

PIE CLOSES DOWN

PAEDOPHILE INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The Executive Committee of the Paedophile Information Exchange reluctantly decided in July that it could no longer continue running the group when there was so little to offer its members and not much prospect of the situation improving in the foreseeable future. For the last year or so, the Committee had consisted of only a handful of people with varied degrees of commitment to the group and with some disagreement between individuals. The worry of the forthcoming 'incitement' trial, the harassment of the many newspaper 'exposes' of committee members, internal differences over our relationship with the magazine minor Problems and their critical remarks on PIE affairs, and many personal problems - all these had combined to leave the Committee exhausted and despondent, and thus unable to produce our publications or arrange any useful services for our members.

P.I.E. was founded in 1974 to publish information on paedophilia, to campaign for the acceptance of paedophile love, and to counsel lonely paedophiles or those in legal difficulties. To these ends, we have published numerous periodicals, held meetings for members and the public, allowed members to write to one another - all reasonable and sensibly-planned activities, but all of which have drawn the hysterical attentions of the Press and the unwarranted suspicions of the Authorities. National newspapers have year after year published 'exposes' of the group and its committee members, attributing to us all sorts of criminal acts and refusing to print our denials of them, knowing full well our inability to sue for libel because of the enormous costs involved in such cases. The police have conducted at least four investigations into the group, their enquiries being prompted by those press reports or by puritanical MP's - yet, the accusations of producing and distributing child pornography, supplying children for sex, and abducting children from the streets, have all been found to be without substance. However, the need to uphold the public prejudice against paedophiles led the authorities in 1979 to resurrect the totally-discredited charge of 'conspiracy to corrupt public morals' against six members and a quantity of persons unknown; the case was heard in 1981 and, with a choice of two counts against each defendant and the need for a second trial, it was inevitable that the jury would feel itself obliged to convict at least one defendant. There can be no doubt that at the forthcoming 'incitement' trial, with a total of 18 counts against the 3 defendants, the authorities will be hoping for a similar result.

During our ten years of campaigning and counselling, press misrepresentation and police interest have not been the only problems we have had to contend with. Membership of PIE alone has been sufficient justification for committee members to be sacked from their jobs, for security reasons (Home Office) or adverse publicity (Open University); and for them to be harassed by their neighbours and landlords, with broken windows, physical and verbal abuse and threats of eviction. While these troubles have been worrying enough for each of us personally, our hopes for a continued enlightenment on the subject of intergenerational sexuality still have the hurdles of an 'incitement' trial and Paedophilia (Protection of Children) Bill to overcome; hurdles which will mean virtually the end of any discussion on the subject, if they are not cleared.

'INCITEMENT' TRIAL

Three PIE members are due to stand trial in November on charges of publishing and mailing an obscene article, and five charges of 'inciting persons to commit sexual offences'. (The charges were brought in September 1983 after police had failed to catch the three men who abducted and assaulted a boy in Brighton.) The evidence to support these allegations consists almost entirely of a member's letter, which discusses the ethics of penetrative sex with children, in our members-only magazine Contact 6. (Contact was a 'house' magazine consisting of ordinary letters sent in by members and it was meant to give an 'open forum' to members' views; despite its title, it was not a contact service for 'introductions' to children, nor was it even a penfriend service for members to correspond with each other.)

The prosecution alleges that reading that letter would incite the reader to have sexual intercourse with a girl under the age of 16 years, AND/OR to commit buggery, AND/OR to indecently assault a girl, AND/OR to indecently assault a boy under the age of 16 years. We would have liked to reproduce that letter, whose apparently amazing power over thought and action would surely rank it amongst the most potent of English Literature, but Contempt of Court rules prohibit it. We would have liked to report on those persons who were incited to commit each or all of the amazing variety of sexual acts described above, but the prosecution has not presented anyone able to testify to the fact.

So, what is this prosecution all about?

It's about the social taboo on sexuality and, in particular, society's hysteria against any discussion of children's sexuality.

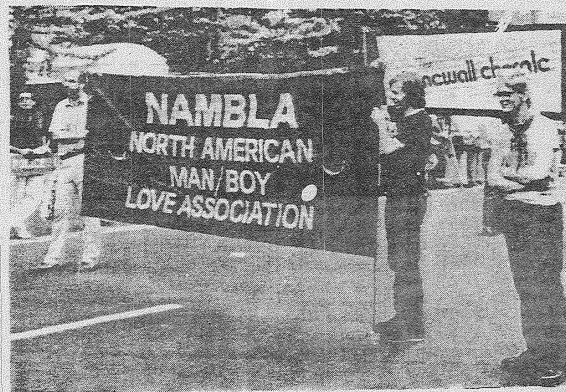
It's about the public's inability to accept the fact that many children willingly and happily enter into relationships with adults, relationships which often include a sexual element and which sometimes last for many years.

Above all, it's a visible attempt to make a scapegoat of these three defendants for the authorities' inability to catch and bring to justice the many child abductors and murderers - not a far-fetched suggestion when so many people consider that simply to be paedophile is a crime.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

On 27th June 1984, Geoffrey Dickens finally fulfilled his threat to introduce legislation against paedophiles, and was given leave by Parliament to introduce his Paedophilia (Protection of Children) Bill. The Bill is complicated but generally speaking it would make it an offence to belong to a group which discusses sexual relationships with children, except in a condemnatory way; or for members of such a group to possess any material discussing such relationships. Due to pressure of business, the Bill did not get its second reading, but Dickens has promised to re-introduce it in the next session, starting at the end of the year.

The passing of this Bill would effectively make it impossible to make any comments about the beneficial aspects of intergenerational sexual relationships, as those comments would certainly be deemed as giving support to such relationships. It would mean the banning of any group similar to PIE, and the prohibiting of any group, radical, gay or otherwise, from discussing the subject.



New York City

june 24, 1984

8th MAN/BOY CONFERENCE

NAMBLA, the North American Man/Boy Love Association, held its annual conference in San Francisco, October 6-7, at the Pride Center.

Discussions concerned the organization's future and also covered a series of related workshops. There was also a public forum on Sex between Men and Boys and other questions.

"Pie Closes Down." International Gay Association Bulletin, no. 5, 1984. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, link.gale.com/apps/doc/KQDAGG973176566/AHSI?u=ed_itw&sid=primo. Accessed 22 July 2024.