



Maine Gay Task Force NEWSLETTER

VOL. 3 No. 3

March 1976

NEW CRIMINAL CODE REPLACES 1840 ANTI-GAY LAW

Maine's new criminal code goes into effect on April first, repealing the law that makes sex a crime for Gay men and women. Under the old law, sex was a felony subject to a penalty ranging from one to ten years imprisonment. With the new code, sex is now legal for consenting adults.

In case you've ever wondered how it became illegal in the first place, homophobia started with the ancient Hebrews, the Romans subsequently caught it, the Roman Catholic Church carried it through the Dark Ages, Henry the Eighth of England--having trouble with the church his wives and his patriarchal lineage--secularized it, and we in the United States inherited it. In honor of being legal for the first time in several thousand years, you might be interested in the following sketch of the History of the Laws Against Homosexuality:

THE HEBREWS Most pre-Roman civilizations in the Middle East accepted homosexuality, some even encouraged it. The ancient Hebrews, on the other hand, developed a distinct homophobic tradition. The origins of this convention are unknown but probably are the result of the Hebrew desire to strengthen and differentiate their own culture.

Hebrew hostility to homosexuality was first articulated when the Jews settled in Canaan. The rites of the Canaanite goddess Atargatis encouraged homosexual acts among her followers. Jewish leaders, in order to distinguish their followers from the Canaanites, established strict standards of behavior which included specific prohibitions against homosexual conduct.

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GOODSTEIN ACTIONS PROVOKE IRE FROM 'MOVEMENT' GAYS

In the wake of an editorial attacking "gay 'spokespeople'" as appearing "neurotic to the point of megalomania," David B. Goodstein, publisher of *The Advocate*, a west-coast male-oriented Gay biweekly, has called for a conference of persons who share his views on the direction of the Gay movement. According to a letter inviting "like-minded people" to a meeting in Chicago on March 27, "We are not trying to convene a conference that is representative of the wide and divergent spectrum of gay and civil rights opinion."

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Dear Folks,

I just today rec'd your/our news-
letter and was hit by the down-ness. Feb. 20, 1976
I know, I know--the stock answer to
criticism is "If you don't like it,
write something." But really--all
this pessimism and hate-mongering!
Your writers probably didn't intend
it that way, but that sure isn't the
way it reads, to me.

To illustrate. What is all this
seriousness and concern about Lesbi-
an separatism? If separatism is what
they want, they sure as hell don't
need the permission and empty mono-
logue of Gay men in order to do it.
And, in my humble opinion, there
would be no harm in it. Might even
remove some hassles (not that Les-
bians are a hassle, but the bullshit
surrounding this issue is beginning
to get very messy). Kate Millett, in
NYC over Thanksgiving, advised that
Lesbians form their own movement for
strength in their own right. Perhaps
that's not a bad idea.

So...since I feel that way, what's
my problem in dealing with Steven
Bull's last *Corn Muffin*? Probably
the tone of the thing was one thing.
Honest to God, I felt like Charlton
Heston on the Pinnacle receiving the
Word--and Steve's was about as much
fun as the original, (more rhetor-
ical too). Some people mistake rhet-
oric for perception.

Then there's the problem of Stev-
en's self-contradictory habits. A
couple months ago in the *Corn Muffin*
he demanded that we (Gay people)
unite with *all* oppressed minorities
in order for revolution and the
overthrow of the capital-O oppressor.
In this one, he questions the desir-
ability of unity between Lesbians
and Gay men. Will the real Steve
Bull please stand up?

One more comment and I'll cut my
tirade. I'm no David Goodstein, but
apparently I don't measure up to a
Steve Bull since his conception of
mere reformism vs. real revolution
does not coincide with my version of
what's going down. Many, many Gay
people, myself included, could be,
if they had to be, labeled both re-
formist and revolutionary. It is not
feasible to believe that we need
both, one being a necessary stepping
stone for the other? Are we really
willing to content ourselves mouth-
ing "revolution" for some hazy fu-
ture while right *now* we lose our
children, we lose our jobs (or nev-
er get them in the first place), we
are murdered in the streets, we rot
in jail, because we have no legal
recourse? I don't think so.

(Continued next column)

With hope,

John Frank

Main & Mill Sts.
Milford, Me. 04461

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Dear People,

I just read through your Feb.
issue for the 2nd time. I really
must congratulate you on such an
exceptional newsletter. It's by
far the most informative and inter-
esting copy I've read since I be-
gan my subscription in Sept.

