



# **GALOP**

---

**Gay**

---

**London**

---

**Police**

---

**Monitoring**

---

**Group**

---

***2nd Annual Report***

---

***June 1985***



## **Gay London Police Monitoring Group**

The Gay London Police Monitoring Group wants to hear about the treatment of gay people by the police. If you witness or become involved in any incident, discuss it with our full-time worker in confidence.

If you are a gay person who supports GALOP's aims and would like to know more about or work or how you can join, please write to the address below.

GALOP is grant-aided by the GLC but we are in constant need of extra money. If you would like to help, donations can be sent to:

Gay London Police Monitoring Group  
38 Mount Pleasant  
London WC1X 0AP

Telephone: 01 278 6215  
(Answerphone service out of office hours)

Full-time GALOP worker: David Wilson-Carr  
Management Committee: David James (Convenor)

John Harrison (Secretary)  
Matthew Bensberg (Treasurer)  
David Tyler  
Brian Stockdale  
Clive Simpson

Locum Workers:

Margie Wood (Lesbians & Policing Project; June—August, 1984)  
Colin Richardson (Publications; May—July, 1985)

LESPOP Workers:

Kris Black  
Sara Mogen

## **Police & Criminal Evidence Act**

The Police powers created by this Act were discussed at length in the 1984 GALOP Annual Report. They will not now come into effect until January 1st, 1986, largely as a result of the Miners' Strike, which held up police training in their new powers. Detailed guides to the Act will be published later in the year by GALOP and by LESPOP. Enquiries to:

GALOP  
38 Mount Pleasant  
London WC1X 0AP  
Tel: 278 6215

LESPOP  
38 Mount Pleasant  
London WC1X 0AP  
Tel: 833 4996



## Introduction: Convenor's Report

---

The year 1984 opened with Orwellian forecasts of the threat to individual liberty. Yet at the end of the year, the media commentators appeared to give little importance to the changes that did occur. The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill became an Act. The Prevention of Terrorism Act was rewritten in wider terms. The policing of the miners' strike exposed the role of the police as a national strike-breaking force and the meaninglessness of most of the legal constraints on police powers.

For lesbian and gay people too, the new strength of reactionary forces was evident: raids on gay pubs and bookshops, new police powers of arrest, bans on lesbian and gay employment by local authorities, intimidatory arrests on lesbian and gay demonstrations in London and Rugby, and an escalating hysteria constructed around AIDS.

For GALOP as an organisation the most significant development was the opening of resources to lesbians in London. The organisation had been started, run by and mostly concerned with gay men. However, in May 1984 further GLC funding was made available to employ a second worker. A lesbian was appointed to conduct a pilot project, and this quite quickly grew into an effective organisation which (within the limits of funding and management arrangements) enjoyed autonomy under the GALOP umbrella. During the year LESPOP succeeded in negotiating independent funding from the GLC so there are now separate organisations working on policing issues for gay men and lesbians respectively.

For the men's project, 1984 was largely a year of consolidation. The work we did in 1983 around the issue of entrapment made a substantial contribution to the debate on the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill: media interest in the arrest and trial of Dr Keith Hampson was fed with special briefings on the background issues.

For the 1984 Gay Pride March GALOP organised a system of observers and emergency procedures to deal with arrests such as had been seen on the Lesbian Strength march. There were none, but the system was put to good use when eighteen lesbians and gay men were arrested on a protest march in Rugby.

GALOP has also organised training sessions on street collecting for Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners and on new powers contained in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

Most of our work during 1984 has been described in some detail in the following pages. This report has been written since LESPOP obtained independent funding and each organisation has taken responsibility for reporting on its own work. Thanks are due to the GLC Police Committee and unit for support, both financial and practical, to the members, management, staff and volunteers of GALOP and LESPOP for their contributions and to the individual lesbians and gay men who were prepared to add to the trauma of their encounters with the law the experience of recounting it for our benefit.

I succeeded Brian Stockdale as Convenor of GALOP at the 1984 Annual General Meeting and I am pleased to take this opportunity to record the appreciation of everyone involved in the organisation for the contribution he made in initiating the project and steering it through its first two years. Brian has fortunately remained on the management committee so we have not lost his experience.

Our next year has commenced under the shadow of GLC abolition and the likely loss of funding in 1986. With the implementation of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act in January 1986 and the promise of further police powers to deny the rights of freedom of assembly and protest there is clearly an essential role for GALOP to fulfill. Even with depleted resources I am sure that we will still be here and still be fighting next year.

*David James  
Convenor*



# Entrapment

---

4.

## Introduction

The last annual report from GALOP described in detail many cases occurring during 1983 in which police officers had posed as gay men outside gay pubs in Earls Court and arrested gay men for importuning for an immoral purpose even though it was the police officers who took the initiative. These men were prosecuted under section 32 of the Sexual Offences Act 1956, the 'gay sus law', which was analysed in the 1984 report. This police tactic of using agent provocateurs to encourage offences is known as entrapment.

Of the 25 men charged and known to GALOP during those few summer weeks only six attempted to challenge the police tactics before the Crown Court: as GALOP heard later most defendants in that situation feel intimidated into "getting it over with" as quickly as possible by a quick plea of guilty in the Magistrates Court.

The six who took their cases before a jury fared better. Five were found not guilty and only one convicted. The stand these men took has, we hope, convinced many gay men of the advantage of contesting police abuse of power whenever it is met.

Against this background a campaign was conducted which demanded the repeal of section 32 and also that effective control be placed on the police. This campaign received wide support.

