

Anti-Gay Movie

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Cruising Hits Rough Waters

The hot days of July and August witnessed an uproar in the gay community of New York City over the film "Cruising," which was being shot on location there.

According to Gay Community News, "Cruising" is the story of a man who searches out and brutally murders gay victims in the Rambles of Central Park and the bars of Greenwich Village. Al Pacino plays a police officer who discovers his own homosexuality while pursuing the killer and turns homicidal himself.

The gay community in New York, which is taking action against the film, said "the film misrepresents the gay lifestyle and it could also trigger a national backlash or bring more violent attacks on gays."

The director of the film is William Friedkin, and the producer is Jerry Weintraub. Friedkin adapted a 1970 Gerald Walker novel for the screen.

After sporadic attempts to obstruct filming throughout the last weeks in July, an emergency rally Wednesday, July 25 at Sheridan Square developed into a militant march of hundreds, in which a gay man was arrested for allegedly assaulting a police officer.

The National Gay Task Force is-

sued a statement in early August lending its full support to all non-violent efforts to halt the filming of "Cruising."

The statement said, "We have reached the conclusion that the film in its present form represents a gross distortion of the lives of gay men by portraying them as violent and sex-obsessed. . . . Like other groups before us who have been victimized by false and inflammatory media images, we will not sit still for an entertainment that debases our humanity."

David Rothenberg of the New York City Human Rights Commission said, "They have the right to make the movie, but we have the right to do everything we can not to cooperate with it and make it economically difficult."

The reaction against the movie was initially prompted by an article in the "Village Voice" by Arthur Bell on July 16. Bell said that what has turned out to be a major show of solidarity among gay people started when he and several other journalists met on July 17 to plan actions against the film.

The film is being financed by Lorimar Productions and may be distributed by United Artists.

Coronado Court-martial Resumes

FAYETTEVILLE--The court-martial of Air Force Capt. Bob Coronado resumed this month at Pope Air Force Base.

The prosecution said that it will seek a conviction of consensual crimes against nature if Coronado is found innocent of forcible sodomy.

At present, Coronado faces a sentence of 5-10 years for "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman." The court-martial began in May and was halted by the U.S. Court of Military Appeals.

The charge centers on the evening of August 17, 1978, when Coronado picked up a hitchhiker, Spec. 4 Jonathan Heaton, an Army paratrooper. Coronado and Heaton went to a gay bar in Fayetteville and then to Coronado's apartment.

The next day, Heaton allegedly told his commanding officer that he was beaten and drugged by Coronado and another man who forced him to have sexual relations with them. Heaton later said that only one other man, Coronado, had been involved.

A military physician, who examined Heaton hours after the incident, found no medical evidence suggesting a forcible act. The physician's conclu-

sion was that Heaton "had probably engaged in previous homosexual acts or was accustomed to having foreign objects inserted into his rectum."

Cumberland County authorities began investigations soon after the incident. In September, the county dropped charges against Coronado, after Heaton did not appear at four consecutive court hearings.

One month ago, Heaton filed a new complaint in civil court against Coronado. The district attorney's office again dismissed the charges.

Civil authorities cited the military physician's testimony, as well as major discrepancies in Heaton's story as the basis for both dismissals.

The Air Force initiated court-martial proceedings in October. Then Coronado requested a discharge, which the Air Force denied.

If Air Force prosecutors attempt a conviction for consensual sodomy, Coronado could face a 1-3 year prison term.

A conviction of consensual sodomy is likely because of a sworn statement made by Coronado in October, in which he admitted having "oral and anal sex"

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