



"Her Timing Was Perfect"

(With all due respect to the young woman who began talking to me at the Nov. 23, 1987 Executive Committee meeting, at the exact moment Joel Meyers' resolution protesting Mayor Koch's arresting homeless people against their will, came up a second time for discussion.)

My attention was diverted so I did not hear or participate in the discussion nor know what happened to the resolution. Later, I was told that it was referred to a committee. Is it similar to, or essentially the same as the Carol Feinman one presented a week or so earlier? Could the recording secretary refresh our memory?

I would like the subject brought up again. Especially in light of remarks now being made by Mayor Koch that now he expects that more than 50 percent of the homeless are mentally ill. You surely remember that before the October 1, 1987 greenlight for the arrests, only a small percentage were considered in need of hospitalization. Don't forget - when he said the homeless should be picked up for their own good, even if it was against their will, he also said that anyone who disagreed with him was crazy, or words to that effect. Chilling, isn't it?

Today, December 7, 1987, a front page article by Josh Barbonel, "Psychiatric Care For All Homeless May Be Lengthy," states, "Psychiatrists See Extended Treatment For New York's Mentally Ill Homeless."

I only have to call your attention to an article by Robert E. Gould and Robert Levy, (N.Y. Times, Nov. 27, 1987,) entitled, "Psychiatrists As Puppets of Koch's Roundup Policy," to remind you of the gravity of the Koch Police roundup, and the urgency of Joel Meyers' resolution. The article says, "We have seen the disastrous results of the abuses of Psychiatry in totalitarian regimes and must be on our guard to protect the integrity of the psychiatric profession as well."

Now, today also, (N.Y. Times, Dec. 7, 1987, the day of the tooted Reagan - Gorbachev Summit re-beginnings, and we can remember another December 7th of another time and place,) we read that the police were called in to arrest 11 (eleven,) members of Dignity, gays and lesbians who refused to sit down at a worship service at St. Patrick's Cathedral, choosing instead, to remain standing to show their disapproval of the Church's stand against them. You will remember that these devoted gay and lesbian Christians can no longer attend special Masses at a Greenwich Village Church because the Archdiocese of New York ordered an end to the Masses earlier this year. (I'm typing these notes on Dec. 12, 1987, and The New York Times says in an Editorial, "Aids, the Cardinal and The Public," that "A church's teaching is its own business, but doctrine that affects public policy invites public comment." The subject of the editorial is Cardinal O'Connor's stand against "allowing AIDS education programs in the schools of the New York Archdiocese to include instruction about condoms," but it applies equally to the subject at hand. Fellow members of V.I.D., Greenwich Village is our community, and

so is East Village, and the grid in between, and members of our community are being arrested because they are poor, homeless, and gay. With a collective voice, we should rage against what's going on, against the indignation, against the bigotry, against the aggression by those who abuse power. Can't we see, or do we want to see, that talk of hospitalization and concern for the mental health of the poor, unfortunate ones, are scarcely veiled attempts to make prejudice, discrimination, and hate palatable and acceptable, by those whose economic, social and politico-religious scheming is coming unraveled?

For the past 25 years I have made no secret of the fact that I am gay. But I didn't exploit the fact either. A person's sexual preferences are his own business. But this Reagan Administration has so muddled the waters of rights to privacy, and individual liberty, and so forth that I stand up proudly and announce the fact. And my announcement is not a confession of sin because it is not a sin. I consider it a gift and a special blessing! So you can imagine the horror and pain I felt when I read in a 1974 Baha'i Faith publication, that the Baha'i Faith forbids homosexuality. Forbids! I read that in 1982 or 3 or what or when the hell, but definitely during the Reagan nightmare years, and I got the hell out. Period. I thought. They don't accept me. That's O.K. This is (was!) America where church and state are separate entities. And in America you fight for the rights of those whose political and religious and ethnic and racial instincts are different from your own, you fight for tolerance. You fight against prejudices of all kinds, and you fight for the rights of those who believe nothing at all. In America you fight for liberty. You fight for the victims of all the systems! And you fight hardest for the victims of your own. And that is, happily, our strength and the reason why our sky is blue. "Tell me why the sky is blue?" I can't. But that is why, America, I love you. I consider being created gay a precious gift. And I'm thankful. I'm proud and beautiful! "It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves." For the rights of All, we fight in America, we fight for our own rights, we fight for the poor, we fight for the rich, we fight for the black, we fight for the white, we fight for all colors and races, we fight for gays and lesbians, and we fight, as Bill Van Felix put it, "for those who are as straight as a corkscrew!" We fight for everybody. Or do we?

