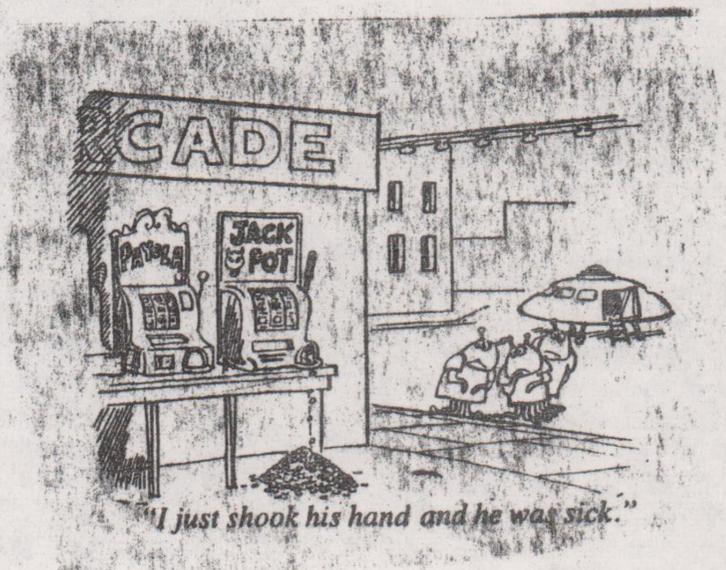
- WED. 5TH Video evening at Mark's, 95, Hereford Road, Bakersfields Est. Nottingham. (Tel. 876740 if in need of directions). Starts 8pm. Please be prompt.
- FRI. 7TH Meeting with the Leicester group for a Skittles Challenge at the Blacksmith's Arms, Loughborough. From 8pm. It will cost £1-50 for a game + refreshments.
- WED. 12TH Coffee evening at David's, 11, Plantagenet Court, St. Ann's. From 8pm.
- THUR 13TH NOGSOG Xmas Party at the CVS - bring some food and drink.
- THUR 20TH Programme meeting at the CVS. 8.30pm.
- SAT. 22ND Perry's Christmas Party at 52, Church Lane, Selston from 9.30pm onwards - bring TWO bottles!

Advance notice: Jan. 6th - a mystery walk; meet at Gatsby's at 1.30pm.

Progress is being made towards the formation of a Gay Sports Group in Nottingham. It is hoped to provide facilities for Badminton, Squash, Weight Training, Swimming and Football. Anyone interested should contact Roy Humphries on Nottm. 866398.

Remember that in addition to what is listed above, anyone is welcome to call in at the CVS (31a, Mansfield Road) any Thursday evening (from about 8pm onwards) for a chat and some coffee. Yes, there is coffee! The group has moved to a new and more comfortable room which is also conveniently near a kitchen.

One of Gay Switchboards longest serving operators passed his fortieth birthday recently. We did think about hiring the Vienna Boys Choir for the occasion. Just to blow out the candles.



First US 'gay city'

Los Angeles: The first US city controlled by a homosexual majority was created yesterday when 36,000 residents in the Los Angeles suburb of west Hollywood voted for the new status.

The residents voted two-to-one to turn the area into a city, giving themselves the power to freeze rents — but now they will have to pay for their own police force.

The new city chose a lesbian activist, Ms Valerie Terrigno, as mayor and two other members of the five-member council are homosexuals.
Reuter.

The Customs' misplaced zeal

What could Jean-Paul Sartre, Gore Vidal, Jean Genet, a thirteenth century nun, the dramatist responsible for one of Broadway's greatest triumphs of 1983 and the early socialist Edward Carpenter have in common? All of them, it turns out, are authors who have fallen foul of HM Customs and Excise's notion of indecency. For this huge limb of the Treasury is responsible, for controlling and monitoring the importation of publications. And this year Customs has concentrated a remarkable amount of time and effort on books from America stocked in a bookshop in London, called Gays the Word.

