

"The Campaign Against Moral Persecution (W.A.) - its aims and objectives".

C.A.M.P. in W.A. has never received the whole-hearted support of the homosexual community in this state. The reasons are probably numerous: an overt, activist group like ours poses a threat to people who are largely "closeted"; the values of our society teach people to lead self-centred lives ("blast you Jack...!") and not be concerned for others in need - particularly if involvement poses, in any way, a social and/or economic threat; moreover, there has never been anything like the overt persecution of homosexuals in this State to push them together for mutual protection as there has been in other States or countries; also, because homosexuals have learned for so long to live with their oppression, many of them are no longer aware that they are oppressed and they deride and oppose any organisation that exposes their oppression to them. There are probably other reasons, but these are the main ones.

Consequently, the Campaign has had to struggle from time to time to keep its impetus and its services going. For most of the time that we were in the Spartan Club and while there were few or no other venues for socialising, gays stayed with us, mostly for selfish and superficial reasons. However, when we moved out because other commercial interests were offering them entertainment elsewhere, we experienced and even shorter supply of help for the more serious aims of our movement.

In organising this seminar at the Conference we hoped to gather together past and present members for a long critical look at the road we had traversed and whether we were presently following the right one. This was the most poorly attended (approx. 30 - about half the attendance of each of the other two). Of these, six were members!

Graham Douglas, one of C.A.M.P.'s founding members, gave a brief resume of the organisation's achievements. They were fairly formidable: a Counselling/Referral Service which has been rated by one Government Dept. as the best of its kind in the State; the establishment of clubrooms; hundreds of socials, parties, dances, etc.; submissions to such bodies as the Commissions for Schools, Human Relations, Homosexuality; liaisons with other relevant organisations; radio and tele-

vision programs and "talk-backs"; public speaking to dozens of organisations; public debates and seminars, law reform, help in family custody cases (in which we have established some precedents); counselling courses for High School counsellors; support in cases of discrimination in employment; publication of periodicals and pamphlets.

Graham suggested that in establishing and maintaining all these activities, we were on the right track and that these are the activities in which we should continue (take up again?) to involve ourselves. However, two questions arise in my mind: is there still the same need and/or opportunity for them? and, where will we find the people to organise them?

Trevor Norton, a student at Murdoch University and a member of Gay Lib stated that C.A.M.P. was no longer a necessary organisation because Law Reform and Counselling were all it was now doing; the first activity should now be disbanded as both political parties were now against law reform; and the second should become a separate and autonomous organisation; nobody is using our facilities; it would be years before we got better ones; there was no warm and friendly feeling in the clubrooms for newcomers; people were misusing the premises, i.e. sex; C.A.M.P. "runs people into the ground" workwise; there was no consciousness-raising so important to the vitality of the homosexual liberation movement; there was little or no link with other gay organisations and the Feminist movement which now led the Gay movement in Australia because it had similar aims and enemies.

In discussion, later, (and most of it centred around what Trevor had to say) it was felt that there was much truth in his statements although many were overstated to the point of occasional inaccuracy.

Max Carnaghan, a more recent member of C.A.M.P. and the minister presently officiating at Perth's Metropolitan Community Church, spoke finally calling for greater unity within the Campaign: we have approximately 700 members on our books who could be a force to reckon with if galvanised into united action working towards our Object (Constitution, Art.1.3) which I quote here in part:

"The present object of C.A.M.P. W.A. shall be to promote the moral, civic, professional, psychological and sociological well-being of Homosexuals, male and female.

- by defining their rights and responsibilities,
- by devoting their self-awareness and ethical standards,
- by encouraging their legal and political emancipation,
- by liberation them from prejudice, discrimination injustice and persecution.
- by achieving homosexual-heterosexual equality."

Max spoke also of the importance of C.A.M.P.'s personal help to all its members but felt that there was alienation of members from its executive; that letters from C.A.M.P. should be signed by more than one person - all members or groups of them; the public should know what a large organisation we really are.

There was considerable and constructive discussion following this final speaker. Some recommendations were made directly, others I have deduced and extrapolated from general comments. I think I have most of them listed, but should any member or conferee wish to add to the list or convince me that some

need changing, a note to the Secretary will bring his/her contribution to the attention of the Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. C.A.M.P. (W.A.) SHOULD TAKE MORE RADICAL ATTITUDES, ADOPT MORE CONFRONTING TECHNIQUES, AND BE MORE PERSISTENT IN PURSUIT OF ITS OBJECT.
2. C.A.M.P. (W.A.) SHOULD RECOMMENCE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES (DROPPED IN RECENT YEARS) WITH RENEWED VIGOUR AND IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE ABOVE PRINCIPLES.
3. C.A.M.P. (W.A.) SHOULD ACCELERATE ITS EFFORTS TO FIND NEW PREMISES. THESE SHOULD BE SUITED TO EXPANDING SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND COUNSELLING ACTIVITIES.
4. C.A.M.P. (W.A.) SHOULD, WHERE POSSIBLE MAKE ITS PREMISES AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO ORGANISATIONS (e.g. Gay Lib, Women's Movt.) AND ACTIVITIES CONDUCIVE TO ITS OBJECT.
5. C.A.M.P. (W.A.) SHOULD ATTEMPT TO RATIONALIZE ALL EFFORTS TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF ITS OBJECT BY VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS SO AS TO AVOID DUPLICATION AND SUBSEQUENT WASTE.
6. C.A.M.P. (W.A.) SHOULD ESTABLISH EITHER IN COMPANY WITH GAY LIB OR ALONE REGULAR MEETINGS FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING.