LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE WEEK

Lesbian and gay pride week '84 will soon be with us and this is our chance to make it something special- to highlight our presence, solidarity and growing strength. So, to make sure that the week is a success it was felt that at the next meeting a group be formed/come together with responsibility for the organisation/co-ordination of Lesbian & Gay Pride Week '84.

At the meeting some suggestions were put forward as to ways which might be considered as a starting point for the events of the week:

i) Lesbian and Gay Pride Week be lengthened to ten days to cover two week-ends,

ii) events should take place on aregional basis on the first week-end and that the second week should finish in large events e.g. march, social etc. in Dublin,

iii) spaces be allowed throughout the week for lesbian activities which will be defined and worked out by lesbians,

iv) a build-up of media coverage be organised throughout the week on a national basis i.e. local radio, press releases etc.

v) an open-air live music 'gig' replace the traditional picnic in Dublin at the last weekend,

vi) a party/celebration with live music, films, video, be arranged in Dublin for the second week-end,

vii) open public meetings and workshops take place nationally during the week,

viii) films/video are shown outside of Dublin during the week,

ix) leafletting with information stands, contact information etc. take place nationally,

x) lesbian and gay pride badges are produced and readily available,

xi) As many events as possible be video recorded and edited into a film.

These are just suggestions: everyone has their own ideas as to how to make the week great. We have the ideas-now is the time to start organising and make it a success both in terms of enjoyment and also to let people know that lesbians and gay men are proud -and not going to go away.

LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE WEEK IS OUR WEEK

2017.21.2.1223

TERMINOLOGY - LESBIANS NOT GAYS

It was felt that we are slipping in to the all inclusive title of GAY which the Lesbians at the Cork meeting were against. We feel that as Lesbians working with Gay men we want to be visible, for ourselves and more importantly for other women. The Gay Movement in Ireland has not in the past been particularly supportive or aware of Lesbians and their needs. Given this it is important to highlight that we are working together on a different basis i.e. as Lesbians we are organising with Gay men from a position of strength rather than one of weakness. This feeling was supported by all the Gay men present at the Cork meeting.

The Cork Lesbians will organise a special meeting during the Womens weekend for those Lesbians involved in the Campaign so that we can discuss together the recommendations made in this report and decide on others which we feel should be brought up at the national meeting being planned.

LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIETIES IN THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION

It was felt at this meeting that one area of focus should be the setting up and support of Lesbian and Gay Societies in the Universities and Regional Technical Colleges which do not have them because of non - recognition from governing bodies (as in UCC) or for reasons of fear of intimidation.

It was suggested that a picket or protest of some sort could be set up in Cork at a meeting of the Governing body of UCC to protest the non - recognition and the refusal of funds to the Lesbian and Gay Society.

It was slso suggested to contact the welfare Officer of USI with reference to the Campaign, the setting up of Lesbian and Gay Societies and the welfare of Lesbians and Gaymen in third level education.

HEALTH

The meeting emphasised the need to be prepared for a co-ordinated response to any backlash against the Gay Community resulting from the AID'S issue. It was agreed that the next meeting should take positive steps to prepare such a response.

It was agreed that the next meeting should discuss the possibility of establishing a Gay Mens Health Group / Lesbian Health Group.

Itwas noted at the meeting that there is no S.T.D. clinic in Limerick and perhaps the next meeting could explore ways in which this situation could be changed.

2017.21.2.1223B

ANTI-SEXIST MEN'S GROUPS

There is a need for anti-sexist consciousness raising among Gay and progressive men generally. As Gay men we have been made more aware of this need in recent years. At the National Gay Conference in Dublin 2 years ago the Women made it clear that it is up to Gay men to deal with their own sexism. Should we Gay men take the initiative and start anti-sexist men's groups around the country. (Where possible)?

