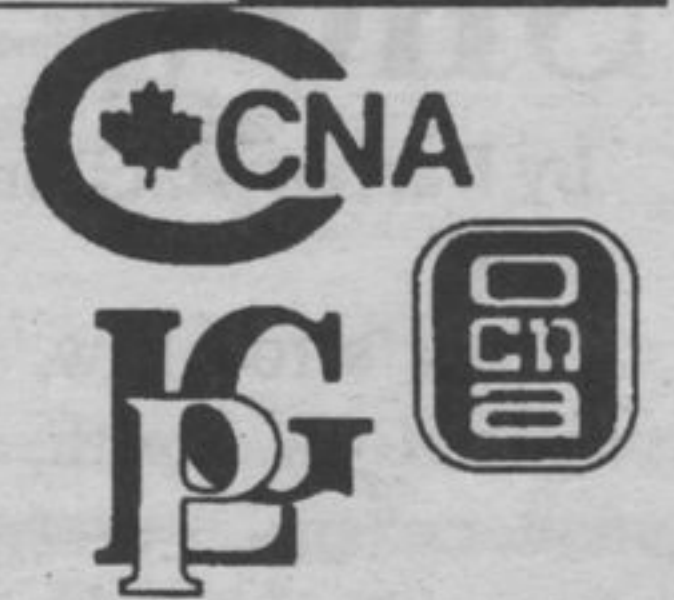


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Ontario Human Rights Commission creaking with age

I don't mean to sound mean-spirited or inflexible, but the ruling last week by the Human Rights Commission that 'spouses' of homosexuals are entitled to spousal and survivor benefits is wrong, wrong, wrong.

But not for the reasons you might think. Whatever your position might be on a homosexual's lifestyle, opinion really doesn't enter into it. In fact, it gets back to the reason spouses receive benefits in the first place.

Way back when unions began winning concessions from employers, it made a lot of sense to extend benefits to spouses. Most employees were men and the spouses were wives raising families. Women quite simply didn't work, and often had quite large families to raise.

Today, many, many things have changed. More women work today than ever before, and many of them receive benefits from their own employers. Also, couples that choose to have families tend to have one or two, rather than five or six. So even extending benefits in usual spousal relationships makes a lot less sense than it used to.

But extending it to homosexual couples makes no sense at all. Presumably—and biologically—there's no children in the relationship, so there's absolutely no reason why both of them can't work. And if they do work, for heaven's sake, why should the taxpayer have to pay for an extra dental plan?

Whatever my own sense of morality is, I believe that homosexuals have the right to choose the way they want to live. But I shouldn't have to pay for it out of my already too high taxes. The very idea is outrageous.

What it amounts to is yet another case of well-meaning but out of touch bureaucrats who still believe that the taxpayer's treasury is a bottomless trough that can and should be used for all kinds of social engineering.

But this time they've got it all wrong. If they truly wanted to recognize that the world has changed, they would have conceded that spousal benefits is the product of a different era and was designed for quite a different kind of family than is becoming common today. Protecting the health and welfare of a non-working mother is one thing—subsidizing someone's alternative lifestyle is quite another.

I'm sure that the Human Rights Commission thought it was being progressive in its ruling, but in fact it has shown itself to be a relic of another kind. Instead of dealing with the new challenges of a changing society head on, the commission decided to throw money at the problem in the hope it goes away.



Lots and lots of spies like us

There's no doubt that J. Edgar Hoover will go down in history as one of the most loathsome toads ever to huddle under the skirts of Democracy. The man has been dead now for 20 years, but before that he ran the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation on a short leash for nearly five decades. He did some good stuff. He established fingerprinting as a cornerstone of police work. He greatly encouraged the use of forensic science in crime detection. But that hardly outweighs the evil the man wrought. He did everything he could to destroy Martin Luther King. Indeed, he smeared every Civil Rights spokesman who dared challenge the Jim Crow status quo. He dispatched agents to investigate any public figure to the left of Attila the Hun. He kept files on politicians right up to and including the Kennedys. And he wasn't shy about letting public figures know that he had dossiers on the skeletons in their closet.

FBI records released last month show that Hoover kept a secret file on Sammy Davis Jr., of all people. Why? Hoover's file identifies Davis as a 'black nationalist' engaged in 'questionable activities.' Such as? Being married to Swedish Actress Mai Britt, for one thing. She's white, you know.

Another damning indictment that appears in Davis' FBI file reveals that during a 1967 benefit for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the entertainer went on record as saying "all races must learn to live together in a peaceful manner." Hell, hanging's too good for a trouble maker like that.

One would like to think that such outrageous red neck tyranny died when Hoover bit the dust in 1972, but recent revelations from California show that the pinched and ugly spirit of J. Edgar is alive and well in the 1990s.

L.A. Secret Police: Inside the L.A.P.D. Elite Spy Network is the name of a book just published in the States. It reveals that for the past 35 years, the Los Angeles Police Department

has sent out a 57-man unit of urban spies.

The unit's job: to follow, tap the telephones of, and otherwise maintain surveillance on a host of 'potential threats.'

What kind of threats—Saddam Hussein? Manuel Noriega? Charlie Manson types?