During 1984 opposition parties in Parliament attempted to introduce an amendment to the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill which would have severely restricted police use of section 32. The debate on these amendments was transformed into a major parliamentary occasion by the coincidence of the arrest of Dr Keith Hampson MP on suspicion that he had indecently assaulted a plain clothes officer who was in a Soho male nude review.

Circulation of the GALOP annual report and lobbying undertaken by other gay organisations such as CHE led to the best informed Parliamentary debate on the policing of gay men to date. The government was nearly defeated on the opposition amendments. However, no significant change was made to the law as a result of that debate and the campaign continued. GALOP continued the attempt made by Lord Scarman to amend the Police Act to achieve the virtually automatic exclusion of police evidence obtained in breach of the rules.

Meanwhile, Keith Hampson was committed for trial at Southwark Crown Court. GALOP prepared a detailed background briefing for journalists in the hope that this would reduce the uninformed comment on the case. In October, Dr Hampson denied the charge and after a first trial in which the jury could not agree he was acquitted at his second trial when the prosecution decided it was in the interests of justice to offer no evidence against him.

## Police 'Rules' On Entrapment

The Metropolitan Police admit that when conducting surveillance of gay men for the purpose of making arrests for sexual offences, officers in plain clothes observe without, it is claimed, in any way counselling, inciting or procuring the commission of the offences. However, in practice, such fine distinctions cannot be made by police officers.

The principle guidance for the police is contained in a confidential Home Office circular first prepared in 1969 which remains confidential (being described as "an operational police matter full details of which cannot be disclosed"). The only points relevant to entrapment are made in passing:

*3) No member of the police force and no police informant should counsel, incite or procure the commission of a crime.*

In the House of Commons debate of 14th May, 1984, a Minister explained the Metropolitan Police instructions:



*"I hope that I have made it clear that the internal disciplinary arrangements of the police should make it plain that entrapment is wholly contrary to our principles of fairness and justice. Indeed, the Metropolitan Police general orders and procedures make those points. Those orders provide that a plain clothes operation relating to male importuning has to be authorised at Area District Assistant Commissioner level—a very high level. Only experienced officers may take part, the officers involved must be specially instructed on the need for circumspection in carrying out their duties and their attention must be drawn to the requirements that, in general, no person is to be arrested on a section 32 offence solely on the grounds of his behaviour towards the officers, though if his behaviour is flagrant, arrest may be necessary to put a stop to it. In order to get corroborative evidence, persons importuned should be asked to give their name and address and to attend court. Should such assistance be refused, particulars are noted in the officer's pocket book and stated in evidence."*

Rules therefore exist which prohibit the use of agents provocateurs and entrapment techniques. The issues is whether these rules are either observed or capable of being enforced.

### Police Practice and the Response to Public Concern

It may be thought by police officers that dressing as gay men is the only way to keep observation discreetly. However, even on the most innocent interpretation of police evidence in court, since it is always the police officer who is allegedly importuned, it is clear that the officer's conduct has not discouraged sexual advances. Therefore, even when positive blandishments, such as smiles or words, are avoided, the officer's mere presence as a man who must attempt to signal "I might be available for sex if you were to make all the moves and ask me" must in itself amount to an inducement to onlookers to commit the offence of importuning. The significance of such a pose will be reinforced by the location in which such techniques are practised: eg, outside gay pubs.

However, the evidence shows that Metropolitan Police officers rarely limit themselves to such restrained interpretations of the rules. The account frequently given to GALOP by men charged with importuning is that it is the officer, posing as a gay man, who takes the initiative and raises the possibility of a sexual liaison. These approaches are subsequently denied by the police officers, but the police evidence has been successfully challenged by defendants who, not fearing the threat of publicity, have elected for jury trial. In a typical case the Judge summed up to the jury in these words: "There is a total clash of evidence and you may think somebody is lying. You must decide who, but someone clearly is." The jury took a very short while to decide on an acquittal of the defendant.

We must contrast the cases where police officers themselves importune and fabricate evidence of importuning by the defendant with those where the defendant admits importuning but has been incited to do it by the conduct of the police officers.

In the former case, the police evidence can be challenged as was done successfully in many Earls Court cases; but in the latter type of case, the defendant has no defence on the basis that he was entrapped by an agent provocateur. This is the case, however blatantly the rules have been broken. In this respect, our criminal justice system differs from many other countries. The unsuccessful attempt by Lord Scarman to introduce a rule excluding evidence unlawfully obtained by the police was an attempt to remedy this. Although he was able to persuade the House of Lords, his amendment was flung out by the Government majority in the Commons.

In response to the May debate, Home Office Minister David Mellor gave certain assurances to Parliament:

*"We have had discussions with the Metropolitan Commissioner about whether the orders should be amended to give further emphasis to the need to avoid action, while on plain clothes duty, that could cause the commission of an offence. Indeed, the Commissioner intends to make some amendments to the rules to point out even more clearly that officers deployed on plain clothes duty should never act as agents provocateurs."*



GALOP thinks that this statement is mere waffle. The evidence contained in the GALOP reports demonstrates that the instructions to Metropolitan Police officers have been grossly violated in many cases and the ineffectiveness of the rules is implicitly admitted by the Minister proposing to issue new rules. However, the defects of the current rules are not in their clarity but in the lack of means to enforce them.

Since that statement, the new instructions have not been made public even though members of Parliament have requested information. However, there are regular reports across London of intensive police activity to make arrests for 'gay' offences.

6.