Homophobia, Aids, McCarthyism, racial prejudice, the homeless problem, the blurring of distinctions between church and state, book banning and burning, the crackdown on street vendors and Indian restaurants, Ronald Reagan's Administration's faithful execution of human and individual and civil rights and liberties, indeed, their execution of the laws of the land -- none of these 'paths' run parallel, they converge upon each other and are interrelated. Ted Weiss said, at a recent lower Manhattan town meeting, (One passed under a Bronze Sculpture of Icarus, cast in 1976, with its 'hope and a warning' plaque, to reach the meeting at the community college,) that this Administration has shown less regard for the rule of law than any Administration in the history of the Republic." And Ed Koch's police action against the 'victims of the system' - is it a part of a larger, anti - human and individual rights, anti-constitutional, national, or perhaps international agenda?

Who knows? But it is fascism. What is fascism? Webster's Dictionary, at least the copy I have, defines fascism as a "system of government characterized by rigid one-party dictatorship, forcible suppression of opposition, private economic enterprise under centralized governmental control, instituted in Italy in 1922." Village Independent Democrats, should we not denounce Koch's 'roundup' for what it is? It is fascism, raw and brutal, and extremely dangerous! Have they come for you, yet? When will they come for me? Does anybody care? Or must that question, like Joel Meyer's resolution, be sent to a committee?

The power, governor, and regulator of a democracy is knowledge taught, learned, and shared by all its citizens. Power is in the hands of its people, hopefully all of them, who elect and put their trust in their elected representatives, who work for their rights and their welfare. The 'divine' right of kings, the 'divine' right of gods, the 'divine' right of big corporations, the 'divine' right of a president or vice president or mayor, has no sanction in our system of government, that separates the branches of government to protect us from the abuses of power. And the rights of both Church, (or different religious beliefs or non-religious beliefs,) and State are protected and safe only when it is recognized that the two are separate and distinct entities.

We Americans are not informed people, and I dare say, I don't believe our elected representatives are either. Most of us have only been allowed to see our shadows on the 'cave' wall. And never in the history of the Human Race have a people's minds been more filled and manipulated by 'programmed' schemers and 'power' brokers. For instance: Powerful ABC's Ted Koppel, writes in a letter to the editor of Saturday Evening Post, Nov. 1987, (Reprinted in The New York Native, Dec. 14, 1987, and I quote it, hoping I'm not breaking a copyright law by doing so without asking permission!.) "We have actually convinced ourselves that slogans will save us. Shoot up if you must, but use a clean needle. Enjoy sex whenever and with whomever you wish, but wear a condom. No! The answer is no. Not because it isn't cool or smart or because you might end up in jail or dying in an AIDS ward, but no because it's wrong, because we have spent 5,000 years as a race of rational human beings, trying to drag ourselves out of the primeval slime by searching for truth and moral absolutes in their purest form. Truth is not a polite tap on the shoulder -- it is a howling reproach. What Moses brought down from Mount Sinai were not the Ten Suggestions." Whew! Mr. Koppel, and one of those Top Ten moral absolutes you refer to with such obvious moral fire, (and brimstone,?) says simply and without qualification or fanfare, "Thou Shalt Not Kill." Remembering the 5,000 of slaughter during the 5,000 years of slime, (slime meaning human beings like you and me, I suppose you mean, I'm inclined to ask you if you think all the Commandments are of equal importance? And what, by such a pronouncement as yours, have you just done to Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Sans'i, etc.? And what happens to the unbeliever? Do you know about the 'Aryan' tribal people who 'arrived' in India about the time Moses was taking Israel out of Egypt? (See, "Three ways of