This note is to let you know
that your effort is greatly appre-
ciated. My best to all of you.
Thanks again.

Alan H

Feb. 22, 76

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Dear Peter,

I am writing to you in response
to your article entitled "Respect-
ability and the Gay Movement." As
your article is based on material
printed in *The Advocate*, and, as I
have not read that article, I do
feel at a disadvantage in having
sufficient details about the Dorian
Group in Seattle. If you can pro-
vide me with more information I
would appreciate it.

Peter, you were very upset in
your article. I was moved by your
hurt feelings but I question how
personally offended you are by
having a group of "professional"
men and women join in on working
for Gay rights. As you wrote, and
I feel you are correct, the Gay
movement has shown compassion to
women, nonwhites and the poor. But
now, it seems, we have a group of
people, the Dorian Group, who want
to share in making the lives of Gay
people better, and you will not
have it.

It seems, these men and women
are professionally trained individ-
uals (lawyers, doctors, politi-
cians) who have been "in closets"
for years and now want to help.
(Are they in the process of coming
out? I don't know. Are they opting
to help in more than a strictly
monetary way? I don't know).

To me, these people may have
obtained a professional status lev-
el and a middle-class income level
and still they feel like second-
class citizens and unimportant ones
because of their sexual preference.

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LETTERS (Continued from page 10)

I would assume they have experienced the same basic inner conflicts which most Gays do in this society. Money and status cannot make one's life whole and it seems to me that they are just now taking a giant step toward facing their own sexuality, the society, and that wholeness.

In your article you quoted the President of the Dorian Group as saying, "It's important that they know there's a big middle-class of homosexuals who are tax-payers and important citizens." I interpreted this to mean that they have not felt important to this point. And, even though they are tax-paying individuals their personal rights have been denied and they too feel like victims of the system.

It is important that the public learn that homosexuality is not limited to college campuses or "combat zones" of our cities. And maybe, it's not until the general middle-class recognizes this that gains in the movement will be significant. You seem to resent being joined by middle-class people in your struggle. You wrote about assimilation and mainstreaming as if they were real negatives. Looking back at the development of the women's movement, it seems that it had to enter the "mainstream" before it achieved credibility (I don't like it either, but I think that's what happened). The strength of the women's movement began when Sylvia Plath was read by middle-class homemakers, when Erika Jong appeared on the daytime Dinah Shore Show, when middle-class TV (like the New Hampshire Network) programmed "Woman," when Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm (both middle-class) were viewed by the national public on TV and the names of Kate Millett, Ingrid Benjis, Betty Friedan, and Gloria Steinham became common in the media.

I can remember the excitement some of us felt when Ms. Magazine first published and what that meant in terms of wide-spread circulation and a general raising of consciousness. (Unfortunately, the magazine has changed.) Now at least, women and men are talking and thinking or at least hearing about issues which would not have come up even five years ago. I don't feel the women's movement has suffered for this "mainstreaming." Maybe the Gay movement has to run the same course, with leaders and "mainstreaming" before it can grow. Maybe the Dorian Group can help with this.

Peter, I don't see how we are "trading our Gay collective pride"

(Continued next column)

or "accomodating ourselves" with the Dorian Group. It seems to me that we are increasing our collective feeling and numbers by including these members of our society who have similar concerns. And it seems we are transversing classist lines too. Why should these people not be able to act as agents of change in our society? I don't see how one can be a doctor and not recognize the injustices of the medical system or be a lawyer and not recognize the injustices of the jail and court system. It seems these doctor and lawyers have recognized the injustices of the system for Gays and now want to help.

Thanks for taking the time to read this, Peter [Prizer.] I hope that if any of the Newsletter readers have opinions on this or have information pertaining to the Dorian Group that they will write to you at the MGTf address [Box 4542, Portland, Me. 04112.]

Richard

Feb. 22, 1976

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Dear [Susan H.] Curmudgeon,

I've enjoyed very much your articles on the GAU conference and on world citizenship.

One quibble: In saying that David Goodstein has removed himself from the Gay community, aren't you going against your own principles? You're disowning him because you feel he's disowned others. Two wrongs....