A survey conducted in London by the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) revealed 200 arrests over a period of six weeks in June and July 1984 for importuning and indecency charges. The only change apparent is that such operations seem more likely now to be targetted against men in the vicinity of public toilets rather than outside openly gay public houses; against men who are less likely to contest their cases or complain about their treatment for fear of revealing their sexuality. The potential for abuse by plain clothes officers in such situations is however exactly the same.

### Legal Protection Against Entrapment

There is no defence of entrapment in English law. The possibility of creating a defence of entrapment was considered by the Law Commission in 1977. Their report rejected the idea, principally because, in their view, a person entrapped into committing an offence had committed it and because the element of entrapment could be taken into account at the stage of sentencing.

The Law Commission gave no weight to the argument that denying convictions to police officers who broke the rules to get evidence is the best possible inducement upon officers to keep the rules: a principle adopted by many foreign legal systems.

The arguments for denying officers the fruits of their 'crimes' have also been pursued by defence lawyers hoping to exclude from court evidence improperly obtained. Judges have a discretion to exclude certain evidence and for some time it was argued that this discretion extended to evidence improperly obtained by the police. However, since 1979 a decision by judges in the House of Lords has prevented this.

The amendment proposed by Lord Scarman would have wholly reversed this picture. As it is, the Government was obliged to modify the law to allow judges a discretion to exclude evidence improperly obtained. It is dubious how enthusiastically the judges will use this restored power in the light of their reluctance to use it before 1979. The power is not yet in force and so remains untested.

## GALOP Casework

---

These are some of the cases, incidents and experiences that have been reported to GALOP since last year's Annual Report. They range from cases where the police have actively sought to harass and arrest gay men to incidents where, although no-one was arrested and had to face the pressure of a court case, the police willingly showed their contempt for gay people, by being as abusive and unhelpful as they wished. The names of the people involved have been changed to preserve the confidentiality of GALOP's service and to protect the people from further police harassment.

● In last year's Annual Report several cases of gay men being entrapped and arrested for importuning were detailed. Many men had to wait until mid-1984 for their cases to come to court. Here is one case which was not heard until after our 1984 report was published

Albert met friends for a drink in the Coleherne one evening. After closing time Albert chatted with friends outside and then walked along Wharfedale Street. He saw a young man and they started talking. The young man told Albert his name was James and that he



had been in the Coleherne and Bolton's earlier in the evening. He said he had moved to London from Newcastle some six weeks earlier. He had worked as a carpenter in Newcastle but had been made redundant but was pleased that he now had a job as a trainee chef. He started to ask what Albert was into sexually. "All sorts of things," said Albert, "but let's not stand around in the street talking."

Albert asked James if he wanted to come back to Albert's flat for a night-cap. James said: "Let's go to my place, it's just past the Exhibition Centre." Halfway up Warwick Road they were joined by another man and James and the third man identified themselves as police officers.

In the Crown Court nearly twelve months later the police officer told the Court that he and the second officer had been on duty in the area to detect offences of importuning and had seen Albert squeeze the crotch of a man and touch the buttock of another man and then approach him. When Albert's defence counsel asked the police officer whether he had arrested anyone else and made similar allegations against importuning the police officer said he couldn't remember. The defence counsel said he thought it was odd that the officer couldn't remember as defence counsel had a clear memory of defending someone in the same courtroom a couple of months previously. Someone who had been arrested by the same two police officers in the same place around the same time and in the same circumstances only 24 hours before Albert. The first man was acquitted of the charge and so was Albert.

● Bill was on a demonstration against the Government's proposals to cut student grants. He was wearing a couple of gay badges. He stepped out of the crowd onto the pavement to take a photograph of the crowd. A policeman said to him: "Get off the pavement and back with that rabble, you dirty queer." Bill said that wasn't a very nice way to talk to someone. The policeman replied: "I'll talk to queers anyway I like." Bill told the policeman he found being called a queer offensive and that he had a good mind to complain about the policeman's language and the way he was doing his job. The policeman told him: "I'll call you any name I want and do my job any way I want and nobody can stop me." Bill told GALOP about the incident because: "Although it wasn't very serious, no-one was hurt or arrested, I thought it was interesting that a policeman can show his contempt for gays so openly and know that there is nothing anyone can do to stop them behaving the way they want."

● The Bell Public House in King's Cross has been holding lesbian and gay discos for a number of years. Last year the police paid several visits to the pub and alleged licencing irregularities. Then, one Sunday evening, at about 11.30pm, over 50 police officers raided The Bell.

Edward was in The Bell when it was raided. He was charged with being drunk and disorderly. At the Magistrates Court the police told how people inside the pub were moved out after they had been questioned and in some cases searched. The police said they saw Edward on the pavement outside the pub. Edward was asked to move, the police said he refused to move and became very abusive. Edward then produced a stemmed glass from his overcoat and drank from it. The police went on to say that Edward's "slurred speech, glazed eyes, general unsteadiness on his feet and smell of alcohol on his breath" made the policeman suspect that Edward was drunk. The policeman said that Edward was then cautioned that if he didn't move he would be arrested. Edward again refused and became even more abusive and a struggle then took place as Edward was put into a police van. After putting Edward in the van they then took the glass that Edward had been holding back to the pub.

