

Mattachine Society of Washington

G A Z E T T E

Volume II, Number 1

Spring 1964

H.R. 5090

District of Columbia law, as passed by Congress, requires that organizations seeking to raise funds be licensed to do so by the District Government. In August, 1962 the M S W received such a license. In July, 1963, Rep. John Dowdy (Dem., Tex.) objecting to the issuance of a license to a "bunch of perverts" introduced a bill, H.R. 5090, which provided that (a) the issuance of any such license be preceded by an affirmative finding publicly announced that the organization contributes to the health, welfare, and morals of the District of Columbia, and (b) the license issued to the Mattachine Society of Washington be revoked. The bill was referred to Subcommittee 4 of the House Committee on the District of Columbia. Dowdy is the Chairman of Subcommittee 4.

The Society opposed section (a) on the ground that it is excessively stringent; and (b) on the primary ground that, apparently as a bill of attainder, it would be unconstitutional.

A letter setting forth our position was sent to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, to whom the bill had been referred. The support of the American Civil Liberties Union was obtained.

In addition, the Society requested that Congressional hearings be held, at which representatives of the Society could testify. The request was granted, the hearings took place on August 8 & 9, 1963.

Representatives of the Government of the District of Columbia testified for 45 minutes in opposition to the bill. The president of the MSW testified for about 4½ hours, the Vice-President for about 1/2 hour, and a representative of the local ACLU affiliate for about an hour. The DC Republican Committee sent a letter to the Congressional Subcommittee opposing the bill.

The hearings elicited extensive newspaper publicity (10 articles), all of it either neutral or favorable to the Society, including an editorial in the Washington Post, strongly supporting the Society and its right to the license.

It was discovered that a provision of the law exempts from the licensing requirements organizations expecting to raise less than \$1,500.00 in any calendar year. Since the M S W comes within this category, the Society's license was returned to the District, with the clear proviso that the organization feels itself free to solicit funds without limitation or restriction.

The return of the license was reported in the Washington papers, in a fashion indicating that our activities were restricted. A letter to the editors, published in the Washington Post, stated that we "will actively continue to solicit for funds."

The District of Columbia then proposed new regulations, eliminating the \$1500 exemption, and requiring (continued on page 3)

EDITORIALS

Mattachine Society of Washington

G A Z E T T E

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SOBER THOUGHTS ON GAY BARS

Like bees and ants, man is a social creature; but, unlike our insect friends, Man's communal life goes beyond a coalescence for survival - it extends into his leisure periods or "free" time. This is his true "social" life. The homosexual is no exception to this universal principle. He is, however, by his very nature, limited in his choice of a "social" life.

The avenues open to most heterosexuals through which they can feed their social appetites are virtually limitless. Not even the smallest town is without its Kiwanis, Elks, Ladies Aids, church groups, daughters of this, sons of that---places where people with common interests can gather to talk, meet others, develop. And what has the homosexual, as such, to take the place of these? The homosexual, as members of a group, have only the gay bar.

The need for the gay bar in the community life of the homosexual is as necessary as all the other social institutions are to the heterosexual. However, the existence of a gay bar is not a license for unso-cial behavior on the part of its patrons.

We do not condone lewd or indecent behavior, the serving of liquor to minors, or disorderly conduct generally in any bar, be it homosexual

or heterosexual. The inequality lies, however, in the fact that when such conduct occurs in a heterosexual bar it is the offending individuals who are punished; when it happens in a gay bar the bar itself is looked on, by officials, as the offender and, in many cases, closed. This is unfair, but, for the present, a fact of life.

Our round-about point is that the continuing existence of gay bars is in some measure determined by the behavior of its patrons. The need of a social life for the homosexual exists - the gay bars help to fill that need. Don't jeopardize their existence. Remember, the D. A. R. won't have you!