Now I'm an old-timer, 17 years in the Gay movement, and in the last 6 1/2 years I've seen a lot of really awful abuse of Gays in the Gay press--almost always directed against Gays who are reformist, who lack radical/revolutionary consciousness, who are "male-identified" (Lesbians), who Suck the Establishment, and much much worse. No one ever took these vilifiers to task--no one didn't dare!--while people do feel free to go after Goodstein, and do so. Believe me, the whole ambience of Goodstein's outburst and the lively response to it is more in the civil libertarian tradition than most of the clobbering-into-silence from other quarters that I've endured and witnessed over the years.

Sincerely,

Barbara Gittings
Philadelphia

Feb. 27, 1976

NEWS RELEASE

A strong and outspoken heterosexual foe of homophobia, Dr. Una Maclean, will be visiting Portland for ten days commencing March 25th. Una has a distinguished career in medicine and social science in Britain. She has on a number of occasions put her brilliant mind, her humanism and, yes, her reputation "on the line" in an effort to counteract the categorization of homosexuality as a disease, and to urge her medical colleagues and the public-at-large to recognize Lesbianism and homosexuality as a wholesome alternative to being heterosexual.

[See Bits Page for more details]

Una is associated with Richard Steinman (one of the two keynote speakers at the forthcoming Third Maine Gay Symposium) in the conduct of a cross-national study of "coming out." To date, they and four volunteer Gay interviewers (in western Norway, London, Amsterdam, Fort Wayne and Princeton) have interviewed more than 100 Gay men and women about the process through which they voluntarily share with some non-Gays the fact of their sexual orientation. It appears that this is the first time those Gay people who want to are having the chance to contribute, in a somewhat systematic way, their experience with coming out.

Una will be present at the April 4th monthly meeting of the MGTF and would enjoy meeting Maine Gay people as she has many throughout Britain. If there is an interest at that meeting, she and Richard will be happy to discuss their research into coming out. In order to accomodate a somewhat larger group than usual, the MGTF April Meeting will be held at the Student Union, UMPG, at 92 Bedford Street, Portland. Refreshments will be served following the meeting, which will begin at 1 PM.

ABOUT DR. MACLEAN

Una Maclean is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Edinburgh. A native of Invernesshire, with deep roots in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, she is a scientist, a poet, a loving and warm human being, and the mother of five children ranging in age from 23 to 6 years.

In the Fall of 1974 Professor Kendall, who was being appointed to a professorial chair in psychiatry, argued in his inaugural lecture for the applicability of the "disease model" to psychiatry: homosexuality was, after all, a disease and therefore helped to confirm his thesis.

Una and Dr. Michael Coulson, a Gay member of the University faculty, protested in a storm of eloquent letter-writing. Their letters led to further debate in which Dr. Kendall was forced into a more and more defensive and untenable position. Finally the national press picked up the cause celebre, attracting public attention from one end of Britain to the other. Some months after the storm subsided, Dr. Coulson and his lover invited Una and Dr. Kendall to his flat for quiet dialogue on the issue which had made them public adversaries. But despite Uns's and Michael's best efforts, and despite Kendall's seeming "conversion", it appears that in his Fall 1975 lectures to students in psychiatry Dr. Kendall was back to his old tricks again. Fortunately, Una lectures his students each year so she will "have at" the students as well.

And so the battle goes...

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CONDENSED CALENDAR

MARCH

- Thursday. Gay People's Alliance of UMPG meeting. At 7:30 pm, 92 Bedford St., Portland. Rap & Business; all welcome.
- Wilde-Stein Club meeting at UMO. In International Lounge of Memorial Union; 3rd floor, 7pm. Business & Rap, all welcome.
- MGTF Benefit Disco-Dance. From 8pm, at the Oasis Ballroom, 195 Middle St., Portland. (\$3) Call 773-5530 for information. Res. suggested-- capacity is 166.
- GPA Meeting. (see March 11)
- W-SC Meeting. (see March 12)
- Gay People's Alliance Dance. 8pm, at Payson Smith cafeteria, side entrance. BYOB. \$1 asked.
- Thursday, 4pm: Dr. Una Maclean, lecture on women & health services; Rm. 326, Luther Bonney Hall. All invited. Free.
- W-SC Meeting. (see March 12)

New England Gay Conference. At Clark Univ., Worcester, Mass.