Edward's version was very different. He was talking to friends when the police raided The Bell. Edward left the pub and was standing talking to friends outside. They were talking about what was happening, why the pub was raided and why so many police officers were there. He was still holding the can of Carlsberg lager he had been drinking from inside the pub. Suddenly he was grabbed by two policemen. They took the can of lager out of his hand and emptied it all over the pavement. One of the policemen said "Right, you're drunk". He was then led towards a van. Edward admits he struggled when they tried to put him in the van, but did not attempt to fight the police as alleged, nor was he abusive. In the van, Edward's head was pushed under the seat and a policeman knelt on his chest. At the police station Edward said he was stripped naked, made to bend over and "they looked up my bum". He felt that this was done because it gave the police the opportunity to hum-



iliate a gay man. The police, however, denied this was the case. The Magistrate decided to believe the police's version of events and Edward was found guilty. Edward decided, however, to appeal against this and several months later his appeal was successful and the Magistrate's verdict was overruled. GALOP heard from two other people who were arrested when The Bell was raided. They were charged with obstruction of the highway. They were found not guilty at the Magistrate's Court.

8.

● Fred and George contacted GALOP to tell us about being arrested. They left a gay pub in the West End at closing time. They gave each other a good night kiss. Two police officers approached them and they were arrested and charged with "Insulting Behaviour whereby a breach of the peace may be caused". The two policemen said they had been on foot patrol in the area, a group of about half-a-dozen people were standing on the other side of the road from the pub. One of the group, a man, approached the police and complained about Fred and George kissing. The police said they approached the two friends and asked them several times to stop embracing as they had a complaint from a member of the public, if they didn't stop they would have to arrest them. The police said that they were reluctant to arrest them but George became very abusive and threatening. They radioed for a police car and Fred and George were taken to a police station. Fred and George said that there was no group of heterosexuals on the other side of the road, no-one complained and the police did not need to radio for transport as there was a police van parked just up the road from the pub. They were just grabbed, thrown in the van and taken to the police station and verbally and physically abused on the journey to and inside the police station. The Magistrates took a few minutes to decide that there was no case to answer.

● Henry went for a drink with some friends one Sunday evening. He left the pub about 9.30pm and drove towards his home in West London. Whilst driving through Pimlico he stopped and parked to use a public lavatory. There was no-one else in the convenience when Henry entered. A man came in and then left. Henry has a medical problem with his bladder which makes urinating slow and difficult. He was still urinating when the man who had come in earlier re-entered and stood right next to Henry. Henry finished and left. He was followed out of the lavatory and questioned. "Excuse me, sir, what were you doing in there?" "Peeing," replied Henry. "Oh really, tell us another one, it's people like you that go around molesting little boys." By this time they had been joined by two police cars and four police officers. Henry explained that he didn't know what they were talking about. "Oh really, this area is full of mincing poofs." The police officer then asked for Henry's name and address and wanted to know what he did for a living. Henry told them. He was then asked "When were you last arrested?" "Never." "C'mon, when were you last arrested?" "I've never been arrested nor even stopped and questioned by the police before." After more questions and answers and after his car was checked he was told he could "go this time but we'll nick you next time."

The following morning Henry told a gay friend what had happened. Because Henry had never come into contact with the police before and because he is heterosexual he was horrified to learn that this sort of incident is all too common.

● Ian has contacted GALOP a few times over the last year to tell us about the various occasions he has bumped into policemen. The first time was when he had just finished work and had arranged to meet a friend in a gay club. He had been in the club about 4 or 5 minutes and was just about to get a drink when he became aware of about 15-20 policemen in uniform questioning other customers and taking their drinks away. A policeman approached Ian and asked "Have you been searched?" "What for?" asked Ian. "Drugs of course," replied the policeman. Ian told the policeman "You're not going to search me, you have no reason to suspect me." "OK, you're nicked," said the policeman. Ian was grabbed by the arm and thrown downstairs and taken to the police station. Inside the police station two policemen insisted on referring to Ian as 'Doris' and kept telling him that they both had big cocks and that if he didn't stop complaining they would sort him out. Ian was then told he was going to be stripped and his body and his anus intimately searched. There were 8 policemen in the room at this point and Ian feels that they were enjoying threatening him with the humiliating process of a strip-search. A sergeant told all but 2 to leave. "Which of us are going to be the lucky ones?" they asked each other in what Ian thinks were supposed to be camp voices and gestures. Eventually Ian was charged with failing to give his name and address. Ian maintains that it was not until after he had arrived at the police station that he was asked for his name and address. When Ian appeared at the Magistrate's Court the Magistrate dismissed the case against him.



Shortly afterwards Ian was waiting for the all-night bus to go home. Two policemen approached him and asked him for his name and address. Ian recognised one of the policemen as being one of the men involved in his earlier arrest. Ian asked why they wanted his name and address. He was told it was for their records and they wanted to see if he was wanted for anything. Ian told them he didn't believe them and thought they just wanted to harass him. He was arrested and charged with being drunk and disorderly. Fortunately for Ian the Magistrate believed him and not the police and Ian was found not guilty.

A little time later Ian was again waiting for the all-night bus after finishing work. Two policemen approached him and started to question him. They wanted to know where he had been, his name and address. Ian thought that one of the policemen was familiar to him and then remembered that he had first seen him when he was arrested in the gay club. Ian asked why they were questioning him. They said it was for their records and that he was behaving suspiciously. He replied that waiting for buses at bus stops was often a frustrating experience but hardly thought it constituted suspicious behaviour. His arm was grabbed and forced behind his back and he was taken to a police station. This time he was charged with obstructing a police officer. The Magistrate agreed with Ian that although he may have been "cheeky" when answering the police's questions he was not guilty of obstruction and Ian had another case against him dismissed. GALOP has not heard from Ian for some time now.