ECHOES OF ECHO)))))))))

Now that the hubbub has died down and the dust has cleared, it's a good time to take a look through the retrospectoscope for an objective evaluation of the 1963 E C H O convention. Most people we have spoken to seem to feel that it was an unqualified success. Do we agree? Most emphatically YES!!!!

Our criterion for judging is twofold: 1. Did it achieve its immediate aims? 2. Will ECHO '63 have any lasting effects to help further the homophile movement?

The immediate aim of the '63 convention was the dissemination of information and ideas on homosexuals and homosexuality. Considering the caliber of the speakers and the variety of subjects, the attendance, the resultant radio programs, and the sale of literature, we scored well on part one.

It may be too early to judge part two. However, the breakthroughs in advertising and on radio will certainly make it easier for us to approach these media in the future. The mail we have received and the

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H.R. 5990 (con't)

requests for transcripts of the talks which we are still receiving some six months after the convention show more than an immediate interest. Perhaps the fact that membership in the Washington Mattachine has doubled since the convention can be argued in our favor.

that those connected with the solicitation supply residence address and place of employment. Public hearings on these amendments were held on November 8th. The changes were opposed by the ACLU and community organizations.

The question now arises - "What next?" The answer is obvious -----
E C H O CONVENTION 1964!!!!

The bill has come out of both subcommittee and full committee at this writing. Action on the House floor was expected on March ninth but none was taken. This may have been due in part to the many telegrams sent to members of congress by the Mattachine Society and by the ACLU. On the morning on which action was scheduled to be taken a strong editorial appeared in the Washington Post taking a stand against the bill.

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HOMOPHILE: A DEFINITION

The word homophile is coming into increasing currency. It has been agreed that, as used by the East Coast Homophile Organizations (ECHO) and its individual member organizations, the word is not simply synonymous with homosexual, but conforms to the following formal definition:

homophile: adj., pertaining to the social movement devoted to the improvement of the status of the homosexual, and to groups, activities and literature associated with the movement; as, homophile organizations, homophile conventions, homophile publications.

ECHO))))))))))))))))))))))))))

Thus, in referring to the homophile movement, or to homophile organizations, etc., there is no implication that those involved are necessarily homosexuals. We will not substitute homophile for the adjective homosexual, nor refer to homosexuals as homophiles, nor to homosexuality as homophilia, or homophilism.

The first sessions of the monthly ECHO meetings have been devoted entirely to discussions on the upcoming 1964 ECHO convention. Committees have been set up in the following areas: Program, Publicity and Advertising, Finances, and Arrangements and Accommodations. A tentative budget was arrived at. A report at the last meeting by committee chairmen shows that work has been progressing rapidly in all these areas.

With the distinction implied in this definition, we feel that the word is a useful addition to our language; without it, it becomes merely a needless euphemism.

The second sessions have been devoted, in the main, to discussions of projects contemplated by ECHO. An ECHO annual is one of the items under discussion. It has also been decided that ECHO has an obligation to assist in the formation of new homophile organizations in the East. Inquiries along these lines will be welcomed.

Your support is needed by the
MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON
Donations are always welcome.

OUR PRESIDENT SPEAKS

(Editors note: The views expressed in the following column, a regular feature of the Gazette, are the personal views and opinions of the President of the Society; they do not, necessarily, reflect the views of the Mattachine Society of Washington.)

There is a strange reluctance on the part of the homophile movement to take a stand on the question of whether or not homosexuality is a sickness.

It is currently the fad, in our all - too - conformist society, to term as sick any significant departure from the statistical norm. The homosexual community has, apparently, been so "brainwashed" by such thinking that it actually takes it with sufficient seriousness so that the argument is made that we should assume a neutral or agnostic position on the question until we have clear proof that homosexuality is NOT a sickness.

If nothing else was made plain at our recent E C H O convention, the abysmally poor quality and lack of validity of virtually the entire body of psychiatric and psychological research on this question became clearly evident. Books have been written by psychiatrists, posing as authorities, whose entire acquaintanceship with the homosexual community came through the patients coming to them for help --- an obviously atypical and unrepresentative sampling.