In the last six months some 130 titles and about 2,500 volumes have been subject to seizure notices. The bookshop, which is principally devoted to writings by and about homosexuals, has been led to believe that charges will soon be brought. It matters not at all that a number of the books seized are freely available in England, published by English publishing houses. For Customs and Excise operate under the Customs Consolidation Act of 1876, by which seizure notices are issued against publications, and all the protections and special safeguards for literature available for books published in Britain under the Obscene Publications Act are denied for imported books.

Anomalies and injustices are, therefore, encouraged by the process. Thus one of the books seized, a volume of short stories under the misleading title *Aphrodisiac*, was seized although it was published here by Chatto. In answer to a recent question from Mr John Wheeler, the Conservative MP, a Treasury spokesman suggested that Customs and Excise observed the tests of obscenity and indecency applied in the courts.

But that is a disingenuous answer. For officers in Customs and Excise have wide-ranging freedom to organise their own tests, failing to ensure that their lists of proscribed works and the test of indecency are in line with the courts of Britain. There has been loudly voiced suspicion that Customs and Excise are engaged in a campaign of harassment. The minister responsible, Mr Barney Hayhoe, will have to demonstrate that a small minority of customs officers do not have the freedom to carry out personal vendettas and campaigns.

Police 'trappers' ensnared

Sir,—While agreeing with your Leader "Boys in Blue Jeans" (October 6) it is more than mere coincidence that police guidelines on entrapment and the use of "agents provocateur" were revised between the arrest and trial of Dr Hampson. A little matter of the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill second reading in the Commons intervened.

Alliance MPs then tabled an amendment to outlaw the use of what gays describe as "the pretty police," and it may have had more to do with placating rebellion in its own ranks that bland assurances were given by the Government.

Since the "revision" of

the guidelines, entrapment cases have increased rather than lessened, bringing further divides between the gay community and the police.

What may hasten an end to entrapment is that the attire, activities, or attitudes of employees like PC Stuart Marshall are being questioned by the public at large as burglaries, muggings, or racial harassment cases rise. The police would do well to act upon the sentiments of Gerald Kaufman, MP, who observed that the place for the "bobby" is on the beat, not the basement gay club or public urinal.—Yours faithfully,
(Cllr) Steve Kirkham,
Birmingham City Council.

Gay trap stays sprung

Sir,—It is, of course, welcome that Dr Keith Hampson has been found not guilty. But the decision to prosecute him and others like him is a disgrace. Those who are prosecuted for minor sexual offences potentially have their lives placed in a glass house for others to observe, and their reputations needlessly damaged.

It is not surprising that most plead guilty to avoid the exposure of a public trial. The irony and unfairness lies in the fact that 80 to 90 per cent of the cases that do come to trial, juries refuse to convict.

The real concern which arise from Dr Hampson's case all remain. There has been no change in the law or practice which would discourage plain clothes police officers from frequenting gay bars or clubs or lurking in public lavatories. The Director of Public Prosecutions has given no indication that he will change his policy in relation to such cases. The House of Lords ruling in 1979 saying that the courts have no discretion to exclude evidence obtained by entrapment stands unaltered.

In other words, "policing the morals" of the community of the kind illustrated in these cases will continue unabated. The only thing that will change now that the Hampson case is over is that the subject will be eased out of the news while the police practices carry on as before.

Yet the solutions are so clear and appropriate. First, the police should actively enforce existing guidelines against entrapment by the use of disciplinary proceedings whenever there is a transgression. Second, the DPP should exercise his discretion not to prosecute in any case where there is no victim and no witness other than police officers. Finally, the court should be obliged to exclude evidence obtained through unlawful entrapment.

These proposals, if implemented, would not be detrimental to any public interest, and it would stop the discrimination and victimisation which has understandably alienated a minority community. — Yours faithfully,

Larry Gostin,
General Secretary,
National Council for
Civil Liberties,
21 Tabard Street,
London SE1

Africans asked not to give blood in Aids alert

By Andrew Veitch
Medical Correspondent

The fear of an Aids epidemic in Zaire and Zambia has led one of Britain's largest blood transfusion centres to advise people from central Africa against giving blood.