● Jim was walking down the steps to a public lavatory in South London. Halfway down the steps he heard what he described as a "terrific crash and a scuffling noise and muffled voices talking". He continued down the steps. The lavatory appeared to be completely deserted. Jim said he "stood there gazing around wondering where the odd noises he had heard had come from. The door to the cleaner's cupboard opened, two men emerged, one munching a sandwich, and said to Jim "We're police officers, fuck off out of it." Jim said he "wondered why the police couldn't find something useful to do, rather than hang around in toilets."

● Kevin was driving home one night. His car was stopped and the police explained that it was a routine traffic exercise, checking tyres, seat-belts, etc. He was asked where he had been and he told them Heaven. "Oh, we've got another poof here, lads," said the policeman to others. Kevin told them he preferred the word gay to the word poof. The policeman replied that he preferred the words pervert or nancy-boy or queer and if Kevin got too clever he'd find himself down the station answering questions about his sex life.

● Leonard contacted GALOP to tell us about what he'd seen and heard one evening near Heaven. He said: "It wasn't a major incident, I just thought it was interesting and disgusting at the same time. There were two of us. We were walking down Villiers Street on our way to Heaven. There were two coppers standing outside this pub on the corner. One of them, the tall one, said, and we heard it quite distinctly—I think he wanted us to hear—'Just look, as soon as it's dark someone goes around lifting up stones and every bit of scum and pervert comes crawling out.'"



# Lesbians and Policing Project (LESPOP)

---

LESPOP was launched in May 1984 when a lesbian worker was appointed by GALOP for 3 months with a brief to undertake a pilot project into the policing of lesbians in London. During the period May-August her work concentrated in 2 areas:

*Publicity for the project*—in order to find out what the need for the project was and how it should be done; and building an active core group who could carry the project forward, the intention being for the lesbian worker to be accountable to lesbians in London.

*Educational and research work*—including talks and the production of written materials. The research work was partly a result of the case-work generated by the publicity and partly due to the series of demonstrations held in London during the summer months. These demonstrations were heavily policed and provided material both for the study of police tactics and for case-work involving those lesbians who had dealings with the police.

It was decided to offer the post as a job-share from September. The 2 workers appointed were one mixed-race Black lesbian and one Sephardi Jewish lesbian (both under 30, currently able-bodied and without children.)

## 1. RESEARCH

10.

This has been done on the basis of cases reported to the project, either through direct contact with the lesbians concerned, or through referral from women's centres and other groups with a lesbian contingent. A questionnaire is presently being compiled to further the research. This will be widely distributed and the results reported on. All research will be made available to lesbians in London and to others where appropriate. Although LESPOP is not a counselling organisation, lesbians are encouraged to come to the project about their experiences of policing in London.

a) Lesbians who go to the police for assistance in cases of theft, violence and other 'crimes' often find themselves the target of police activity, investigation and harassment; they are treated by the police as if they were the offender. Alternatively, lesbians report police *inactivity* following a complaint. Lesbians often feel that the police do not take reports of crime against them seriously, or feel that in the case of violent attacks on lesbians, the police condone the attack.

b) Lesbians who are stopped/arrested/questioned about offences unrelated to matters of sexuality often find that their lesbianism becomes the major issue. Lesbians report anti-lesbian abuse, interrogation about lifestyle and sexual practice, questioning about friends and so on.

c) Lesbians are often stopped/arrested/harassed directly for being lesbians. It is not illegal in this country to be a lesbian, yet lesbians showing affection, or being seen leaving lesbian pubs or clubs, or being present on lesbian events are targetted by the police. When arrested and charged, lesbians are often charged with unrelated offences such as littering, obstruction of the highway or drugs offences.

## Issues Identified in the Course of Research

Policing tactics, policy and practice all alter over the years. New developments are made and legislation passed both in specifically 'policing' areas and in other or more general areas have implications for the policing of lesbians.

i) **Multi-Agency Policing:** the development of 'multi-agency' policing puts a name to and makes a policy out of what has in effect been police practice for a number of years. Social services, establishment voluntary groups, local councils and others have long been co-operating with police requests for information; what is new is the overt attempt to use these bodies as aides to the police in, for example, surveillance of the public. Multi-agency policing affects all lesbians, but especially those with something to lose, such as lesbians with children, or lesbians under threat of deportation. Developments in police technology mean that information is more easily passed from one agent of social control to another.



ii) **Technology:** technological developments in policing mean that information can be stored on police computers, is easily accessible to police officers and may include not just criminal records, records of vehicle ownership, etc., but details of political beliefs, sexuality, race and so on, often of people with no criminal convictions, merely those deemed 'deviant' or 'dangerous' by the police/state. Other developments are in the surveillance and information gathering field of policing, eg., cameras, phone-tapping, new equipment for monitoring cultural events and demonstrations, to name but a few. All information gathered can then be stored for future use by the police or other agents of repression.

iii) **Reorganisation of the Police Force:** London's police force is in the process of being reorganised, ostensibly to give the 'bobby on the beat' more decision-making freedom, to streamline the chain of command and generally make the police more efficient. It is a myth, though, that the police's real priority is to make London a safer place for all to live, where women, 'ethnic minorities', lesbians and gay men can be free from fear of attack as police priorities on auto-crime and burglary in the Central London area clearly demonstrate. People's own priorities however are violence against women, racist attacks and arson! The establishment of at least 3 holding and training centres in London, along with the massive training/deployment of London police officers to the mining villages over the miners' strike demonstrates clearly that Metropolitan Police Commissioner Newman wants a London-wide, if not national, army-type riot force to quell dissent and unrest in times of increasing misery, unemployment, racist attacks and violence against women. Central control of local police actions is ever-increasing as, for example, the recent Scotland Yard co-ordinated and planned eviction of protestors from the South London Womens' Hospital, and the policing of anti-racist and other demonstrations in London show.

iv) **Specific Groups:** Certain groups of lesbians encounter certain forms of maltreatment by the police all of which may intersect with police anti-lesbianism.