Asian wisdom, by Nancy Wilson Ross., Those people hated the ancient Hindu Temples and the Hindu religious practices. Why? Most likely because they were embarrassed or ashamed of the imagery depicted there. Those snow white spaces held the 'sacred' lingam, and the 'sacred' yoni. And did you know that the geometry those symbols represent, are found in modern day physics, are the stuff of what 'squaring the circle' is all about, that they relate to the now, now, now atomic age, and that those symbols and 'paths of lines' can be used to beautifully construct exquisite human figures, exactly 23 squares high as the ancient Egyptians and Greeks said they did? And did you know that most of us didn't know that? And did you know that those symbols are found on the New York manhole covers, along with hundred of very significant, and complex designs, all loaded with information? Did you know that the two symbols are incorporated in the Icarus sculpture in lower Manhattan? By the way, not one of the Ten you speak of says anything about homosexuality. What is your position on that? Hopefully, that is not the slime you were referring to! Yet my firm suspicion is that that subject is the real Aryan issue, and the issue that has plunged so many of us into these last nightmare years. Was it your TV network or another, who had the weatherman who wrote from the back of a pane of glass, mug gay, instead of the word muggy. He corrected the glaring mistake, and with a twitter, but not before we saw through that 'glass darkly', because of it's horrible implications; For those of us who are gay that 'coffin' was 'crystal clear.' The message was every much as chilling as the statement that came out of the mouth of a republican senator in Houston, Texas, who said, "shoot the queers!" Do you remember that statement? And do you know the Christ who said that it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles the man but that which cometh out? That Christ also said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another." This is the First COMMANDMENT, not suggestion, "and the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." I'm sure you will agree with me, Mr. Koppel that love in all its lowest forms, if there is any such thing as low forms of love, is better than hate, better than aggression. If you teach that truth clearly to the 'primeval slime,' (I can't stand the words, 'Primeval slime,') then the fascist or Aryan overtones to the words, search "for truth and moral absolutes in their purest form," would not sound so blatantly shrill. The Christ also said; "If you love not man whom you have seen, how can you love God, whom you have not seen? My Book is a Love book, not a law book, (small l.) That little l, (elle,) (L), looks like a lm (one,) And the HUMAN RACE has finally decided to LOVE whether the law, (wal,) (wall,) allows it or not, and that is it's salvation!

Power brokers have diverted our attention from the real issues. The programmers' have done to us and to the rest of the world what big power and the lust for big power has always done. It has not shared its power with the likes of you and me. Because of the fear of sharing, we cannot possibly imagine with our uninformed minds the extent of the distrust they have these days of the poor, of the gay, of the black, of the Jew, of the Chinese, of the Russian, of the American, the American and Continental Indian, of the Arab, of the French, of the German, of the Japanese, the Korean, the Vietnamese, the Tibetans, the Tamils, the Sandinistas, the English, of the government, of the Alien, of the dispossessed.

And who are they? They are ourselves, and they are our gods. How many Comings, firsts and seconds, and going aways and coming agains and Reincarnations, and Crucifixions, Resurrections and Erections, how many Scapegoats, Sacred Cows and Bulls must we have before the gods! 'hounds of heaven' have had their fill of flesh?