APRIL

- Panel discussion on criminal code, sponsored by GPA. At 7:30pm, Hastings Formal, Gorham (UMPG)
- MGTF Meeting; at 92 Bedford St. Portland. Business & rap, and Dr. Una Maclean.
- Maine Gay Symposium, UMPG

THE JANUARY THAW

by Hugo Leckey

[His Holiness the Pope stated recently that incurable homosexuals should be treated with kindness and consideration.]

Darkness comes early this time of year, and it is close to sunset by the time I have put in my stint at the typewriter, brought in enough wood to last the night and the next morning, and got a good soup simmering on the back of the stove. It is barely seven degrees when I rouse the dogs from the hearth and set off down the beach for our daily walk.

It has been cold indeed these past few weeks, even for the coast of Maine which often escapes that brutal life-defeating cold the small isolated places inland have silently endured for generations. But we have a taste of that now, and the beach is transfigured by it.

Salt water has begun to freeze. A stiffening lip of tide leaves rill upon rill of bluish ice as it ebbs. Sand, rockweed, and the tiny air-holes made by clams have all disappeared. The wind comes out of the North East, fetching up enough sea to smack the rocks and drench them with layer upon layer of dripping ice. They squat above the water like improbable melting candles.

The dogs dash along as usual, their noses close to the ground. Occasionally they skid, one half of the body galloping on while the other half collapses in a frenzy of spinning paws. Now and again they dump themselves down with an air of exasperation to chew out the ice that clumps between their toes and wrecks their traction. But apart from such technicalities, winter and summer seem one to them. The only real question is whether or not to go swimming and so keep body temperatures comfortable.

Not so for me. Winter is vastly different. It is cold and solitary, and one is thrown back--but I mean "we"--Richard and I are thrown back to our small isolated selves and the inexplicable spark that holds us together. I am aware of this especially now since Richard is away on business. This physical solitude sharpens a sense of being naked in winter, of being vulnerable, that was not so apparent when the rituals of gardening and fishing, or lounging on the pier for drinks with friends, made the warm days drift mildly by.

But the summer folk have left long ago, and even the clammers whose raw and heavy hands seem oblivious to cold have deserted the beach these days. The only people likely to meet us now are our neighbors who live a few hundred yards to the south, the Simpsons.

They, like us, are "from away," and they came to live here at just about the same time as we did. Unlike us, however, they are very wealthy and keep up their connections with high finance by airplanes, expensive four-wheel drive jeeps, or whatever else is needed. Their elderly parents live with them, their college-age children visit, and they have a dog. The dog, it turns out, is the common denominator between us. Like us, they walk their dog, and since one must go either one way or the other on a beach, it happens that we meet.

That is to say, the dogs meet. For unexpectedly rounding a rocky point or nosing around the pier, the dogs spot each other and bound off for an orgy of sniffing. We yell--of course we yell--and they yell too. But the rapt joy of dog meeting dog on that white desert of a beach soars beyond command. In short, we keep talking to the Simpsons over a happy tangle of dog bodies that we try to sort out while showing as little embarrassment as possible over the fact that our dogs are perfectly disobedient.

We try to be nice about this. So do they. We say--all of us say--how sorry we are, how it was *our* dog's fault, how they just won't listen. And then we start grabbing at dogs to get them disentangled. But by coincidence, all the dogs are of one breed. They are all golden retrievers, and although it is easy to tell them apart, it is easy enough to mix them up in a tangle. So often you find yourself yelling

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the right name, but grabbing the wrong dog; and when they're finally sorted out, and various people want to go their various ways, the dogs want to stay put. They get along.

It is of course entirely clear to me that their dog is the instigator of this mischief. He is a dog so ill-trained that he never answers to his name unless the mood is on him. But I give no hint of this, and if the Simpsons harbor similar thoughts, they give no hint either. We all smile alot and scold our own dogs as we get them sorted out. That may be a little unfair to the dogs, but it is a way of being considerate, a way of being good neighbors.

Occasionally I wonder what the Simpsons do think. I wonder what they think about us. After all, if you move from the East Seventies in New York City to the rock-bound coast of Maine you don't automatically anticipate that your nearest neighbors will be two rather handsome homosexual males. They retired here "to get away from it all"--and here it all is! I'd love to joke with them about that some day, but I doubt I ever shall. What I know of these people I don't care for. They were (and perhaps are!) staunch defenders of Richard Nixon, and I'm sure they'll vote for Ford, or Reagan if they get the chance.