— **Racism:** Black lesbians, Irish lesbians and lesbians from 'ethnic minorities' are subject to police racism. This may manifest itself in a variety of ways, including imprisonment under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for having an Irish accent or name, deportation, verbal, physical and/or sexual harassment and abuse of a racist nature. For example, Black lesbians are often held on 'suspicion' of drugs offences. Generally, the police categorise Black people as 'criminal' and treatment demonstrates this.

— **Lesbians with a disability:** Lesbians in custody who carry white sticks often have these removed (against Home Office recommendations!) as part of police exertion of power over a vulnerable group. Pain relieving drugs or other medication may be refused as a method of coercion; lesbians with diabetes, epilepsy or myasthenia gravis are sometimes suspected of being drunk or drugged and are held in cells where serious injury or even death may result. Here, racism can worsen matters further as the police are trained to disbelieve Black and Irish people generally and to suspect Black people of being drugged and Irish people of being drunk.

The police also appear ready, particularly in the case of Black lesbians, to hold lesbians for up to 72 hours under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act. 'Sectioning' can also be used as a threat to make a lesbian admit guilt or implicate another in a crime no-one has committed!

— **Young Lesbians:** many young lesbians do not want their parents or school to know that they are lesbians and the police may use this to intimidate, harass, or coerce young lesbians. It is not uncommon for police to keep young lesbians in cells without informing anyone of their whereabouts, contrary to Home Office guidelines about the detention of juveniles in order to exploit their vulnerabilities as young women and as lesbians.

— **Lesbians with children:** are particularly vulnerable to the effects of multi-agency policing, developments in surveillance technology and general police harassment. Fear of losing children in custody battles because of involvement with the police may prevent a lesbian having a social life, being able to participate in protest, or exercise the civil liberty of displaying affection in public. Here are just two examples of what this can mean in practice.

#### EXAMPLE ONE

A Black lesbian is caught by the police committing a minor traffic offence. She is arrested and held in police custody overnight. The police threaten to charge her with a drugs offence if she does not answer questions about a womens' group she is involved in. She refuses to answer any such questions and the police do not charge her as threatened. While in police custody, she is not given any food, is not allowed to make a phone call or have a solicitor. When she asks for these rights she is insulted in a racist and woman hating nature. When she gets home, her neighbours tell her that there were people in her flat last night. She finds her belongings have been gone through although money she left out has not been moved.



### EXAMPLE 2

Two lesbians, both white, are sitting in a pub in central London, having a conversation about a lesbian club they have both been to. The man sitting alone next to them says something to the barman who happens to be the landlord. When the women go to the bar again, he refuses to serve them and threatens them with violence if they do not leave immediately. The women try to make the man explain what harm they are doing, just having a drink. Both men then become violent towards the women and in the course of the fight a glass is thrown which damages some of the pub decor. The police are called who arrest both women, who are handcuffed and pushed around roughly in the van on the way to the police station. On arrival they are told that they are being charged with 'behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace' and criminal damage. Both lesbians are subject to anti-lesbian abuse and are told that if they do not make a statement they will be kept in the cells overnight, and that their employers will be told that they are lesbians. One of the women has a child who is expected back from her father's in the morning. Her custody of the child is already precarious as her ex-husband does not know of her lesbianism. She does not tell the police that she has a child as she fears that they may use this against her. So that she can get out of the cells in time to collect her daughter, she makes a statement admitting to the charges. Both women are released 5 hours after being charged. Both are strip-searched in interview rooms with the door open and police-men wandering around in the corridors. When the lesbian with the child has a welfare report done a few months later when custody is being challenged, she is frightened that the social worker knows about her lesbianism, because she appears to know a lot about her 'offence'.

## 2. EDUCATION/INFORMATION

There is an obvious need for information about what the police are doing, changes and developments in policing policies, practices and legislation, as well as basic information about rights, what to expect in the case of a police raid, how to prepare for demonstrations, and so on. The project has been and will continue to educate lesbians about these matters in the following ways:

12.

i) **Publicity:** Leaflets have been produced about the project and about forthcoming educational projects such as workshops. They have been distributed as widely as possible around clubs/ bars, womens' centres, lesbian events, demonstrations, student unions and various other places where lesbians may meet or go.

ii) **Letters** have been written to many different groups explaining the project's existence, aims and objectives.

iii) **Articles** have been written and printed in several autonomous womens' publications, such as the London Womens' Liberation newsletter, the Black feminist newsletter, the Jewish Feminist newsletter, the Older Lesbian newsletter, and others.

iv) **Other Groups:** many different kinds of groups, including lesbian groups and police monitoring groups, have had invitations to meet with women in the project to discuss how policing affects lesbians. Other groups have distributed our publicity in their mailings.

v) **Civil Rights Information:** because we believe in making information about police and policing issues as accessible as possible, we are producing a civil rights poster (about police raids) and a civil rights card for lesbians to carry around in case of arrest, stop or search on the streets.

vi) **Bulletin:** we are in the process of producing a bulletin which will be available to lesbians in London and others where applicable, about what the project is doing, about policing developments and to stimulate thought and discussion around policing issues.

