

WHAT YOU CAN DO

The Countdown on Spanner campaign aims to mobilise opposition to the conviction of 16 gay men for participating in consensual SM acts. The campaign is organising public actions and lobbying efforts around the Spanner convictions in the run-up to the Law Lords appeal, which is to be heard at the beginning of December.

We need all the help we can get. We welcome everyone, no matter your sexual preferences, to our weekly meetings at Central Station (7.30pm every Sunday), 37 Wharfedale Road, London N1. The campaign's work is split into four sub-groups (Action, Fund-Raising, Lobbying & Education, and Press & Publicity), but you don't need to have experience in any of these areas to contribute at meetings. We socialise downstairs in the bar after meetings, where supporters are warmly welcomed.

You might like to support the campaign by sending us a donation, adding your name to the mailing list for information about future activities, buying badges or promoting the campaign within your local group/bar. If so, fill out the form below and send it off now!

- I'd like to make a donation. I'm enclosing a cheque/postal order for _____ (made payable to Countdown on Spanner). Tick one of the following:
I wish to remain anonymous
Please use my name in the SPANNERpeople list of supporters
- Please add me to the mailing list for details of forthcoming campaign actions (Enclose 3 first class stamps).
- Please send me an information pack/campaign posters (delete where not applicable). If these are for spreading word at your local group, club or pub, tell us its name: _____ (Enclose 3 first class stamps to cover p&p).
- Badges: Please send me _____ (specify number) assorted badges, at 50p each. Make cheques/postal orders payable to Countdown on Spanner, and enclose a SAE or first class stamp.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

Send this form to: SPANNERpeople, Countdown on Spanner, 69 Cowcross St, London EC1M 6BP.

SPANNERpeople

Unlocking our bodies from legal restraints

SMers say Obscene Publications Squad boss should be given the boot

Campaign kicks off with call for Hames to resign

London 21 September 1992: Countdown on Spanner protestors last Monday called for the resignation of Superintendent Michael Hames, the head of Scotland Yard's Obscene Publications Squad.

Hames was responsible for the multi-million pound Operation Spanner investigation that led to the conviction of 16 gay men for consensual SM activities in December 1990.

A vocal and ardent supporter of Mary Whitehouse and right-wing pro-censorship groups, Hames recently called for greater powers to clamp down on such things as safer sex education videos and heterosexual

satellite TV broadcasts.

Countdown on Spanner protestors asked: Is this man a policeman or a preacher? "Hames is abusing his position to promote his personal moral views," said one. "I don't want his idea of what I should do in my bedroom forced down my throat."

The demonstration took place outside the New Scotland Yard HQ, where the OPS has offices. A posse of waiting policemen had thoughtfully provided a highly visible enclosure for the protestors made from crowd control barriers.

"I've always wanted to have a big hunky officer in full uniform cage me up and stand watch over me," confessed one delighted Spanner protestor. One officer was heard to whisper into his walkie talkie: "We can handle this lot. Some of them have rings in their eyebrows, their ears, their noses, probably even in a few other places as well."

One of the campaign's organisers, Kellan Farshea, led the

call for the resignation of Michael Hames.

"Sadosmochism is as valid a sexuality as any other," he said. "It can be loving and tender. I'm fed up with being misrepresented and abused by people who don't understand."

Countdown on Spanner...



...is a campaign set up by SMers and their supporters to raise awareness of the criminalisation of SM sex by the judiciary. Campaign meetings are held every Sunday, from 7.30pm, at Central Station, Wharfedale Rd, London N1. Nearest tube: Kings Cross. Everybody welcome!

WHAT TO DO?

1. Make a Donation
2. Join the Mailing List
3. Help Organise
4. Spread the word
5. Buy a badge

To do one, some or all of the above, see page 4 of this leaflet

WARNING: SEXUAL REPRESSION CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH

PLEASE GIVE A DONATION

NUMBER ONE

SEPTEMBER 1992

COUNTDOWN ON SPANNER BENEFITS

Support floods in from SM/fetish clubs, pubs, shops and magazines

We are *all* extremely angry...

London 23 September 1992: The SM and fetish community across the UK has responded wholeheartedly to the launch of the Countdown on Spanner campaign, endorsing its central goal of calling on the Law Lords to overturn the Spanner convictions.

The anger over these convictions found throughout the SM and fetish scene is summed up in the words of *Skin* 720 publisher, Tim Woodward. He

said: "The law has turned responsible law-abiding people into criminals. The law must change, but it's up to us to change it."

Financial and moral support has come from political groups like SM Gays, SM Dykes and Outrage. On the social circuit, support has come from all the leading straight, gay and mixed social venues, including: Der Putsch, The Block, The Clit Club, Torture Garden, The

Sadie Maisie Club, The Market Tavern, Submission, The Coleherne and The LA.