But to the dogs again. These hopeless, sociable brutes who never get to vote keep bringing us in contact with our neighbors, and our neighbors, well-versed in the politesse of the East Seventies, fill in the gaps between apologies over our dogs' dreadful behavior by saying things like, "You must come over for drinks one evening," or "We keep meaning to have you over for drinks." We, in turn, say things like, "That's very kind," or "Yes, indeed." But we make sure to keep things vague and never ask them over for a drink. And so forth.

Meanwhile the cold continues, and now I venture down the beach alone, bandaged in mufflers like the invisible man. The hair inside my nostrils stiffens into little needles of ice, and tears run from my eyes as I peer through tiny slits at a blurred white world. Let it be cold. Tucked in long-johns, gloves and jackets, I feel snug and safe for now. The dogs lope along with their golden coats streaming, their nostrils flared for every delicious scent, and the sun settles coldly down leaving the sky and the islands washed in a luminous mauve light, a miraculous light that makes the rocks and the ice and the eider ducks floating on the bay start up with their own fresh and inexplicably valuable sense of life.

It is dark by the time I have stoked the wood stove and settled down with a drink and a book. The dogs are curled in their baskets. Their eyes are closed, but their noses twitch from time to time, like little black computers constantly storing up every smelly reference that drifts their way. The telephone rings with its harsh unexpected cry.

It is Mrs. Simpson. Her dog has disappeared. Just as I tell her "No," something catches my eye beyond the window. There he is, looking strange and uneasy. For a moment his eyes seem to glow as he stares into the warm house. He appears to have been standing there, looking in, for some time. She says she will come for him, and I experience a sudden moment of confusion as I try to say several things at once: Our driveway is impassably slick with ice; the tide is coming in. And I have an odd sense of pity for the idea of this woman searching for her dog on this coldest of nights.

Fearing that he will wonder off again, I put on a coat and run outside to catch him. Our dogs leap up at the glass door, pressing their wet noses against the glass. At first he is nervous when I grab his collar, and for an instant he cowers as though about to snap. But then he is friendly and wags his tail. In a few minutes I see Mrs. Simpson's flashlight flickering like a tiny candle through the pines, and I go to meet her at the icy bridge that leads from our property to hers. She is out of breath and gasping at the cold.

"Oh you are so kind," she says. It is dark and her flashlight is focused on her dog. All I can see is her pale gloveless hand and the bright metal snap on her dog's leash. "Thank you so much," she goes on. "You know, we really must get together for a drink. We haven't even given you your Christmas present yet."

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JANUARY THAW (Cont.'d from page 14)

It is mid-January, and we are both that we don't just pop out of the slithering on a little bridge as the woodwork on weekends, but they're dog tangles his leash around our legs, and all I can do is wonder who is singing at the Metropolitan tonight.

"I wanted to give you some bread," she says. But what with my parents and --"

"You mustn't worry. Please."

We talk about the dogs. How difficult they are. She fears hers will wander and not find his way home. I fear ours will get run over if they stray. Then she goes back through the trees with her dog, her flashlight making a white circle on the snow.

That night at bedtime, I peer out over the water through a tiny space on the window that is not scalloped with frost. Behind me I can imagine Richard already in bed, the warm sleepy curve of his body under the brightly colored quilt. The moon is full and zephyrs of sea smoke are drifting over the icy bay. It seems extraordinarily beautiful, this fierce cold. Or is it me, incurable me, making the best of it until the thaw.

ooo ooo ooo ooo ooo

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE NEW BAR IN AUGUSTA ...?

The question is still making the rounds, so for those of you who haven't heard, Flo's Tavern on N. Belfast Avenue in Augusta is open. It's owned and operated by two Gay men, Dominique and Paul. There are also two Gay women who work there on weekends. Flo's is open from 4pm to 1am Monday through Saturday serving draft beer, bottled beer, soda and pizza, all at competitive prices.