### — WORKSHOPS:

a) **General Workshops:** a series of these were held in womens' centres in and around London. The topics included 'Police Raids', 'Your Rights on Arrest', and 'The Implications of the Police Act'. At these workshops, lesbians expressed the need for more information about policing, especially about the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, about how we can provide alternatives to policing and how we can develop effective strategies for dealing with the police. All lesbians were welcome to attend these workshops.



There are many different lessons to be learnt from the campaign as a whole: we think the following are important.

1. The effectiveness of the SLAGBAN campaign depended very much on the local organisation, resources and knowledge of Rugby trades unionists and activists: this was particularly important since individual lesbians and gay men were being intimidated with the threat of dismissal.

2. Practical defence of marches and demonstrations requires planning, communication and a sense of tactics from the organisers. Ad hoc responses to police initiatives are unlikely to succeed.

3. GALOP and LESPOP both have a role in situations where arrests occur on marches in collecting information at the scene, assisting the securing of defendant's release, co-ordinating legal defences and facilitating the organisation of defence campaigns by the defendants themselves.

4. Defence campaigns are at a particular disadvantage when the defendants are widely dispersed. Also, the political experience of marchers and demonstrators rarely includes personal experience of defence campaign organisation and GALOP or LESPOP must consider in future campaigns how the benefit of such experience can be injected without hi-jacking the direction of any new campaign.

5. In all aspects, March organisation, responding to mass arrests, defence co-ordination, defence campaigning and self-representation in court there is a need for training.

## Crimes Against Gay Men

---

In June 1985 GALOP launched a new project to examine the police response to crimes committed against gay men. The project plans to concentrate on:

- \* Police willingness to investigate crimes against gay men.
- \* Police practice in prosecuting offences committed against gays
- \* The readiness of the police to protect gays from violence in emergencies
- \* Police treatment of gay men who report crimes
- \* The reluctance of many gay men to report crimes committed against them.

The new initiative was launched with a full-page article in *Capital Gay*'s free page and major press coverage in the rest of the gay press.

A typical case was that of a gay man who was attacked by an ex-lover outside Heaven. When his friend called on the assistance of a passing police officer he was told "No, it's not my job to look after perverts".

In another case two gay men who were living together in a squat in North London had their Hi-Fi equipment stolen. A neighbour saw and identified the thief. When the men tried to report the crime and description of the offender they were at first ignored and then threatened with charges for criminal damage in entering the squat — even though they had not committed any criminal offence and no-one alleged they had. The police still refused to act when a police monitoring group questioned the local station: action was only taken when the case was raised with Scotland Yard. The gay men were quite clear why they were given this treatment: "It was because the police knew we were gay and saw us as second class citizens."

We have appealed for all gay men who have been the victims of crimes to report their experiences to GALOP so that we can build up a complete picture of the pattern of police responses. The project will involve both a questionnaire survey and a study of press coverage of cases of crimes against gay men. We intend to produce a major report on our findings.



## How GALOP Can Help You

If you have been the victim of a crime GALOP may be able to help in various ways:

\* **Compensation.** Victims of crimes of violence can claim compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. GALOP can give advice about the best way to make claims and appeals.

\* **Intermediaries.** Some people are reluctant to report crimes to the police, whether because they themselves have committed an offence in the past or just because they are gay and fear the police response. GALOP may be able to arrange for intermediaries or sympathetic lawyers to assist victims in reporting offences.

\* **Complaints.** If you wish to make an official complaint about the way the police treated you as a victim GALOP can advise you on the procedure and help you with the complaint itself.

## Financial Report

---

### REPORT OF THE AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF:—

#### GAY LONDON POLICE MONITORING GROUP

We have prepared the annexed Balance Sheet, Income and Expenditure Account, together with the Notes thereon, from the books, records, vouchers, explanations and information supplied, and we hereby certify same to be in accordance therewith.

In our opinion, the Accounts, which have been prepared under the Historic Cost Convention, show a true and fair view of the state of the Group's affairs as at 31 March 1984, and of its surplus for the period ended on that date.

Dated 14 Jan 1985

SAUNDERS, WOOD & CO  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS  
The White House  
140 Tachbrook St  
London SW1V 2NE

#### GAY LONDON POLICE MONITORING GROUP

18.

#### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD FROM 15 SEPTEMBER 1983 TO 31 MARCH 1984.

##### INCOME

G.L.C. Grant — General Purposes	9,270
G.L.C. Grant — Civil Rights Card	—
Donations	<u>190</u>
	9,460



**LESS: EXPENDITURE**

Salaries	5,629
Employers NIC	587
Office Rent	910
Telephone	99
Postage	28
Stationery	116
Printing	760
(Advertising)	—
Publications	109
Volunteers' Expenses	61
(Secretary's Expenses)	—
Travelling Expenses	128
Training Expenses	43
Hire of Halls	6
Photo-copier Hire	46
Typewriter Maintenance	86
(Solicitors' Fees)	—
Auditors' Fees	125
Bank Charges	33
Office Furniture	100
Miscellaneous Expenses	40
Civil Rights Card Expenses	21
	<u>8,927</u>

**NET SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD**£533**TRANSFERRED TO GENERAL FUND****GAY LONDON POLICE MONITORING GROUP****BALANCE SHEET****AS AT 31 MARCH 1984****FIXED ASSETS**

Office Equipment (See Note 1)	521
Less: Depreciation	<u>521</u>
	—

**CURRENT ASSETS**

Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	572
Balance at Bank	2,417
Cash in Hand	35
	<u>3,024</u>

**LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES**

Sundry Creditors and Accruals	2,322
Loans	—
	<u>2,322</u>
	702

**EXCESS OF ASSETS OVER LIABILITIES**£702**REPRESENTED BY:—****GENERAL FUND**

Balance Brought Forward	169
ADD: Net Surplus for the Period	<u>533</u>
<b>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<u><u>£702</u></u>



## GALOP asks: what are the Police doing about crimes against gay people?

# CRIMES AGAINST GAY PEOPLE

GALOP, the Gay London Police Monitoring Group, is launching a major new project for gay victims of crime. For the last three years, GALOP has been concerned with the police treatment of gays as criminals. Now we also want to look at the police response to crimes against gays.

