



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### Struggle to exonerate victim of modern “justice”



In October 2001, street preacher, Mr Harry Hammond, a 69-year-old pensioner from

Bournemouth in Dorset, was holding a placard urging homosexuals to repent.

A group of sodomites summoned others on their mobile phones and before long Mr. Hammond was being pelted with dirt and had water poured over him. During this tussle, Mr Hammond was knocked to the ground and had to be helped to his feet by security guards from a nearby shop. Mr. Hammond was carrying a placard which read: “Stop immorality. Stop homosexuality. Stop lesbianism”. The police arrived and instead of protecting his rights to free expression, they arrested Mr. Hammond. Nothing happened to the violent sodomites who assaulted Mr. Hammond.

During the subsequent trial, the Crown Prosecution Service spent £4,200 of tax payers’ money to bring a single witness from Australia, against Mr Hammond. Another policeman testified for the defence against the arresting officer, WPC Gandy, but Mr. Hammond was fined £300 plus £395 in costs and ordered to destroy his sign.

#### Appeal

An appeal against the conviction, imposed by Wimborne magistrates, Dorset, in April 2002, was heard in London in January of this year. Mr Hammond died shortly after his appeal was lodged.

Lord Justice May and Mr Justice Harrison were told the sign caused a furore as a group of 30-40 people gathered round. However, the two senior judges dismissed arguments that the conviction for displaying an “insulting” sign interfered with his freedom of religious expression and infringed his human rights. They ruled that he was “properly convicted” of a criminal offence.

#### Article

Writing in The Spectator, on May 15th 2002, Mr. Peter Hinchens said: “Mr Hammond’s case may well be the most bizarre arrest in the history of English policing, since the two officers involved disagreed over what to do. A more experienced male constable, Wayne Elliott, thought that Mr Hammond should be protected. His younger female colleague, Nicola Gandy, thought that he should be taken in. Her view prevailed, but at the trial the two officers — incredibly — gave evidence on opposite sides, PC Elliott appearing for the defence, while PC Gandy spoke for the prosecution.

PC Gandy has since defended her actions by saying, “He was provoking and inciting violence with highly inappropriate behaviour. My agenda was to try to maintain the peace. . . .” The quarrel between the two constables neatly sums up the difference between the old law, which was concerned about what people did, and the new one, which is far too interested in what people think and say. Mr Hammond’s story recalls the 1999 case of Mr George Staunton, a 79-year-old war veteran who went out one night and painted two slo-



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gans on the wall of a condemned building in Toxteth. They said, "Free Speech for England" and "Remember the 1945 War". He was arrested and charged with racially aggravated criminal damage, a worrying insight into what the police now classify as racially prejudiced sentiment. But in his case the charges were dropped before they ever came to court. Mr Hammond was not so lucky . . . . "

The executors of Mr. Hammond's estate intend appealing the case to the House of Lords. Funds are required to meet the high cost of such an appeal. Anyone wishing to donate a gift may send a cheque made payable to Coningsbys (Harry Hammond Fund) and send it to Coningsbys Solicitors, 87-89 High Street, Croydon, Surrey, CR9 1XE, marked for the attention of Paul Conrathe.