Although it looks like another straight, beer drinkin' joint from the road, what's inside is quite the opposite. It's also a welcome change from Ray's--Augusta's previous Gay haunt. Flo's is much cleaner, roomier, more inviting, and joy of joys, the bathrooms are clean. Perhaps best of all, it's a good place to go and relax with a friend or lover or to share a conversation with the bartender or bar-leaners on weeknights. When Ray's was the bar, Gay Augusta had to wait for the strange metamorphosis to Gay that occurred every Friday evening and reversed itself after Saturday night. I'm not sure if Augusta is ready to grasp the fact

There is a good-sized dance floor and the juke box usually keeps it full. There are several well arranged tables and booths that hold an official capacity of 99 persons. The owners have been limiting the crowd to that number even when it has meant turning away many would-be customers on weekends...kind of nice change from the "sardine syndrome" experienced at most popular establishments. The main reason, however, is that Flo's opened despite many bureaucratic and homophobic roadblocks and still remains under the scrutiny of certain official bodies as well as the "concerned citizenry." Any infraction, great or small, would undoubtedly inspire another stronger effort to close the place. Dominique and Paul and company certainly deserve a lavender star for putting in the time, effort and money to open up.

In general, Flo's is clean and comfortable and the people who run it are very friendly and accomodating. The only unpleasant thing I've experienced at Flo's is the less-than-liberated attitudes of some of the patrons. But I suppose that's present in most bar situations, and the place itself along with the management are well-worth a visit. The next time you're in Augusta, stop in and check it out.

Doug Chase

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MGTF PEOPLE TESTIFY AT DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM HEARINGS

LEWISTON--On Saturday, Feb. 28, two members of MGTF attended the Maine Democratic Party Platform Hearings to lobby for the retention of the Gay Rights plank, first passed on a party-splitting vote in Bangor two years ago.

Representing the Task Force were Stan Fortuna and Peter Prizer, who discussed the importance of the anti-discrimination plank with members of the Subcommittee on Justice and Equal Rights. Sentiment among Subcommittee members concerning the plank appeared to be supportive, with the major disagreement coming from a party "regular" and a State Representative from Sabattus.

The final platform hearing will be in Bangor on March 28, when the Subcommittee will decide on the final language of the platform section.

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GOODSTEIN (Cont.'d from Front Page)

This and other actions by Goodstein have provoked one of the most heated discussions in the Gay community in recent years.

The formal goal of Goodstein's "1976 ADVOCATE Invitational Conference" is to discuss fund-raising for a lobby in Washington D.C. for federal civil rights for Gay people. An "informal" goal of the conference is "To meet leaders of the Gay civil rights movement and share experiences with them." In an anonymous letter sent to MGTFF by "a Gay brother looking for discussion not controls on those we disagree with," Goodstein sets down "ground rules" for the conference and warns, "Please do not accept this invitation if you do not believe you can agree to these ground rules and objectives, because they are the rules I will enforce as convenor and chair of the meeting."

The "ground rules" include strict adherence to an agenda established by position papers filed with Goodstein beforehand, "no binding votes on matters not on the agenda," and access to the meeting by name tag only. Only those invited to the conference will be issued name tags, and "All invitations will be made by the ADVOCATE," according to Goodstein's January 22 letter.

The agenda, which begins with a keynote speech by Gary Aldridge, legislative assistant to Senator Alan Cranston of California, focuses on organizing the lobby. One section proposes for discussion "What should this lobbyist's policy be in regard to: 1. Other sexual minorities? 2. Gay groups? 3. People unwilling to work within the system?" A separate agenda heading entitled "Dealing with Gay spoilers," however, lists two items: "A. Keeping them off broadcast media and out of the print media--organizing local media committees to educate media about whom to contact. B. Keeping them away from legislators or at least neutralizing them."

Goodstein, described by *The Wall Street Journal* (Nov. 3, 1975) as a "43-year-old horse fancier" and "co-founder of one of the first mutual funds with a computer assisted portfolio," bought *The Advocate* in 1974 for "a reported \$300,000 in cash and long-term notes." Since then he has moved the paper from Los Angeles to San Mateo, near San Francisco, and precipitated a debate among California Gay people about the paper's politics and journalistic intentions. The debate has now spread across the country. Critics contend that Good-

stein has reduced news coverage of Gay activism and taken the paper to the right politically. Goodstein says that his paper reflects the feelings and interests of the majority of Gay people.

The most recent stage in this debate began in the January 14, 1976 issue of *The Advocate*, when Goodstein declared that a split has occurred between a "silent majority" of Gay people and "Gay 'spokespeople.'" Goodstein explained that "Almost everything of any significance is being done behind the scenes by people who do not wish to be known or exposed to harassment by other Gay people, especially by self-appointed Gay leaders. As a result, Gay 'spokespeople' are disconnected from their constituency." Goodstein described "movement people" as men and women who "appear unemployable, unkempt and neurotic to the point of megalomania."