Four of the UK's five women victims who died of acquired immune deficiency syndrome had links with Africa through either birth, work or their husband's employment. One of the victims was a nurse from Zambia. At least two of the women were white.

The North London Blood Transfusion Centre in Edgware, with 180,000 donations a year, is asking people born in Zaire and the Congo, and their sexual partners, not to donate.

The Department of Health will be advised to follow suit in the new clearer guidelines on Aids and blood donors due out next month. Transfusion centres will be told to mail the guidelines to the homes of all donors.

The African outbreak is affecting Zaire, Zambia and Rwanda. At its present rate, it threatens 10,000 cases a year in the southern cities of Nigeria, according to Dr B. M. Greenwood from the Medical Research Council's laboratory in the Gambia.

Antibodies to the Aids virus have been found in 5 per cent of blood donors in Zaire, he reports.

The outbreak reveals that Aids is not a gay disease. Half the victims in Kinshasa, Zaire, are women and all but one of the men are heterosexual. This is confirmed by evidence in Belgium where 23 African Aids victims were heterosexual and nine were women.

A spokesman for the Aids charity, the Terence Higgins Trust, yesterday urged gays not to donate blood but emphasised that they were not the only people at risk of passing on the infection. Some gay groups were yesterday advising members to tear up their kidney donor cards.

Professor Michael Adler of the Middlesex Hospital, London, stressed that only a minority of victims died. Some patients had no symptoms, but were potentially infectious, others had comparatively mild symptoms such as swollen lymph glands.

The North London transfusion centre has prepared a leaflet listing the reasons why people should not give blood, so as not to deter gay donors from seeking advice. The list includes pregnancy, acupuncture, ear piercing, cancer, jaundice, practising homosexuals, intravenous drug users, people born in Haiti, Zaire, the Congo, and their sexual partners, people who have travelled to a tropical area, and a final catch-all: "If you are not feeling 100 per cent fit today."

The Aids that Africa could do without

A 27-YEAR-OLD nurse has died of Aids. Treated at the Princess Margaret Hospital, Swindon, and the John Radcliffe, Oxford, she is one of at least three women who have developed the disease in the UK after living in Africa.

The nurse came from Zambia to train in Britain in 1980. The first symptoms developed three years later — a typical Aids incubation period. Ten months after going to her doctor, she died.

How can a virus which is spreading rapidly among homosexuals, destroying the body's defences against infection, and is transmitted in blood and blood products like Factor 8, find its way into an African nurse?

Now scientists are piecing together clues which indeed suggest something else might be happening. The trail leads backwards in time from the UK and Europe, to the homosexual communities of the United States, to the slums of Haiti, and finally to the central African countries of Zaire, Rwanda, and probably Zambia.

Objections to the portrayal of Aids as the Gay Plague may be right. The trail now leads alarmingly back to heterosexuals in Africa.

Certainly Aids is now spreading in Africa. The latest report comes from Dr B. M. Greenwood at the Medical Research Council's laboratory in the Gambia. Fifty cases have been identified in Zaire and in the neighbouring Rwanda. Antibodies to the Aids virus have been found in 5 per cent of blood donors in Zaire (showing they have been infected). Attack rates of the disease in Kinshasa, Zaire, and in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, are running at rates as high as those recorded in New York and San Francisco.

The evidence suggests that the Kinshasa outbreak was spread at least in part by sexual contact; but not by homosexuals. Nearly half the victims were women. All but one of the men were heterosexuals.

The heterosexual link is emphasised by the results of an investigation into 23 African patients with Aids-like illnesses treated in Belgium. All but four of the patients came from Zaire. All were heterosexual. Nine were women.

Homosexuals have always objected to Aids being called the Gay Plague. The evidence now shows they are right.