In his recent, much - publicized book, "Homosexuality", Bieber sets out, clearly, the weak position of the psychiatric profession, when he says (emphasis supplied): "All psychoanalytic theories ASSUME that adult homosexuality is ---- pathological." Obviously, if one assumes that homosexuality is

pathological, then one will discover that homosexuals are sick, just as, if one assumes that two plus two equal five, one is likely to discover that three plus one equal five. In both instances, the assumption requires proof before it can be seriously entertained. In neither instance is such proof available, or, apparently, likely to become so. There seems to be no valid evidence to show that homosexuality, per se, is a sickness. The simple fact that the suggestion has been made is, in the absence of evidence, no reason for abandoning the view that homosexuality is not a sickness.

Our movement, whether we like it to be so or not, is primarily one of a political, public-relations, and social - action nature, and only to a limited degree, a scientific one. In such a context it is necessary that we take firm, strong positions whenever the facts reasonable permit us to do so without violating intellectual honesty and integrity. If our movement is to succeed, we must be prepared to take bold, positive positions on relevant controversial matters, not negative, or wishy-washy neutral ones.

We would be derelict in our responsibilities to community, to society, and to science, were we not to reject the image and concept of inferiority of which this idea of sickness is part, and which society has done its immoral best to inculcate into us. Dr. Pomeroy, co-author of the Kinsey Report, put this aspect of the matter very well when he stated, in a recent address, that the Mattachine Society "will not accomplish (its) role as long as its members believe the nonsense that society has been saying about homosexuality for the past 150 years, or as long as they are weighed down by feelings of low
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Summary review: "The Emergence of the American Homophile Movement."

Donald Webster Cory, author of THE HOMOSEXUAL IN AMERICA, chose the above title for his address at the ECHO Convention. He very ably outlined the movement's development from its European roots to its present status. Mr. Cory stated that the important factors responsible for its success and development included World War II, the Kinsey and Wolfenden Reports, and more permissive sexual attitudes. These also aided in reducing the opposition, reluctance, and fear on the part of the homosexual community to create the movement.

We have only begun our work of initiating social change on a big scale. He then summarized what he felt were the major difficulties and obstacles today. Among them was failure to overcome the apathy of the majority of homosexuals toward the movement.

Also, he decried the dearth of effective leadership and incentive. Said that the homosexual's great emotional problems brought about neurotic interaction within the leadership. Cory hit prevalent hypocritical stance of the movement in which homosexuality is presented, not as it exists, but in a manner designed to placate the public.

He contended that great confusion exists in the area of what constitutes beneficial publicity. He stated that we often did ourselves great disservice in our method of handling speakers and guests so as not to offend potential friends regardless of what they might say or do.

Problems are created by naively

allowing ourselves to be used by superficial authors masquerading as great authorities, who in reality are sensationalists.

He further said that we are the victims of poorly planned goals, compounding difficulty in establishing and maintaining a high level of interest for any appreciable period of time.

Continuing, Mr. Cory proceeded to enumerate some of the strengths and achievements of the movement. Among them was that homosexuality has been made a legitimate source of social protest, meriting serious attention and no longer is solely a source of entertainment. Also, meetings of homosexuals and discussion of homosexuality are now quite respectable, are advertised and held in highly regarded public places, and favorable received by professionals.

He further declared that the movement has helped qualified authors, researchers and professional bodies bring about enlightenment in addition to having established cooperative relationships with such groups as the American Civil Liberties Union, public health, social welfare, and governmental agencies.

Cory concluded by stating that we must fight for acceptance, which is an achievable goal; and calling for the development of a definitive long range program that would include building a realistic image acceptable to society as well as the homosexual himself. The address was followed by a provocative question and answer session on the speech.

ELLIS ADDRESS: A SUMMARY

E C H O banquet address: SEXUAL FREEDOM AND HOMOSEXUALITY: The Right of a Man to be Wrong, Albert Ellis, Ph.D.

