

hall meeting. Only 11 persons were arrested, but they suffered at the hands of drunken policemen who broke one fellow's ribs, cut his eye and rolled him in poison ivy. A complete account of the raid appeared in the L. I. Press, complete with pictures, names, addresses and occupations. Most of those involved were executives of sorts.

The police announced future raids but denied brutality. The Islanders have engaged a lawyer to investigate the situation and go to court if necessary. Ten of the defendants pleaded guilty and paid \$25.00 fines. One man pleaded not guilty and plans to fight the charge. He has a good case; the "rack" has a road leading to another community (The Pines) and the man claims he was on the road going to the grove for a visit.

The 4th was more crowded than ever. Many new faces said that they had read about Cherry Grove in Jess Stearn's book **The Sixth Man** and went to find out if it was true.

Many weekenders came from Atlantic City where police harrassment has gone to extremes.

A new gay area is developing known as Water Island. However, most of the ones who developed and built up The Grove are tired of being pioneers and are trying to preserve what they have.

The annual Drag Show, "Odds and Ends" was a smash sell-out. Female Impersonators Lynne Carter and T. C. Jones appeared at the hotel.

Everything is still tres gai.

TAMPA TEMPEST

Many readers not living in Southern California admonish this reporter for talking so much about

unfair treatment of homosexuals. These readers naively believe that there are no problems except in Los Angeles. But other readers who remember the "Miami Hurricane" of 1954 in which homosexuals of that city were persecuted, threatened, arrested, murdered, etc., as vagrant crackpots and perverts without constitutional rights realize that homosexuals everywhere are top candidates for any new and large scale witch-hunt, and likely victims of vice-squad malpractices and badly written laws when corrupt politicians and opportunistic officials stampede any community that permits itself to be so used.

The current Tampa situation illustrates what trumped up hysteria can do in a few weeks to any city. The first of June after a year of snooping through the use of two-way mirrors, still and motion picture cameras, and radio equipment installed in a rest room of a North Tampa shopping center where Sheriff Ed Blackburn's deputies lurked, peeping and listening—straining for every juicy detail as they adjusted their mirrors for better viewing, turned the knobs of their recording devices to tune in more clearly every slurp or whisper—assiduously gathering their evidence (exhibits A to Z) only out of a sense of duty, of course, 30 persons were arrested on morals charges. The actual arrests took place in a series of early morning raids by a team of city-county-state agents.

Sheriff Blackburn said, "It's the biggest morals crackdown, to my knowledge, in the history of the state of Florida."

Among those arrested were an elementary school principal, a Doctor and operator of a school for boys, a former Air Force Major and many others of professional stand-

ing. It has been the policy of the Tampa press to print the names and addresses of those accused.

Sheriff Blackburn said that there will probably be more than 100 arrests as a result of the investigations which are continuing.

At the same time, Tampa Chief of Police Neil Brown, laid down the law on what he termed "an ever growing problem" of homosexuality in Tampa.

"We're going to clean them up and get them out of town," the chief declared, pointing to a continuously growing list of known homosexuals. "I don't know where they will go, but we're going to get them out of town," he added.

Following an order by Brown, city vicesquadmen hauled in 48 persons who were found in what Brown termed "known homosexual hangouts." The chief opined that he was certain homosexuality "is . . . on the upswing here."

One member of the vicesquad, Bill Whitmer, said he and deputy sheriffs had been working for over a month on a detailed "mug book" containing the names and vital information on known homosexuals either living in Tampa or visiting in Tampa for "weekend parties." The data is being compiled from dockets starting with the year 1955. Whitmer said he still had about three more years of dockets to scan.

Chief Brown added that about 10 years ago Tampa "had very little homosexuality, but now there are from 10 to 15 places around town where they cluster . . . we certainly intend to make it difficult for them to carry on in Tampa." He said that Miami was confronted with a similar problem and coped with it "just the same way we are."

In the past, as many as 200 homosexuals would spend the weekend in Tampa from such places as Sara-

sota, Lakeland, Dade City and parts of Pinellas County. Apparently their every move was watched.

Later in the month State Atty. Paul B. Johnson issued an urgent plea to Tampa parents of teenagers to warn them against the growing danger from "perverts." Johnson said "investigations have shown this problem to be even more widespread than we first anticipated. We have arrested at least 130 persons for crimes against nature and lewd and lascivious acts in the last 90 days." Of all the accused, "most have admitted their guilt."

A letter from a reader of ONE in the Tampa area points up the tragedy: "On June 16th I received a letter from my best friends. The two have been living together for 11 years. One is a teacher the other a doctor. They have a lovely home outside Tampa on. . . ." A part of the letter reads, "I don't know what you have read in the papers or whether radio or TV has carried the news in your city or not. At any event our worst fears have been realized, the reign of terror struck Tampa and made front pages here. On June 2nd, **B** was arrested without warning at . . . and charged with a 'crime against nature.' He is awaiting trial and is out of jail on \$2,000 bond. Being a school teacher he enjoyed adequate publicity. Needless to say, just about everything has collapsed for us.

"Fortunately, I am not involved legally, but of course otherwise, especially financially, we've had it. I don't know how we'll get through the next few months. . . ."

Latest news from Tampa is that arrests are continuing, and that police are now using information obtained from persons previously arrested who have been persuaded to tell on their friends and acquaintances.