Gay Community News for February 28 reported that among the thirty or forty persons Goodstein has invited to the conference are such "Gay 'spokespeople'" as Massachusetts State Representative Elaine Noble, Jean O'Leary and Bruce Voeller of the National Gay Task Force, Chris Pattie of Connecticut's Sexual Orientation Lobby, and Minnesota State Senator Allen Spear. All plan to attend, according to GCN. Philadelphia Gay Raider Mark Segal was not among those invited.

Goodstein also charged in his editorial that the "silent majority" does not support "Gay 'spokespeople'" for three reasons: first, "our majority regards separatism, including Lesbian separatism, as counterproductive." "Secondly, Gay men and women do not believe achievement of Gay civil rights has anything to do with fascism, imperialism, socialism, or other aspects of Marxist rhetoric. They are enraged by Gay contingents in leftist and 'Third World' demonstrations. Thirdly, our majority regards the movement infighting more as signs of egomania than anything else."

As the best examples of a new Gay pride, Goodstein cites "the many new, well-lighted, expensively decorated bars and clubs that are rapidly replacing the dingy toilets of old."

Arguing that "We have to find ways to encourage closeted Gay people to do what they can from the

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safety of their closets," Goodstein also insists that "We must find ways to keep the emotionally disturbed members of our community out of stage-center roles and on the counseling couches where they belong." Styling himself a veteran of the movement, Goodstein concludes with a request for help because "it's damn lonely on the front lines!"

Reaction from Gay groups to Goodstein's editorial has been swift and strong. The New York Gay Activists Alliance has charged that "The aim of Goodstein's piece was not to open up a dialogue within the Gay movement on where it should be heading, nor to offer an analysis of the present state of the movement. Its aim was quite different: to drive a wedge between the activist wing of the movement and the rest of the Gay community." The GAA statement, entitled "In Defense of the Gay Liberation Movement: An Open Letter to David Goodstein and *The Advocate*," went on to score the paper for its dwindling coverage of Gay activism. It also attacked Goodstein's choice of the bars, rather than the repeal of anti-Gay laws in many states and cities, the growing number of Gay marches and demonstrations, the growth of a Lesbian presence in the women's movement, and the increasing number of Gay groups throughout the country, as examples of Gay pride.

(Continued next column)

THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY CURMUDGEON

By Susan W. Henderson

[This column generally represents the views of its author and not necessarily those of the Maine Gay Task Force or of the *Newsletter* staff. This month, however, the column reflects the opinion of the Task Force, as voted upon in their monthly meeting.]

JUDAS ISCARIOT REDIVIVUS,

or,

The Old Viper-in-the-Bosom Hustle

Many years ago, so we are told by Aesop, an ancient Greek brother, a shepherd happened upon a snake lying by the road. The snake was cold and stiff and appeared to have one foot in the grave (so to speak) and the other on a banana peel. The shepherd took pity on the beast and put it down the front of his tunic to keep it warm, thinking to revive it. Snakes, as cold-blooded animals, take on the temperature of their surroundings, and in the shepherd's shirt-front, the viper warmed up and took notice. Thereupon, it bit the shepherd, who promptly died.

With regard to Goodstein's defense of the closet, the GAA statement comments: "The entire thrust of the movement has been to create the conditions in which ever greater numbers of Gay people would feel they could come out publicly without running the risk of losing their jobs, their friends, their apartments, their livelihood. Has this thrust been wrong? We don't think so. In fact, we don't want to see our sisters and brothers feel obligated to continue a closeted existence. We are doing everything we can to break down the societal and psychological barriers to a free and open life for Gay people."

GCN in a February 7 editorial challenged Goodstein to name those he had in mind when he described the leaders of the Gay movement. The editorial also noted that five east-coast writers--David Aiken of Washington, D.C. Allen Young and David Brill of Massachusetts, and New York's Vito Russo and Arnie Kantrowitz--had signed a letter condemning the Goodstein editorial (*Advocate* contributing editor George Whitmore of New York recently resigned in protest). In the February 28 issue, GCN reported that its mail has been five to one against Goodstein and in favor of the editorial.

