

EAST COAST HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATIONS

Three meetings of the ECHO delegates have been held in the past month. The first, on August 29th, was hosted by DOB, and the second part was attended by several Chapter members other than the official delegates. The others were held in Washington, D.C. on September 19th and October 3rd.

The ECHO Conference: The main problem experienced in the planning of this year's Conference has been that of accommodation. Each of three hotels, which initially agreed to provide accommodation, later cancelled the agreement. The International Inn in Washington, from whom a formal contract was never obtained, refused, in June, to accommodate the Conference. A contract was then made with the Gramercy Inn in Washington, but the hotel cancelled this at the end of August. ECHO, tired of being treated in this way, hired a lawyer to investigate the advisability of initiating a lawsuit. At the August meeting, a maximum of \$500 was made available by the organizations for this purpose. Since the Gramercy Inn later revoked its cancellation it is unlikely that there will now be a suit, but the lawyer is still working on the possibility of obtaining some compensation from the hotel for the inconvenience and expense caused to ECHO. At the beginning of September alternative accommodations were secured at the Manger-Hamilton hotel in Washington, but, less than two weeks before the Conference, the hotel cancelled this agreement. The possibility of obtaining compensation from this hotel is also being explored. It is hoped that a conclusion favorable to ECHO will be reached in the case of at least one hotel, as the lawyer's fee is now approaching \$1000.

Just over a week prior to the Conference accommodations were obtained at the Sheraton-Park, Washington's largest hotel. This claims to have a liberal policy and ECHO has great hopes that the Conference will finally be held there.

The program of this year's Conference is appropriate to the theme, 'Homosexuality - Civil Liberties and Social Rights'. The tone of the Conference will be set by Robert King, the ECHO Coordinator, in his keynote speech. He will be followed by several lawyers, including Professor M. H. Freedman of the George Washington University and Hal Witt and David Carliner, members of the board of the National Capital Area Civil Liberties Union, who will speak on legal problems encountered by the homosexual and other minority groups. In addition, a panel will attempt to evaluate the outlook, as regards the law, for the homosexual. On Sunday, there will be a debate entitled 'Homosexuality: Legislation v. Education'. The Conference will conclude with a discussion by a panel of ministers in which the problem of the alienation of the homosexual from the religious community will be examined. An addition to the formal sections of the program, of particular interest to women, is a meeting of those interested in DOB, which will be held at 11 a.m. on Sunday in the ECHO Suite at the hotel.

Other ECHO Business: The second and third meetings were taken up entirely by the Conference, but the second part of the first was devoted to general business. DOB made available data collected on press clipping services and announced that it would be interested to discuss joint participation in such a service with one or more other organizations. The committee to investigate extending the purposes of ECHO issued a majority report. This requested that DOB consider the possibility of full cooperation of its New York Chapter in ECHO as it may evolve. The Corresponding Secretary of DOB will collaborate with other Governing Board members in exploring this possibility.

Reports from the affiliates: The Mattachine Society of New York announced that the proposed New York penal code has been submitted for consideration and that the Society is cooperating with the Canadian Broadcasting Co. in the production of a film. The Mattachine Society of Washington reported that HR 5990 (a bill which would prevent the Society from soliciting for funds) has passed the House of Representatives and that the report of the Biennial Conference of the American Civil Liberties Union, which has been approved by the American Law Institute, will be duplicated by the Society. DOB Research Director, Florence Conrad, requested investigation into the rumor that the New York Academy of Medicine intends to publish its controversial report on Homosexuality in a hard cover edition.