(Though the Gazette has refrained from printing reviews of talks at the E C H O convention in favor of the sale of the taped transcripts and a proposed booklet of the full printed talks with reviews, the Ellis talk was so controversial that we feel we owe this summation to our readers. We present this summary, too, in order to indicate some of the extreme views on homosexuality which are now being promulgated. Ed. note)

Dr. Ellis' thesis is that "a fixed or exclusive homosexual is wrong, meaning inefficient, self-defeating and emotionally disturbed; but that he has a perfect right as a human to be wrong." He proceeded to give his reasons for holding this thesis. Maintaining that there is nothing intrinsically immoral about homosexuality, he said that man is essentially a plural-sexual being who can easily be conditioned in his sexual orientation and that anyone fixated exclusively as heterosexual or homosexual is "fetishistically deviated."

He enumerated the major reasons why he and "almost all straight psychotherapists" insist that fixed homosexuals are sick. In capsule form they are:

(1) In our society anyone who persists in practising homosexuality instead of training himself to enjoy heterosexuality is defeating his own ends.

(2) Homosexuality would be normal only after objectively trying heterosexuality and finding that for sexual reasons homosexuality is preferred. Homosexuals exhibit the

bigotry indicative of emotional disturbances by contending that they could not possibly enjoy heterosexuality.

(3) Theoretically possible, the well adjusted homosexual has not been observed. Fear plays the leading role in inducing or maintaining an individual's homosexuality.

(4) Homosexuals are short range hedonists, and also take the easy way in their non-sexual life. A healthy homosexual will by himself or with professional help recondition himself to heterosexuality, which many do. Those who do not, remain hedonists and are emotionally ill.

(5) Most homosexuals are borderline or outright psychotics. There is no evidence that homosexuality is constitutional, but increasing evidence that serious mental illness is partially due to physiological anomalies which may predispose toward fixed homosexuality.

(6) Exclusive homosexuals exhibit further evidence of emotional disturbance which is often found in the manner in which they express their sexual behavior.

(7) Evidence for the existence of the well - adjusted homosexual is unconvincing because of the techniques used. They may not be guilty or upset about their condition, but further investigation establishes maladjustment.

He considers only suicidal patients to be sicker than the homosexual. Dr. Ellis then stated that he did not think homosexuals should be forced to change or be punished. He maintains that no human should be blamed or punished for anything he does. He believes that unless we allow this right to be wrong we will never help homosexual (cont'd on page 7)

ELLIS (cont'd)

sexuals to correct their mistakes but, rather, will encourage them to maintain their present course. He then spent much time elaborating on this latter point and described how he thought that the homosexual should cope with his problems and facilitate his reconditioning to heterosexuality.

NEWS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Daughters of Bilitis is participating in a research project of Dr. Ralph H. Gunlach, a psychologist and associate director of research at the postgraduate center for mental health, New York City. By means of a confidential questionnaire, the project aims to "collect accurate information on the lives and backgrounds of lesbians, and, by analyzing and reporting this objectively, such a study can advance the cause of genuine understanding of the lesbian.

DOB also announced that the first awards of the Blanche M. Baker Memorial Scholarships were made to Chicago and San Francisco students.

Plans are being formulated for the DOB Biennial Convention to be held in New York City, June 20th & 21st. The theme -- "The Threshold of the Future."

New York Chapter DOB has moved into new and more spacious quarters located at 441 West 28th Street.

The Mattachine Society, San Francisco held its Tenth Annual Conference in San Francisco and in Los Angeles with the assistance of the Los Angeles Mattachine last August. Principal addresses of the conference were taped by station KPFA - FM Berkeley, for future broadcast.

San Francisco Mattachine is coop-

erating in a study designed to explore the possibility of "physical changes due to particular sexual habits." It also plans to revive its seminar series, and is beginning a monthly Public Discussion Forum. A professional psychologist has joined the staff of consultant counselors.