Would you believe Robert Redford? Connie Chung? Tommy Lasorda????

Robert Redford makes movies. Connie Chung reads newscasts on television. Tommy Lasorda, for crying out loud, manages the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team.

What threat could they possibly pose to the peace and safety of the citizens of Los Angeles?

Well, intelligence is a quirky business. The L.A. Police also kept tabs on every single member of the L.A. City Council. They hadn't done anything illegal, but the cops spied on them anyway.

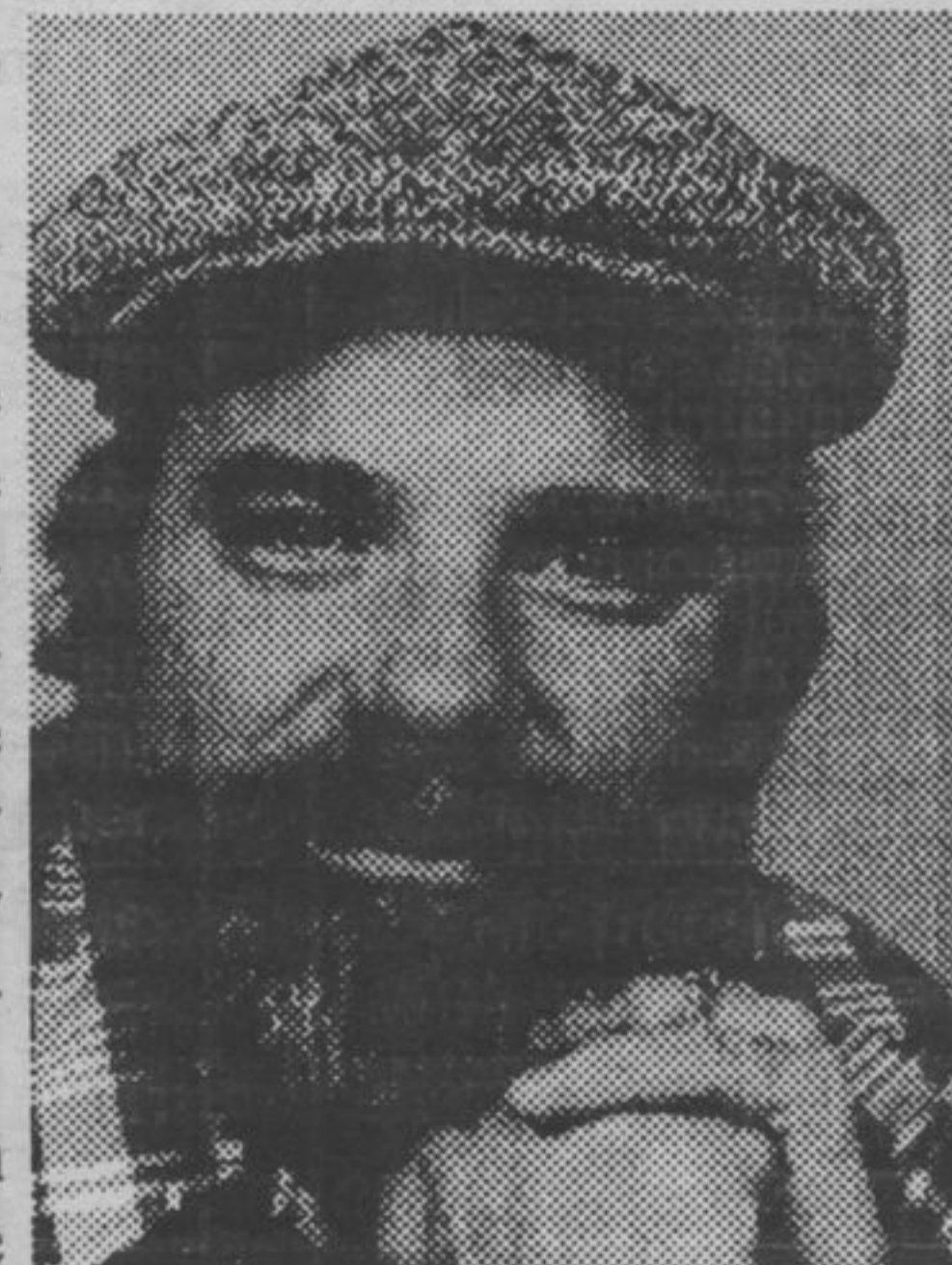
After the beating of Rodney King, police chief Daryl Gates was fired. The next day, he was miraculously reinstated.

By the Los Angeles City Council. Says Ivan Goldman, author of the aforementioned book. "They (the police) were spying on the entire city council. They had stuff on the whole council."

Lest you think overzealous police work is an American disease, let me direct your attention to a couple of RCMP dirty trick initiatives used against Quebec separatists in the late 1970s. Their mission, according to the *Globe and Mail*: to "spread the use of 'disruptive tactics'. The Mounties targeted 'dangerous' people and got them fired from their jobs, broke up their marriages by planting false evidence of marital infidelity, damaged their cars and carried out a number of break-ins and thefts.'

These are public servants we're talking about. I wonder if they thought they were doing that for you and me?

I wonder what they're up to this week?



Arthur Black

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