

THE BERKELEY TIMES

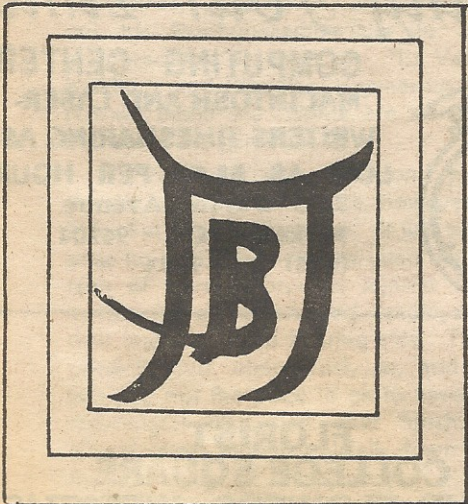
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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LOCAL RELIGIOUS LEADER AT POLAR OPPOSITES OVER OPTION DIET

Religious and cultural leaders in the Berkeley community are taking strong positions over the Option Diet, a dietary program which was introduced into the Bay Area some time ago. The diet reportedly transforms the homosexual.

In general, conservative and orthodox religious leaders have received the diet enthusiastically, whereas liberals and theological "left-wingers" have strongly opposed it.

The diet, which has become popular in other parts of America, has yet to find widespread acceptance in the Bay Area, the gay "Mecca" of America.

Television, radio and newspapers have referred to the diet as the "silent revolution," because the large number of people who have successfully tried it generally prefer to remain anonymous.

In Berkeley, some of the leaders of gay religious congregations have refused to consider the use of the Option Diet for their congregations, claiming that homosexuality is a natural inheritance, a God-given aspect of one's personality, which should not be tampered with by man. They say that to alter one's sexual preferences at all, by diet or any other means, is unnatural.

Conservative and orthodox religious leaders, however, usually regard homosexuality as inherently evil and welcome the Option Diet or any other technique or treatment which will help an individual become free from his homosexual urges. Many report that interest in the subject has become mind-boggling and that the diet has helped them deal with members of their congregations who come to them seeking guidance concerning unwanted sexual drives.

Orthodox leaders have been able to use the Option Diet to help

MARTIN CAMBRIDGE

homosexuals who are uncomfortable with their desires and lifestyle, most of whom, from childhood, have never felt they had any choice in the matter. In their use of the diet, however, church leaders have met with opposition from gays, who consider it a threat to the whole gay liberation movement.

Gay militants in Berkeley have challenged the Option Diet on every conceivable ground, disparaging first the reported effects of the diet and later, when evidence as to its effectiveness and growing popularity began to mount, the ideological grounds for its use.

Public testimony on radio and television by clergymen and prominent, well-known people has been highly persuasive. According to supporters of the diet, the mail order houses which specialize in its distribution have reported back orders of anywhere from four months to a year.

The diet itself is a forty-day plan using ordinary or well-known ingredients. The specific use of these ingredients, however, is unknown in classical herbal books of the West.

A booklet entitled "The Option Diet" answers commonly asked questions about the diet and refers to medical reports on the various techniques that have been attempted during the past century to change the homosexual urge, including surgery, shock therapy, drug usage, occupational and recreational therapy, and psychiatric efforts.

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