

Reise

## 'Politics of the achievable'

1. Manifestos  
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We aren't going to write any more manifestos as such. We have several already available in which the basic ideas are worked out, with either draft legislation (LCLGR) or key campaign points (GLC). The object is to select from these not the ideal but the achievable.

The documents containing specific and general points for a campaign are :

Towards a charter	'Campaign for Reason (CHE ?)'	- 1978
Changing the World	GLC Gay working party	- 1985 & 1983
Legislation, A Manifesto	Labour Campaign	- 1986
OLGA - Charter		- 1988

2. Processes  
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We were previously agreed that there were three phases to political campaigning. Colleagues instanced Welsh radicalism/nationalism, the Suffragettes, and the Chartists as campaigns of this kind.

The first phase is action on the streets to define an issue by agitational techniques. The second is a more mainstream campaign to bring the issue(s) into the general political agenda. The third is a more behind the scenes establishment group to negotiate the final (and compromise) settlement of the issue. Then the cycle repeats.

We felt that the new campaign was emphatically a second/third phase organisation. Perhaps it would edge more in the third phase as groups like OLGA themselves moved from the first to second phases.

The planning timescale for the campaign to make concrete achievements was felt either to be <sup>3</sup> years, if a potential change of government was anticipated in 1991; or, alternatively, 5-7 years for credible near-term achievements without major political change at the governmental level.

### 3. Methods

The methods of achieving change fall into two broad areas. First, the parliamentary/legislative method whereby social change is in effect imposed. Here, goals must be very specific and particular. Secondly, image-building or general public relations work, which might be as effective in altering the ways lesbians and gays are treated. But the campaigning methods would be much more general.

The legislative targets can include :

**National legislation** - parliamentary bills in the Lord or Commons. The House of Lords is likely to be more successful. We felt that any Bills should address the issues in ways which would contain advantages to others than solely lesbians and gays. It was noted that some Bills might be introduced to frame and define issues for other purposes than to succeed of themselves.

**Opposition political parties.** The expedient of private bills by MPs or peers becomes less necessary if the opposition parties win power. We felt that, broadly, enough was already being done so far as the opposition parties were concerned. Lesbian and gay rights were already a part of their platforms (to an extent we have yet fully to document, however). If they take power in 1991/92, then the tasks of the new campaign would automatically shift to ensuring that existing party policies were enacted. Obviously, some campaign areas (eg the age of gay male consent) are omitted from these policies, and would remain to be campaigned for.

**The Conservative Party.** We do not anticipate that either party or government would off itself introduce progressive legislative change in favour of lesbians and gays. Rather, the opposite.

**Extranational legislation.** The possibility of affecting or amending social legislation aligned to 1992 should be the subject of careful and urgent investigation. The European Convention and associated bodies have already been used effectively (eg by Dudgeon), but their purview is limited, and the time to action, lengthy. However, motions or other action by MEPs might be a helpful new approach.

**Workplace organisation & trades unions.** The TUC has recently adopted lesbian/gay rights/non-discrimination provisions. In appropriate areas, the new campaign can foster the adoption of these policies by unions and their individual constituent parts.

**Local authorities.** Despite Section 28, most of the interested local authorities have not withdrawn their active support of lesbian and gay issues. Since their actions can affect many lesbians and gay men (on housing, employment, social services, education and (up to a point) medical/Aids issues), these activities should be encouraged and fostered.

**Direct mail campaigning.** We felt that there was every reason to take up this apparently successful technique of the new right. Among many other advantages, well planned direct mailing can raise substantial funds for campaigning, and ensure a wide spread for the ideas and issues the new campaign would raise. Such campaigns do have to be well planned and highly professionally organised. Jenny Wilson might have special resources to offer here.

**Targetted public relations.** General publicity campaigns can include :

- \* Media (established media) oriented campaigning
- \* Political parties in opposition
- \* Potentially sympathetic government figures
- \* Thos within the lesbian/gay community

It was felt that such campaign might usefully follow the modern motif of often being 'people led' rather than issue led. For example, campaigning would or should highlight specific issues of inequity, unfairness or discrimination.

#### 4. Targets

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Generally, these are to :

To introduce legislative change towards equality.

To improve and enhance the public images of lesbians and gay men.

To pre-empt any major new issues we see arising; for example in the context of broadcasting, or further changes to the education system.

To undertake defensive campaigning as and when necessary if faced with new problems of the Section 28 type.

As to specific goals, we should select these from the major areas outlined in the source manifestos mentioned above. The most desirable targets to select in the political/legislative action categories are seemed to us to be :

- Employment rights
- Partnership (including immigration)
- Parenting
- Age of consent
- Bereavment

Age of consent was not consider 'achievable'. But it was considered that it was an essential part of the new campaigns' image not to rule this out from the start, however unoptimistic we might be about making progress in this area.

Duncan 15/10/88