

BEATS, BASHINGS...

BY

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Recently, reports of some violent gang bashings of alleged homosexuals, in Perth and inner suburbs, have taken up considerable time and space in the Media. One of the television channels asked me to make a statement on behalf of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution. Because of some ill-expressed opinions on my part and bad editing on the part of the TV channel, people were left with the impression that the Campaign considered homosexuals who solicited in public lavatories got all they deserved. This is far from the case! However, the discussion which has arisen from the confused report has caused me to think perhaps a little more clearly about these matters and their issues and to write down a few ideas, the expression of which I feel are long overdue on the WA scene. Let us have a look at the Law on these matters. People who solicit for "immoral" purposes, as the Law puts it, in Public lavatories and the like are committing an offence which is chargeable, and therefore, punishable. When homosexual Law Reform

has been effected in this State, it will allow homosexual acts in private by consenting adults. The situation with respect to these acts in public places will not have altered unless some clever lawyer can convince a Judge and/or Jury that a toilet can be considered "in private". All the better if he can! The Campaign is not presently canvassing for changes in the Law to allow these acts in Public places so it is fair to assume that, in principle, it is against such activities although many if not all of its members have been involved in such activities at times. Now, let us consider the homosexuals point of view. Believe it or not he has a reasonable and legitimate view in many contexts. Living in a suppressive society as he does, a society which discriminates against him for aspects of his personality over which nobody, least of all himself, has any control, nor need have for that matter, he represses his sexuality. This kind of repression is unnatural for anyone. There will be an explosion if he doesn't find a satisfactory outlet, so finds one, often in a public place. What else can he do? If he makes a pass at anyone at work

...AND THE LAW!

his job is in danger; if, at one of his friends or associates, he is liable to form a social rejection which can be terribly cruel and painful. So, he must go somewhere where he is not known, (in the dark maybe), where he can be sure of finding others in the same predicament (and God knows there are many of them), where he can find satisfaction undisturbed. He may be married or living with parents so he cannot take his 'find' home. What must he do but make love or find quick physical relief in the most sordid, degrading circumstances. For these reasons he chooses to search in the early hours of the morning when he can be reasonably sure that nobody else but other homosexuals will be around and when the police will, hopefully, be absent. Like most police forces in this country at present, ours is understaffed. Whether for this or other reasons, they do not often check on public places late at night. But there are those who know of officialdom's absence - the pooker-bashers. They are the sediment of our "great society"; that inevitably underprivileged section created by an uncontrolled capitalistic system. They are born into

violence and conflict and know no other way to express themselves. Love and brotherhood are alien concepts to them. Individual conflict comes to crisis usually in adolescence when, like large numbers of youths, they have difficulty in establishing their sexual identity. The natural homosexual tendencies in man become strongly evident at this time and the subsequent mental anguish because of society's condemnation of such tendencies, and their sense of frustration lead such people to the only expression they know - violence! They externalise their feelings by seeking other homosexuals to vent their violence upon them. They are, in effect, bashing themselves! There must be many of them around the country when Dr. Moss Cass, in the recent debate in the Federal Parliament, can refer to the national pastime of pooker-bashing! The Police no doubt know of this pastime and perhaps are grateful that somebody is doing their job for them. Members of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution have from time to time given them leads about various bashings and on one occasion even arrested a number of these mutations and marched them

to the nearest station. The lack of interest with which the police have followed up these leads has been most concerning. Recently one particular gang (they always hunt in gangs) carried out a number of bashings with such incredible frequency and violence that the police eventually caught up with them and three were charged. The Magistrate, one must assume from his remarks, was quite sure that these upright citizens were merely trying to "correct" their fellows and "one thing led to another" - to violence! What is it? Prejudice? Ignorance? or both? Unfortunately, most homosexuals are so imbued with a sense of guilt by the discriminatory attitudes of an ignorant public and legislature that they will not fight back either physically or legally. They will not report assaults for fear of reprisals from the police. After all, a criminal in the hand is worth many in the bush! It is the police's job to protect the public and apprehend criminals. They should be down around the 'beat' regularly, every night, all night, doing what we, the taxpayers pay them for. If this means they must, from time to time, arrest 'poofters' as well as bashers, then let this be done .. just so long as the incidence of bashing

is reduced. We will fight them in the Courts and bring our plight more openly to a public who should be outraged by such a situation. Let not the police use stratagems: taking the numbers of cars parked nearby, the names and addresses of those they find in the vicinity, or take the law into their own hands and join the ranks of the bashers as has been known in the past. Let them arrest people who are definitely breaking the law. So, it could be said that homosexuals have good reason to frequent the public lavatories. Many would say that until society's attitudes to the homosexual have changed that the homosexual cannot change his predatory habits. All initiative does not rest with society. The integration of the homosexual in society is the ideal required: the acceptance of his life style. The two components of this integration, the homosexual and society, must make effort. From observation and discussion it is fairly apparent that it is not only society which needs convincing that this is so. In Perth today there is no longer any need for any homosexual to seek his fellows on a beat. There are bars to go to and the Campaign has established a Club, The

Spartan Club where they and those who are sympathetic to the Campaign's aims can meet in decency and dignity, with self-respect and honesty; where he can establish relationships with integrity and concern for his brothers' needs. Indeed, the Campaign struggles for lack of support from those it seeks to liberate. Many may raise an eyebrow at the possibility of homosexuals soliciting unrestrictedly in a club. Some go to the Spartan Club with this in view. Most go to have the usual social enjoyment that is found with their fellows in such an environment. This is true too of heterosexuals - men meet women through various social contacts and many form attachments of deep and lasting value. Is this soliciting? Why should not men meet men and women meet women under the same conditions and with the same views in mind? The Campaign quotes in its platform that the same laws should be for all, irrespective of race, or colour, religion, creed, sex or sexual preference.

Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Francis Bacon.



"Could I borrow a book on self-defence?"

One man's meat . . .

Two gentle old maiden ladies sat rocking on the front porch, when they noticed a rooster chasing a hen.

The hen dashed into the road and was killed by a passing car. "How beautiful," said one of the women. "She'd rather die."

