

damages—and to get an injunction to prevent raiding or undue harrasing of the coffeehouse.

Few days later, at a big public meeting, with a few dozen cops straining at the leash but under orders not to make any speeches, there was a general debate on the whole question (just what was the question, exactly?) presided over by Police Commissioner Thomas J. Gibbons. Gertrude Fitzpatrick of 2036 Sansom St. presented a petition demanding the Humoresque be closed as a public nuisance. She was "sick of the place" she said and she didn't believe "a 23 year old boy is responsible enough to run a coffeehouse in the first place." Milo MacGoldrick of 2034 Sansom St. called the shop a gathering place for homosexuals. "It is offensive and a damned effrontery."

Eugene John Lewis of 2018 Rit-tenhouse Square also had a petition from 22 persons attacking another raided coffeehouse, The Gilded Cage. Lewis said he'd been in the place several times and had complained to police 12 or 15 times that he saw "homosexuals and lesbians and young girls with older men" in there.

More speeches on both sides. When atty. Samuel Diamond said court action—rather than police raids—would have been the proper way to cope with alleged nuisances, Commissioner Gibbons had to restrain Captain Rizzo who suddenly rushed forward. There was the Commissioner tugging on the Captain's coat and refusing to permit Rizzo to make a speech. Gibbons made one though: complaining that we—that is, the police—"are not on trial," and alleging that one 14 year old girl had admitted going to the Humoresque to meet lesbians. In reply to a question suggesting the police department was acting

from anti-intellectual bias, Gibbons said not so—"We have quite a few intellectuals in the department ourselves." Rizzo then made his speech anyhow.

Little evidence was presented that the coffeehouses are actually gay—and readers tell us that only a small percentage of the people in these places are gay. This is simply nothing more than vicious and quite capricious police persecution of non-conformist groups.

On the other hand—homosexuals do have a right—and should exercise that right—to patronize any coffeehouse, bar, or other public establishment, and any manager of such a place of business who refuses service to a person simply on the grounds of believing that person to be homosexual, can be sued for damages. Any manager of a business does have a right to refuse to serve, or even to eject, persons whose behavior is improper, illegal, immoral or boisterous.

But, whoever wishes to stand up for his rights has to know it won't be easy. Rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution are nonetheless forbidden under many state and local ordinances. Such ordinances are illegal, but the person who sets out to prove it has a tough row to hoe. However, homosexuals are never likely to have any rights til they are willing to fight for them.

And back to the coffeehouses—why not a few gay coffeehouses? Up to now, bars have been almost the only public places homosexuals could gather—and since many homosexuals don't drink—seems to me the coffeehouse would be a good addition to the limited social facilities available.

## ROUNDELAY

Guatemalan president Fuentes' appointment of his husky cousin,

Senora Julia Quinones Ydigoras, as Minister of Education, brought howls of protest. Dona Julia, whom TIME described as a female transvestite, and who looks like a cross between a New York longshoreman and an Irish cop, had been active as a one-man goon squad for an earlier dictator, and was a rousing campaign speaker, had thoughtfully already submitted her resignation, even before the mob, objecting to her masculine appearance and behavior, and to her relations with her female companion, howled for it. The president, at first reluctant, accepted the voice of the people . . .

Kansas City cops busily blowing up the discovery of a girls' club into a major scandal. One school official, finding that one mother's daughter had confided to her diary—"I believe I am getting gay and it scares me" didn't know what the word meant but found out. He then began, as the KC Star naively describes the whole affair, "to notice a pattern of truancies among certain girls at Northeast" (highschool). Investigation, and finally forced confessions from 6 girls, implicating not themselves but 26 other girls in a secret sex society, with passwords, stiff membership requirements—and sex. One girl claimed to have been slashed on the face and neck, but officials discounted her story—minor scratches and a lot of mercurochrome. There was some testimony regarding drinking and dope—but the whole thing—a not very pleasant story if true—sounded trumped up, or at least exaggerated out of all proportion.

There always have been and always will be young people of both sexes growing up and making the discovery that they are homosexual, and trying with varying degrees of success, to get together. Society itself determines, by its attitudes, whether these meetings, matings, clubs and

other associations that result, will be healthy, wholesome and socially valuable, or whether they will be vicious, twisted things hiding in the dark.

Much yap in New Orleans. Since the murder of the tourist guide there (reported in the last tangents) local and state politicians have been getting into the old sideshow act of "let's clean up all the perverts."

Reversing a lower court, the Superior Court here cleared the manager of the Coronet Theatre for showing the stark homosexual film, FIREWORKS. Judges F. G. Swain and E. T. Bishop held that homosexuality is "older than Sodom and Gomorrah"—"society should understand it." Properly treated, it is an acceptable subject for motion pictures. FIREWORKS, along with THE VOICES, another experimental film the cops didn't like, will show again soon at the Coronet.

Herb Caen, A #1 Frisco-booster, back from the Hearstpress to the SF Chronicle, caught up a prize typo in J. D. Mercer's THEY WALK IN SHADOW, a thick new volume on homosexuals and "ambisexuals." A line on the title page reads: "For the use of legislators, civil and military jurists, attorneys, government executives, penologists and law enforcement officers." This was Caen-headed, "How Freudian Are The Typesetters." Mr. Mercer's book had a pretty rugged odyssey coming to print. Written over 10 years ago (since brought up to date) the book missed publication then because Mr. Mercer refused to anti-slant it. After 10 years and over ten thousand dollars—it is out. A bit uneven, with several Caen-raising slips, it is the fattest and one of the most outspoken books in the field. Can't help thinking what a revolutionary book it would have been if it had come out in 1948 . . .

The Mattachine Society's new Education Handbook (64 pages of microscopic print) is quite a job—a manual of organizational methodology invaluable to anyone interested in setting up discussion groups or such. Prepared in Denver, whence cometh that excellent newsletter we've mentioned now'n then. Denver will be host to the Society's annual convention this coming Sept. 4-7 . . .

Our own 3rd book, Harry Otis' travel stories, including a few that have appeared in these pages, and a few others that our lawyer originally thought might be a little too - - - anyhow, it'll be out soon . . .

And from Chicago, TRADEWINDS, an interesting new mimeoed gay magazine, with fiction, articles and artwork. Welcome aboard . . .