SM/fetish clothing and accessories businesses have rallied round as well. Supporters include: Regulation, Zeitgeist, Westwood Bound, Shi, Libido, Lashes, Julian Latorre Rubber Designs, Kim West Latex Clothing, Expectations and Clone Zone.

Several leading lights in the lesbian and gay artistic world have pledged their support - among them photographer Della Grace and writer Adam Mars-Jones.

"It's a remarkable response from a wide range of people," said campaign spokesperson Kellan Farshea. "But now we need to see how much support we can drum up from outside our community - from people and groups who are not directly involved in the SM and fetish scene, but who see this attack on our liberty as an attack on the liberty of everyone."

Full details on how to get an information pack to spread the word in your local group are on page 4 of this leaflet.

...in fact, we're so fucking angry we're going to party!

Put these dates for Countdown on Spanner benefits in your diary now - and be there if you dare!

16 October: Torture Garden (Straight/Mixed): 2nd Birthday Party: Look out for Countdown on Spanner stall. Electroworks, Torrers St, N1. Nearest tube: Angel

22 October: The Clit Club (Women only): Spanner benefit: Elephant and Castle Pub, by Vauxhall tube

13 November: The Sadie Maisie Club (Mixed lesbian/gay): Black & Blue Benefit Night: The Centre, 69 Cowcross St, EC1. Nearest tube: Farringdon

21 November: The Scala All-Night Benefit: Films, music and perversity! At the Scala Cinema, Kings Cross, London.

COUNTDOWN ON SPANNER ACTIONS

Campaign prepares for International protests and first ever SM Pride march

Preparing to make our mark!

London 23 September 1992: Protest actions against the Operation Spanner convictions are not only hotting up in the UK. World is coming in from America and Europe of plans to make overseas outrage known to the UK government.

Countdown on Spanner is seeking to co-ordinate international concern over the convictions. Friday 9th October has been designated an International Day of Action, when we hope protests will be mounted outside UK consulates and embassies throughout the world.

Groups in the US plan to mount actions in Chicago, New York and San Francisco; while European protests are being planned in Amsterdam and Berlin. Further details of the London event will be given in the next issue of SPANNERpeople.

Meanwhile, our big day of action in London is scheduled for Saturday 28th November, when we'll take to the streets and march from the Embankment (assemble outside Temple station at 1.30pm) to an indoor rally at the University of London, taking in the Law

Courts on the way. This protest march could even be the start of something bigger - the first ever SM Pride march in the world.

"We want people to dress up as outrageously as they dare and take to the streets in a celebration of fetishism and SM sexuality," said one campaigner. "Why should we hide ourselves away? Kinky people generally look fabulous - so why not flaunt it for all the

world to see! Rub their faces in it, if you know what I mean."

Campaigner Berkeley said that following the March, there will be an indoor rally at ULU. Organisers also plan to have space available for stalls where the SM/fetish business community can lay out its wares.

The March has been timed for the Saturday before the appeal to the Law Lords, so a maximum turn-out of our supporters is urged.

The Law Lords will sit up and listen to what *we* say!

Put these dates for Countdown on Spanner actions in your diary now - and start getting those outfits ready!

9 October: International Day of Action: Protests are being planned across the world (see main story). In London, we're urging a big turnout for our dramatic agitprop presentation outside the Lord Chancellor's Office, 30 Great Peter Street, SW1. 12.30-1.30pm

28 November: First ever SM Pride Festival: The big Countdown on Spanner March. Assemble outside Temple tube station at 1.30pm. March departs at 2pm, goes passed the Law Courts in the Strand and up Kingway to the University of London Union (ULU) for an indoor rally, stalls and much more. We're also planning a wild Spanner Benefit Party throughout the night at a secret venue. Watch for details...

Countdown Tibbits: the Red-Bummed Toe Sucker gets his; banner of the Black & Blues unveiled; and badges to pin upon your persons...

Now look, this isn't gossip, just a sharing of ideas. Like, have you noticed that since the Operation Spanner trials, the press has suddenly got a penchant for reporting on any manifestation of perverse sexuality? The Tabloids really took a stick to the Red-Bummed ex-Cabinet Toe-Sucker and the Red-Faced Frank Bough - who knows where it will all end? Maybe there are even Masochists in the Judiciary? Hmm, I wonder... Lindi St Clair maintains in her new book that there were some Tory MPs who wanted her to buy a handbag so they could fantasise about being beaten by the Unspeakable Thatcher. Quite rightly, our Lindi stopped short of that! I mean there are some perversions that really AREN'T acceptable in a civilised society, to steal a plume from a Ranting old judge. I must say I really fancy the new SM pride banner that has been unveiled by the campaign's Seamstress of Honour, Julian Latorre. Those black and blue stripes certainly conjure up a warm feeling all over my person... And speaking of which, where to pin those FABULOUS campaign badges (see back page for order form). I'd just LOVE to pin one through the nipple of that gorgeous lead singer in The Shamen. Wot a geezer!