Los Angeles Mattachine has started a twenty-four hour answering service to provide attorney referral service.

New York Mattachine has assisted the New York City Health Department and the U.S. Public Health Service in developing a VD control program for N. Y. C. homosexuals. The Society's June lecturer was Robert Sherwin, director of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex. His topics were; the law, the homosexual's public image, and possible plans for the future. The September lecture was by Dr Albert Ellis on "Sexual Freedom and Homosexuality: The Right to be Wrong."

The Janus Society of Philadelphia was addressed by the Rev. Robert Wood on "Homosexuality as an answer to the population increase." Janus now has an office telephone to facilitate receiving inquiries. They have recently sponsored a talk at the Warwick Hotel by a PHS representative on "Homosexuality and Venereal Disease."

Dionysus has submitted its Articles of Incorporation to the state of California as a non-profit organization. They are contemplating holding their second Annual Symposium this spring.

The National League for Social Understanding has been successfully active on the California legal scene; participated on a popular TV program; lectured to the Christian Ethics class at Occidental

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College on "Understanding and Justice for the Homophile"; and established an attorney referral service.

The Public Relations Director of the Homosexual League of New York, Randolfe Wicker, spoke to a group of students at City College of New York. His address was covered by the New York Times.

"Lesbianism" was the topic of discussion by eight female homosexuals on WBAI - FM's "Live and Let Live, Part II." Pacifica stations in LA and San Francisco plan to carry the program in the future.

E C H O

CONVENTION '64

Theme

HOMOSEXUALITY: Civil Liberties
and Social Rights

October 10th and 11th

Strameray
~~International Inn~~
Washington, D. C.

Address all inquiries to:

Robert King, Coordinator
ECHO
P.O. Box 6038, Mid-City
Station
Washington, D. C. 20005

Our President Speaks (cont'd)

self-esteem induced by Society's attitude toward them. When you are called nuts and neurotics and goofers by therapists, immoral by the clergy, criminals by lawyers and judges, and perverts and child seducers by the public, you need a special kind of faith in yourself and faith in your fellow men before the collective ego of the Mattachine Society can be healthy and effective."

On most questions, such as this one, a too - carefully weighed, overly - cautious, scientific neutrality, or no-position stand will be taken as a position of weakness and will be used to our disadvantage.

For these reasons of fact, of logic, and of strategy and tactics, I, personally, take the position that until and unless clearly valid, positive evidence shows otherwise, homosexuality, per se, is neither a sickness, a defect, a disturbance, nor a malfunction of any sort.

If evidence should show, conclusively, that this position is in error, I shall give serious thought to leaving the movement. I do not anticipate that I shall ever need to do so.

I strongly commend this position to the homophile movement and to the homosexual community.
H.R. 5990 (cont'd)

Most recently, a Minority Report came out, signed by 9 of the 24 committee members, and opposing the bill in the strongest possible terms. It is understood that this report is the prelude to formal debate on the bill on the floor of the House of Representatives.

The solicitation of funds by the Mattachine Society of Washington actively continues.

OTHER HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATIONS
IN THE UNITED STATES

Mattachine Society, Inc.
693 Mission Street
San Francisco 5, California

Mattachine Society, Inc. of New York
1133 Broadway
Suite 516
New York City, New York 10010

Janus Society
34 South 17th Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Daughters of Bilitis, Inc.
1232 Market Street
Suite 108
San Francisco 2, California

ONE, Inc.
2256 Venice Blvd.
Los Angeles, California 90006

National League for Social Understanding
8214 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, California 90046

Dionysus
P.O. Box 804
Huntington Beach, California

Los Angeles Mattachine Society, Inc.
9157 Sunset Blvd.
Suite 205
Los Angeles, California 90069

Citizen News
471 Minna Street
San Francisco 3, California

Demophil Center
15 Lindall Place
Boston 14, Massachusetts