Those of us who are still alive and can see with our eyes should denounce Ed Koch's police state action against the homeless for what it is. It is leadership paranoia, and that's the worst kind. It is "characterized by systematic delusions, as of grandeur or, esp., persecution." (Webster's dictionary.) A paranoid government, helibent toward fascism, stumbles toward reform only when there are no other alternatives. When the victimized poor, the dispossessed, gays and lesbians, the rich, the eccentric, the resigned, the believer, the unbeliever, the honest, the dishonest, the crook, the saint, the leader, the led, the slave, the free - in other words, when we the people of America, north and south and south of the border, and across the Planet Earth, from Russia to Teheran, to Baghdad, to Syria, to Jerusalem, to Japan, to China, to Australia, to Africa, to Cuba to everywhere shout without fear and without shame, SHOUT, I'm Me and I'm Beautiful! Look at me! Look into my beautiful eyes! Love me! Free me, so that I can show you how much I can love you, and how much I have to give, of myself, to your gray and dismal, paranoid world. Gently lift the yoke of bondage from my tired shoulders and set me free. ~~And I believe that is what~~ the 'I Am, that I Am, said through the thunder of Sinai. The HUMAN RACE, without money, without hope of a place in your N's, (in's,) (inn's,) (STABLE's ?), thunders, I AM THAT I AM! And the Human Race ain't no horse race! Ass Race? You said it! So make sure its clean!

The resolution sponsored by Keith Crandall, and passed at the Executive Board meeting on Dec. 7, 1987, (Two weeks after Joel Meyers' resolution protesting the Kock, (sp. Kock,) (cock,) (crotch,) 'roundup', (last roundup?), (in the sky?), of the homeless, was tabled and sent to a committee,) is, however important, another issue entirely and could actually be interpreted by the 'suspicious' as an alternative measure to divert attention away from the illegal violations of human rights going on in our community, across the land, and throughout the world.

I think it't time V.I.D.'s Executive Committee said to our leadership, to our membership, to our homeless, to our elected officials and our mayor, and to those he has appointed to positions of authority over us, through Joel Meyers' resolution, that V.I.D. does not intend to sit idly by in 'dark silence' while the rights of the helpless in our community are being violated by police actions against them, and who are being carted off, and the gods know WHY and HOW, and WHERE.

Today, December 19, 1987, the New York Times front page headline reads, "Court Backs Treatment Of Woman Held Under Koch noneless Plan," and I heard on today's radio that a homeless person was found dead last night on 14th street. I was told that one named

Eddie was found brutally murdered on Broom Street in Soho several months ago. Violence is steadily picking up momentum against the homeless, increasing, increasing.. Has a carefully orchestrated psychological brainwashing campaign now taken hold in the minds of an unsuspecting public, (upon whose shoulders government has shifted the burden of care to, in an attempt to rid itself of its responsibility for the homeless,) to such an extent that now people are conditioned to accept the aggressions against their human rights going on everywhere around us? ..

In the film at V.I.D. on December 4, 1987, entitled, Before Stonewall, (Cinema Guild, 1985,) Ronald Reagan is seen and heard saying that he believed homosexuality was an illness, and a severe personality disorder. I believe that fear of it is the issue, and the illness, and that fear of that 'it', and that fear of losing 'control,' led to Adolph Hitler, to Joe McCarthy, and finally to Aids, and to Koch's illegal roundup of the homeless.

(9) December, 1987: New York Times, p. 29 - The article is about the rise in the diversion of ambulances in New York City to other places. But the most chilling lines in the article by Alan Finder, after he speaks of an "unexpected increase in overall hospitalization and a sharp rise in the number of hospitalized AIDS patients" in public and private hospitals, we read the following quote from the United Hospital Fund report, "Any major outbreak of respiratory disease in the next several months would find the city's hospitals without adequate capacity to admit all the patients that might need care." Wait a minute! Didn't I read in Thursday's New York Times about a reinstatement of chemical warfare manufacture after a lapse of a good many years? In Shreveport, Louisiana, or Salt Lake City, or somewhere? Is there a hookup, somehow, somewhere? Shit! Are New Yorkers, the homeless and everybody else, the victims of some 'hidden agenda?' Who knows? But, until we find out, I, for one, support Joel Meyers' resolution protesting the police roundup of our homeless citizens! This is not a fascist state, Is it?

*John Ford*