The new campaign will concentrate on:

- Police willingness to investigate crimes against gay people;
- Police practice in prosecuting offences committed against gays;
- The readiness of the police to protect gay people from violence in emergencies;
- Police treatment of gays who report crimes;
- The reluctance of many gay people to report crimes committed against them.

### RAW DEAL

From the reports GALOP has already received, there is clearly cause for concern that gay victims of crime get a raw deal from the police. Take the case of the gay man who was attacked outside Heaven. When his friend sought help from a passing policeman he was told: "No, it's not my job to look after perverts."

In another case, two gay men who were living together in a squat in North London, had their Hi-Fi equipment stolen. A neighbour saw and identified the thief. When the men tried to report the crime and description of the offender they were at first ignored and then threatened with criminal charges in entering their own squat - even though they had not committed any criminal offence and no-one alleged that they had. The police still refused to act when a police monitoring group questioned the local station: action on the theft was only taken when the case was raised with Scotland Yard.

The gay men were quite clear why they were given this treat-



(Artist: Inga Burrows)

ment: "It was because the police knew we were gay and saw us as second class citizens."

### NO COMPLAINTS

One man, however, had no complaints at all about the police. He was viciously attacked in his own home by a man he had met in a gay pub. He was repeatedly stabbed and left for dead. He was completely satisfied with the police investigation which was thorough, efficient and resulted in the attacker being caught and sentenced to a long term in prison.

We are interested in everyone's experiences as victims of crime, not just those with complaints against the police. Only in this way can we get a complete picture of how gay people are treated.

### NON-REPORTING OF CRIMES

Part of the problem is to find out the extent of crimes against gay people. Many crimes, whether against straight or gay people go

unreported, but many gay people feel there are special reasons for not reporting crimes that will reveal their sexuality to the police: "My flatmate picked up a bloke in a gay club", said a South London man. "The bloke walked off with my leather jacket which was hanging in the hallway. We decided not to bother reporting it. We'd have had to explain how the bloke came to be in the flat. Obviously we hadn't done anything wrong, but we felt the police would give us a hard time for being gay. It just would not be worth the bother."

### HOW GALOP CAN HELP YOU

If you have been the victim of a crime, GALOP may be able to help you in various ways:

- **Compensation.** Victims of crimes of violence can claim compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. GALOP can give advice about the best way to make claims and appeals.

- **Intermediaries.** Some people are reluctant to report crimes to the police, whether because they themselves have committed an offence in the past or just because they are gay and fear the police response. GALOP may be able to arrange for intermediaries or sympathetic lawyers to assist victims in reporting offences.

- **Complaints.** If you wish to make an official complaint about the way the police treated you as a victim, GALOP can advise you on the procedure and help you with the complaint itself.

### FREE PAGE

This week we publish another Capital Gay Free Page - a part of the paper we hand over to gay groups to do with as they will.

The invitation is still open. You don't have to be a formal group that holds meetings. We'd be glad to offer the page to a group of friends who want to get together to produce a piece. We are happy to give any advice or assistance that you ask for. But you keep editorial control. We only check for libel and other legal hitches.

If you would like to publish a Free Page, please ring Graham Mckenzie or Michael Mason on 278 3764.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP GALOP

GALOP would like to hear from any gay person who has been a victim of crime. Let us know about the crime and how you felt about it; whether you reported it to the police and if not, why not; how the police responded; and how the case was dealt with if it came to court. Write to us about any case no matter how serious or seemingly unimportant. We are happy to receive letters about your experiences or, if you prefer, fill in the form at the bottom of this page, return it to us and we will send you a questionnaire.

All replies will be treated in the strictest confidence.

### WANT TO WORK WITH US?

GALOP would also be delighted to hear from any gay person who is willing to advise or assist us in our work with victims of crime. If you think you may have relevant experience or expertise, please get in touch.



(Artist: Stuart Helm)

### GALOP QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

Please send me a questionnaire

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Return completed form to: GALOP, Victims Of Crime Survey, 38 Mount Pleasant, London, WC1X 0AP.

## About GALOP

SINCE its establishment in June 1982, the Gay London Police Monitoring Group (GALOP) has had the following major aims:

- to monitor police treatment of gay people as criminals;
- to monitor police tactics towards gay people, such as the use of agents provocateurs (the "pretty police"), and police attitudes to homosexuality;
- to help gay people in trouble with the police obtain legal advice and support;
- to monitor police treatment of crimes committed against gay people.

The first 3 aims have taken

priority so far and continue to form a large part of GALOP's work. GALOP has also supported the development of a project concerned with the policing of lesbians. The Lesbians and Policing Project (LESPOP) is now an autonomous, separately-funded organisation, also based at 38 Mount Pleasant but now in a different office, tel: 833 4996. GALOP is currently working towards setting up a project for a worker to address the issues of the policing of black gay men. This Free Page, therefore, represents but one aspect of GALOP's work.

(Reproduced with permission.)