

POLICE TO ACT ON ANTI-LESBIAN VIOLENCE

At one of his last official engagements before being forced to stand down as Police Minister, Ted Pickering formally launched the 'Off Our Backs' report at Parliament House on 21 September 1992 with an undertaking that the Police Service will act on the report's findings: "Speaking on behalf of the Police Service, I would like to say that the department will make every effort to reduce anti-lesbian violence and to improve services for victims."

He went on to say that he was particularly concerned about the lack of reporting to police. Whilst he acknowledged there had been problems in the past, he said that there is now a better relationship between the police and the lesbian and gay communities, and in this regard he praised the efforts of Sue Thompson, Police Gay and Lesbian Client Group Consultant.

Also speaking at the launch, Deborah Taylor, Co-Convenor of the Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby, stressed that we as lesbians all "have the right to live our lives without the fear of violence or harassment and to be accorded the respect and dignity that others in the community accept. The silence that surrounds the issue of anti-lesbian violence must end."

Mr Pickering referred the report to Steve Mark, President of the Anti-Discrimination Board, in his role as Chairperson of



Former Police minister Ted Pickering, GLRL Co-convenor Deborah Taylor and ADB President Steve Mark at the Off Our Backs launch.

the Streetwatch Committee, for implementation. This committee was formed to implement the recommendations of the 1990 Streetwatch Report into anti-gay violence and has representatives of various government departments and community groups. This means that it has the necessary clout to ensure that the recommendations are acted upon.

The launch was attended by about 50 people including some MPs, several police and all of the media, indicating that they are finally taking the issue of anti-lesbian violence seriously.

Steve

FEMINIST MP'S ORGANISE FORUM

A group of feminist Labor MPs is inviting women in the community to participate in a women's forum. The group comprises Sandra Nori, Pam Allan, Jan Burnswood, Franca Arena, Meridith Burgmann and Dorothy Isaksen. They are concerned about their "need as feminist Labor MPs for a better process to consult the broadest possible cross-section of women in the community." The forum aims to "create an ongoing network whereby women and their organisations can lobby MPs about forthcoming legislation and the adverse effects of Fahey Government policies... enable MPs to quickly mobilise a response from women as the need arises... and assist Labor women MPs develop strategies for a future Labor Government."

The inaugural forum will be held from 6-8.30pm on Nov. 18 in the Parliament House Theatre. Speakers will include Jan Aitkin, Eva Cox, Anna Marie Martell and Bob Carr. A questionnaire will be circulated seeking opinions about priorities for reform and the development of future policies

and strategies. As refreshments are being provided the organisers would appreciate it if you could RSVP by Nov. 16 on 660 7586 (Sandra Nori) or 622 3110 (Pam Allan).

All women are invited to the forum, but a lot of LOTL readers could make a difference to the attention lesbian issues get in state politics. Sandra's invited us along so we suggest you go.

Frances Rand

CATH PHILLIPS QUILTS Q

Cath Phillips, founding editor of Capital Q, left the paper on October. She refused to comment on the reason for her departure. In a press release her former employers Bluestone thanked her for her "untiring efforts". There has been much speculation about Cath's next project, but again she refused to divulge any plans.

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