RECENT HISTORY OF LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIETIES IN IRISH UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

UCC LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIETY

1980/81 - Meeting of the Philosophical Society at which Homosexuality was talked about. Afterwards the speakers set up a Lesbian and Gay Soc., only 4 members were openly Lesbian and Gay, the others were sympathisers. There were 25 active members the majority of which were Lesbian. Recognition of the Soc. was applied for to the Governing Body and was refused. The refusal was publicised in The Cork Examiner , National Newspapers and "Cork About". Funding from the Students Union was fought for.

1981/82 - Due to public pressure from other students families etc. the society lost a lot of enthusiasm.

1983/84 - The Lesbian and Gay Society had an attempted revival but due to lack of recognition etc. it was not very strong.

UCD LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIETY

In existence for the last 4/5 years, in 81/82 and 82/83 it had a struggling existence with social meetings at lunch hour and the occasional public meeting. This year 83/84 the Society applied for recognition to the Governing body. Petitioned and Lobbied with 1,500 signatures of support. The College Mag. "College Student Affairs" previously refused to list Lesbian and Gay activities ,now they have agreed to.

2017.21.2.1223C..

TCD LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIETY

This Society was absorbed in to the NGF a few years ago. In the last two years it has experienced a revival and has social meetings with the odd public meeting.

QUEENS LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIETY

This Society collapsed this year. It has money from the college and the s.u. The reason for its collapse is the USI meeting of Lesbian and Gay Socs. which was demonstrated against by Paisleyites. A successful counter demonstration was held.

OTHER LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIETIES

ULSTER POLYTECHNIC - Contact Tarlach he is our contact list.
UCG - Paul Hurley is our contact list.
MAYNOOTH - Unknown
There are no Gay / Lesbian Societies in Tech. Colleges or NIHE'S

LESBIAN AND GAY YOUTH GROUPS / SEX EDUCATION FOR CHRILDREN

On the subject of youth groups about ten people are attempting to start a new gay and lesbian youth group in Cork. The problems here are:

1) There are no young Lesbians involved.
2) Most of the Gay Men involved are over twenty one.
3) Publicity - how can we attract young Lesbians and Gay men to our group, people who are perhaps lonely isolated and frightened.

After the improvement of the Cork Gay information switchboard, a special evening for calls from young people could be set aside however publicity is a problem here again; the switchboard receives very few callsalready. There is also a lack of professional people to deal with counselling etc., therefore we should not take that great a responsibility on ourselves.
It is easy to forget about the lonliness and sensitivity of young Gay people, so we should try to avoid being 'clannish'.
In reference to the formation of the Cork youth group it was suggested that organistations such as ogra should be contacted and that the group should be independent.

2017.21.2.1223D

SEX EDUCATION

Sex education in schools is very limited, information of Gay sexuality in non-existant, there must be something we can do about the situation.

Brian Healy
On behalf of the Cork Youth Group

STRUCTURE

It was agreed that co-ordinating our action at a national level is a major problem. Action at the local level can be decided by local groups but they should communicate what they are doing results etc. However work at a national level , for example with Government Departments or national offices and organisations has implications for everyone and should be discussed in advance so that group would speak for the entire campaign. This also means that we make full use of our contacts, background information, experience etc. - the example was given of the D.G.C. going to the E.E.A. without contacting the C.G.C. which has good experience in T.U. work. This also means that we can develop a programme of action on a particular issue instead of "one - off" unplanned actions which are not followed up.

DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

It was suggested at todays meeting that a need exists for positions as full-time Development Workers to be created within the Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Mens Rights.
A suggestion was made that two such positions should be created (a women and a man) , one to co-ordinate activities in the Dublin area, and the other provincial activities.
In terms of the work needing to be done it is obviously necessary to have a person who is not restricted to voluntary work outside office hours.
One difficulty in creating such positions will be the provision of sufficient funding. But other campaigns appear to have no problem in obtaining funds to employ full time workers to engage in such activities. If we are committed we will raise the money.
Details of the tasks of such workers and how money could be raised will be discussed at the next meeting.

2017.21.2.1223E