

Human Rights Act needs changes

The punishments for being gay are not as obvious to the average Canadian as they are to the average gay organization and perhaps it's time to tell you a few stories (unfortunately true) showing what some have suffered in just the last few years in Canada.

John Damien is a 43 year old Canadian citizen. Until 1975 he worked for 20 years in the thoroughbred racing circuit in Ontario, the last five in a prestigious position as one of three racing stewards (judges) with the Ontario Racing Commission. On February 6, 1975 he was offered \$1,700 and a letter of recommendation if he would quietly resign his position. Upon refusal, he was fired. The reason for firing—his homosexuality. John has been in the courtroom ever since. He is suing the commission for unlawful dismissal and bringing the question of the Human Rights Code into the public eye. If he wins his case, the Human Rights Code will include "sexual orientation." His legal expenses are being covered by the donations of private individuals, and gay organizations. The opposition's legal costs are funded by the Ontario government. The Canadian courts call this justice.

Mr. and Mrs. C. were divorced in 1972, and in the custody hearing for their children, Mrs. C. was granted custody. Two years later, Mr. C. contested these rights on the grounds that Mrs. C. had moved in with a female lover. During this case, Mr. C. kidnapped one of the children from school. The court allowed him to keep the child all through the case, despite Mrs. C.'s right as legal guardian, and after 2 years of battle, awarded him custody of the other child. The court ruled that he must have his sister live with him to give the children proper care after school hours, as he could not. One month later, the sister moved out. The children want to be with their mother, and always have.

It is impossible for Mrs. C. to go back to court because her personal holdings are gone and the Gay Defense Fund for Saskatoon is depleted. She cannot afford the court costs.

This year a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, Barbara Thornborrow, a lesbian, was asked to sign either a request for psychiatric help or resign quietly. She refused and was fired. This is one case of several where gay women have been fired and let the public know. How many more took the quiet path to unemployment?

As the law stands, any sexual act is legal in a private setting between two consenting adults. In our case, Canada doesn't consider a homosexual "adult" until the day he turns 21. Funny really, when I'm allowed to sleep with any Tom, Dick or Harry I want from the age of 18 (just has to be a Tom, Dick or Harry)!

To be openly gay in this country you can forget a career with the military, police forces, teaching and other professions, expect to be thrown out of any establishment not gay, risk losing friends and relatives, know that your lease is no good, forget leaving worldly goods to a lover—the family can take it anyway, expect to lose your children, be ostracized by your church, and basically be treated as an all-around half human.

Until the Human Rights Code is amended to include "sexual orientation" one tenth of Canada's people face these possible repercussions every day of their lives. With the law against us, how can we ever totally exist?

Out of a group of 8000 homosexuals in any given city in Canada, 800 will be seen at a gay club or bar, 800 will have told close friends of their homosexual orientation, 300 may have told one parent, 45 will join a Gay Liberation group, 10 of those will march in a protest march as a gay person, 4 will publicly give their real names and become known as gay people.

I am a lesbian and I will say it, not

for personal gratification or reward (what reward!), but for the thousands who are not in the position to be honest and open, but who do live loving, productive lives and happen to be homosexual.

Until sexual orientation is included in our provincial human rights codes they have no choice.

The Canadian Institute of Public Opinion conducted a Gallup Poll and the results were published at the end of June in daily newspapers across Canada. "HOMOSEXUALS SHOULD HAVE THEIR RIGHTS PROTECTED, 52% SAY" was the headline in the June 29 **Toronto Star**. Only 30% replied negatively to the question which was:

"In the proposed Canadian Hu-

man Rights Act, there has been no provision made for protection of homosexuals from discrimination in employment and in access to public services. In your opinion, should such a provision be included or not?"

Another 18% said they didn't know. Excluding those who didn't know from the calculation, 63% favoured protection for gays in the Act, while 37% were opposed.

Join the minority! Write your M.P. and other government bodies. Someone in your family, among your friends, in your community needs your help.

by Mary Ann Mancini

Potter on poverty



Philip Potter, General Secretary World Council of Churches spoke at Dalhousie on Sunday about the world's distribution of wealth.

by Liz Joyce

Philip Potter, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, spoke Sunday on the theme of "Wealth in the West, Poverty for the Rest." Potter has been studying the problem of poverty in the Third World for thirty years.

He encouraged discussion throughout the afternoon (the lecture lasted from 3:30 to 5:30), and his main thrust was that of looking at the problem of Third World and local poverty "with a Bible in one hand, and a newspaper in the

other."

He emphasized an historical approach, showing the growth of modern, industrial, technological societies and why they receive the bulk of the world's wealth.

Potter maintained that there must be great change before the distribution of wealth is equal, and that this is only possible through a distribution of power.

Potter was brought to the city by the Student Christian Movement, with which Potter was once connected.

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by fraud, not election."

The above serves as a brief review of the history of the political "rise" of I.F.S. Burnham to whom Dalhousie University in all its wisdom is granting an honorary degree.

For his outstanding public services, Dalhousie University, in all its wisdom, is granting an honorary degree to Burnham.

It is perhaps ironic, but even Dalhousie is not untouched. Early in this decade, one of Dalhousie's graduates, Dr. J. Ramsauray, a Guyanese and a vigorous opponent

of Burnham's government, was shot while standing in front of a bank in Georgetown. He has lost partial use of one of his lungs. Not surprisingly, no one was apprehended for the crime.

Perhaps the "powers that be" that select recipients for an honorary degree might consider the following individuals for the next convocation: I) Pinochet of Chile II) Idi Amin of Uganda, and III) Posthumously Adolph Hitler.

It's a crying shame Dalhousie!

—a Guyanese

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There is very little doubt that Trudeau would use violence to keep his idea of federalism together. Pierre has already told graduating students what we should leave the country if we can't get work. He talked on December 31, 1970 of a "Kent State" situation of troops and police cutting down Quebecois students in the streets. No doubt he wouldn't hesitate to send tanks in the streets of Montreal if the negotiations between the Levesque government and the federals broke down, and Quebec declared independence unilaterally. I wouldn't have any qualms about throwing the first Molotov cocktail, it wouldn't be

the first time students fought large federalist powers tanks with bare hands, bricks, barricades, bottles and gasoline. The students of Prague proved that they could hold off for a while in 1968 against the Soviet invaders squashing the Czechoslovakian "spring of independence." I can only pray it never comes to that, for I love Canada as it is, I hope the spirit of enlightened understanding can prevail in the negotiations between Canada and Quebec.

I only hope Trudeau doesn't get or make an excuse to loose the hounds of hell as he did in that October of 1970.

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