



Thomas F. Coleman

**N C S C L ATTORNEY
SUCCESSFUL AGAINST POLICE
BIGOTS**

Long Beach, Ca. — Thomas F. Coleman, Co-chairman of The National Committee for Sexual Civil Liberties, was successful in bringing charges against two Long Beach police officers who abused a gay man, and wrongfully took him into custody.

As reported in The Voice, Page 3, of the April 11, 1980, issue, Vol. 2, No. 8, Stanley Drury was harrassed by two plain clothes police officers at approximately 12 midnight in the evening of December 29, 1979, as he was leaving the Man's Country Bar in Long Beach.

To the taunts of "fags ... queers" officers Ronald L. Myers, badge no. 3416 and J. Engelke, badge no. 3442, arrested Drury for allegedly interfering in their pursuit of suspected jaywalkers who crossed against a red light before entering the Man's Country Bar as Drury was leaving.

The officers lost sight of their "suspects", their frustration must have become obvious to Drury and those looking on. When Drury exclaimed "Do you believe these cops?", he was arrested.

The officers regarded the remark as enough to incite the crowd to hostility.

Coleman took on the battle against the police harrassment and began legal action against the officers. Since the police department itself appeared to be embarrassed by the incident and would not permit charges to be filed against the "suspect", the matter was referred to Internal Affairs where it was determined that Drury was within his rights and ought not to have been detained or harrassed by the offending officers.

The following letter was issued by the City of Long Beach Police Dept. over the signature of C. B. Ussery, Chief of Police:

Dear Mr. Drury:

Your complaint regarding the misconduct of officers J. Engelke and R. Myers has been investigated. Your allegations have been sustained, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

We appreciate your interest in this matter. It is only through the involvement of citizens such as you that we are able to improve the quality of police service to our community.

In you have any questions regarding this matter, you may contact the Internal Affairs Section, Lieutenant K. Schack, at 590-7343.

Yours very truly,

C. B. Ussery, Chief of Police

The Voice contacted the Long Beach Police Department and attempted to speak to Lieutenant K. Schack of Internal Affairs; Schack would not respond. A spokesperson for the department refused to give any information.

The Voice asked: "Since the allegations of Stanley Drury were sustained, based on an investigation conducted by the Long Beach Police Department, and appropriate disciplinary action is to be taken, will you tell us what "appropriate disciplinary action" will in fact be meted out?"

"As a matter of policy, we donot divulge the nature of disciplinary action taken against police officers," the spokesperson responded.

Coleman commented, ". . . the offense was public, and thepunishment should be made known to the public."

Coleman insisted that the police department ought to indicate what remedial action is planned by the department to prevent such offensive police conduct in the future.

by Paul D. Hardman



KNOW YOUR FRIENDS — CONGRESSMAN HENRY WAXMAN

Pictured here, from left to right, are Thomas F. Coleman, Esq., Co-chairman of the National Committee for Sexual Civil Liberties; Congressman Henry Waxman of Los Angeles; Jay Kohorn, Esq., also of Los Angeles; and Voice publisher Paul D. Hardman.

Coleman, Kohorn and Hardman met with Congressman Waxman just before a meeting at the White House. Waxman has long been a friend to the gay community. It was Waxman who worked to get the Right of Privacy statement added to the California State Constitution by getting the State Legislature to put it on the ballot as an initiative a few years ago when he was in the State Legislature. The protection of privacy in California is a unique benefit not found in the United States Constitution, thanks to Waxman.

Long Beach Police & Brutality

On January 11, 1980, Frank Sunset of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office was put on notice of a complaint by Stan Drury against officers of the Long Beach Police Department for brutality.

At approximately midnight on Saturday, December 29, 1979, Drury was leaving a gay bar in Long Beach called Man's Country when he was approached by two officers of the Long Beach Police Department. Without any provocation Drury was grabbed by the officers. They shouted various obscenities such as "fags, queers, . . .", and told him that they were going to "break his fucking arms."

Having said that Drury was thrown against a car and had his arms twisted brutally, the officers justified their assault by accusing him of being drunk in public. Since Drury had been drinking only Perrier water, the allegation was untrue.

The officers then arrested Drury and took him into custody under Section 148 of the penal code. Even though Drury posted bail, he was held for several hours.

Once released, Drury went to attorney Thomas F. Coleman of Los Angeles to defend him from the false charges. Coleman discovered that the officers' charges were rejected by the authorities and no case was filed against Drury.

Since Drury had been subjected to false arrest and the criminal brutality of the arresting officers, Coleman demanded that charges be filed against the offending officers for their criminal conduct against Drury.

"It is our sincere desire that the officers in question learn a lesson that they too are subject to the

same criminal laws that other people are subject to", stated Coleman.

"We are not interested in an administrative proceeding regarding discipline of the officers, although that too may be appropriate. We are interested in seeing criminal charges brought against these officers", Coleman continued.

Official records reveal that the arresting officers were Ronald L. Myers, badge No. 3416, and J. Engelke, badge No. 3442 who acted as the "transporting officer".

As an excuse for arresting Drury, the officers wrote an official report which indicated that they were in an unmarked police car, in plain clothes when they noticed four or five men crossing a street against a red light. That offense was apparently sufficient to cause them to stop their car and attempt to pursue the "suspects" who went into the Man's Country bar.

Having lost sight of the offenders who walked against the red light, they heard Drury exclaim to others, "Do you believe these cops?" The arresting officers wrote that Drury repeated that remark at least twice, and they considered that repeated remark enough to incite the crowd to hostility.

When Drury reportedly mocked the officers by stating, ". . . cops just can't seem to get a job they like", the officers took Drury into custody and arrested him.

On March 19, 1980, the Acting Chief of Police of the City of Long Beach responded by rejecting the criminal complaint against his officers and recommended that Drury and his attorney file a complaint with Internal Affairs instead.

At the present time the Internal Affairs Section is actively investigating the conduct of the officers. Coleman is confident that appropriate action will be taken against the offending officers, especially since it seems the officers left their vehicle

with the doors open and left guns exposed and available on the seat while they were running off to investigate suspects who may have walked against a red light!