

## Roseburg report: Guerilla warfare

by Billy Russo

There were about a dozen men cruising when the white station wagon pulled in to the rest area and parked where the occupants had a clear view of the public toilet. A man, who had identified himself as a police informant to my attorney the previous day, was behind the wheel. A man the informant had described as his partner was with him.

I walked over to two men who were chatting nearby. "Excuse me," I said, "the two men who just pulled up in that white station wagon are police informers. They're part of a big bust scheduled for this rest area."

The two men looked at me in disbelief. I smiled, shrugged my shoulders and went about warning others who were obviously cruising. One of these men informed me that there was a guy in the toilet who was aggressively looking for someone to fuck him.

The driver of the white station wagon was out of the car and headed for the toilet. Trying not to be too conspicuous — but feeling very vulnerable — I made a beeline for the place and entered the restroom a few paces in front of him. I hurried into the stall, sat down and leaned over to the three inch glory hole between the stalls and warned the occupant. The informant was sitting on a bench just outside my stall door as I got up to leave. "Hi," I said, "How ya doin'?" He looked away and muttered something unintelligible as I stepped out into the fresh air.

There was no one around the public toilet now. I walked back to my post of the past two days, a picnic table near the restroom door, and sat down. The man that I addressed through the glory hole stepped out, looked around, and hurried off. I noticed that the other police informer was not in the car. I looked around but couldn't spot him anywhere. All the cruisers had left too. It appeared that I was alone.

Forty-five minutes went by. It was starting

to get dark. The police informer emerged from the toilet and looked around. He casually walked over to the pay phones and made a brief call. He walked around the toilet, looking like any other man cruising. After a few minutes he came over to the table I was sitting at. He put his foot up on the bench and said in a weak voice, "You'd better get out of here. Something big is coming down."

"Oh, you mean the police bust?" I chirped. "I heard about it already and I know what role you and your buddy are playing in it, Waechtner."

His jaw dropped when I said the name. He looked at me real close for a minute and said, "I thought you might be up to something when you got up and talked to a few guys when we first pulled in. Are you with that organization in Roseburg?"

"I belong to a lot of organizations," I said. "I know that you're a paid police informant," I went on, "and that the state police are utilizing your services at the rest areas up and down I-5."

"Do you know that I suck dick too!?!?" he sneered. "And you're wrong. I work for the Highway Department, not the state police."

And my job is to inform on individuals who vandalize the rest areas.

We questioned each other for about ten minutes: "By vandalism, do you mean glory holes?" ... "What was that attorney's name who came down here yesterday?" ... "Are there other police operatives in this rest area right now?" ... "Are you an attorney too?" The questions went back and forth.

Essentially he told me the same story that he told my attorney and at least two other gay men on different occasions. He admitted that he was a paid informer and that he was gay himself. He said that he was tired of the entrapment scene. He described the role he actually plays in the busts, his relationship to his partner, and described in detail what was scheduled to happen that night in that rest area, that gay lover's lane.

Well. Now, you're probably wondering what happened next. You're probably wondering why a Roseburg attorney would spend one day of the Labor Day weekend playing scrabble all afternoon with me — especially

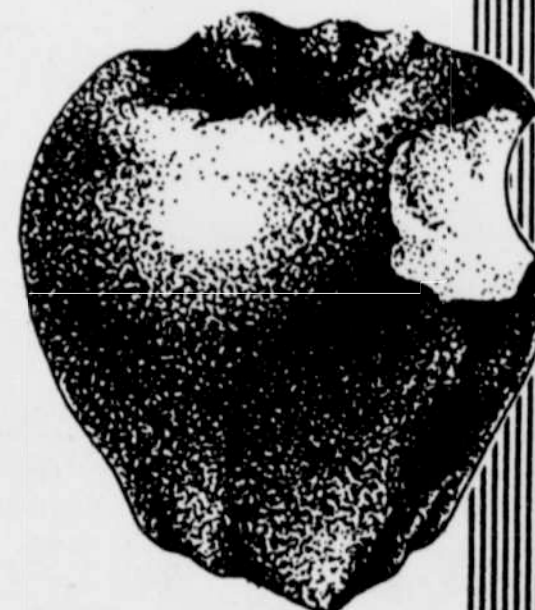
since I beat him three-out-of-five — while cruising a public john sixty miles from home.

I wish I could tell you right now; however, my editor is real tight with the column inch and there's no way I can tell the whole story in the space allotted. So, tune in next month for a detailed account of the techniques the police are using to keep queers from using our rest areas as lover's lanes. I'll also discuss the phenomenon of low self-esteem seeking its own level.

Let me conclude this column with a warning. The state police are cracking down on

gay cruisers in the rest areas, and they are not doing it in a lawful way. Right now they are focusing on the Grants Pass/Medford area: Manzanita and Talent. Oregon City is also targeted according to the police informant. If you are arrested, do not cooperate with the authorities: do not make any statements. If you don't know a lawyer to call, call information and ask for "Gay Switchboard, Roseburg," and ask for me, Billy Russo. I'll refer you to someone who can help you. Call at any hour.

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