Taking issue with Goodstein's conference proposal to silence those he designates "Gay spoilers," the California paper *Newsweek* said, "Surely, the man knows what would happen to Freedom of the Press if a proportionately evil effort against inquiry were waged by the Establishment--to say nothing of what could be done to crush the Gay liberation movement and its leaders, including David Goodstein. What gives him the notion that he alone would be spared from the beast which he proposes to unleash?" (February 6-February 9)

(Continued on page 5)

EDITORIAL (Cont.'d from page 4)

Now, sisters and brothers, let us consider the story of the *Advocate*. Back in the 1950's, that far-from-best of all possible worlds, there was a little four-page Gay news-sheet called the *Advocate*, similar in its humble beginnings to *Gay Community News* or *MGTFN*. It was put out in deadly secret and distributed by underground methods. Gay people, thirsting for positive news of their own kind, took it to their hearts. As civil-rights consciousness grew, Gay people began to band together to fight for their rights and work to improve the quality of Gay life. Gay pride grew, and more and more Gay people dared to buy the *Advocate*, and were heartened by what they read therein. The *Advocate* flourished like the green bay tree.

Then, on 14 January, 1976, the new owner of the *Advocate*, David Goodstein, bit the movement that had nourished his paper and made it possible for him to make money from it. He declared that the "silent majority" (remember that phrase, folks?) of Gay people wish to remain closeted, resent being associated with radical and civil-rights causes and consider Gay leaders "unemployable, unkempt, and neurotic to the point of megalomania." He measured Gay progress by the number of "new, well-lighted, expensively decorated bars and clubs that are rapidly replacing the dingy toilets of old."

Now, heaven knows, there is plenty of room for criticism in the Gay movement; Yours Truly gets her name in print every month as a critic. However, there is a world of difference between honest criticism and criticism used as a weapon to destroy the Movement. Some of Goodstein's statements are patently unfair innuendo, such as his implication that Gay people fear exposure by movement activists. He follows this by declaring that it has been *Advocate* policy never to reveal the name of any person who does not wish it. Well, that has been the policy of every Gay paper and virtually every activist, including *MGTF* and its newsletter. Goodstein is doing nothing that the activists he affects to distrust are not also doing. This is a classic example of the damaging half-truth. Other statements, such as the declaration that Gay people are "enraged by Gay contingents in leftist and 'Third World' demonstrations," are appeals to the worst prejudices among us, to racism and Red-baiting. Every civilized Gay person ought to care about discrimination against Blacks, Native Americans, and other peoples, even as we have been discriminated against. (I say nothing of sexism, for the Feminist cause and ours are one and the same.)

Racism, sexism, and class prejudice have no place in a democratic society, and it behooves all of us to search our own hearts and educate these noxious prejudices out of ourselves. As for leftists, we ought never to forget the debt we owe to the radicals amongst us, for it is they who come up with many of the new ideas that benefit us, and who are first to put their bodies on the line for others' benefit.

As for being "unemployable [and] unkempt," this is not necessarily anything to be ashamed of, given homophobia and the state of the economy. The people who fought at Stonewall were not Wall Street brokers in Brooks Brothers suits; they were drag queens and poor Gays. Most of them probably couldn't afford a subscription to the *Advocate*, but they sparked an upsurge in a movement that has built community services, fought legal and legislative battles, and made homosexuality a topic of open discussion where it was once unmentionable, surely a more worthy measure of Gay advancement than a body-count of well-lighted, expensively decorated bars. One does not have to be a radical to find Goodstein's crass materialism appalling. And as far as megalomania goes, a person with an ego as big as Goodstein's has no call to point the finger, as we shall see.

Hard upon the heels of this editorial came the news that Goodstein had organized a select conference, by invitation only, to meet in Chicago. The prospectus got into the hands of a latter-day Daniel Ellsberg and was sent to Gay groups across the country; its authenticity is beyond doubt. Now, any one may call a conference and invite whatever elite one pleases; the result is likely to be as significant as the Debutantes' Ball. However, two features of the prospectus are blood-chilling. The first is the proviso that nothing will be discussed that has not been submitted for the agenda in writing beforehand, and that Goodstein will be the arbiter of who and what gets on the floor. This could just mean that Brother Goodstein wants an interrupted opportunity to sing and dance, but it sounds suspiciously like thought control.

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EDITORIAL (Continued from page 5)

The other show-stopper is the agenda section, "Dealing with Gay Spoilers." The program sounds horribly reminiscent of Nazi tactics--that is a sensationalist comparison, true, but it is also accurate. The Nazis had short methods of dealing with people they disapproved of. One of their earliest acts was to burn the magnificent Gay library of Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, one of the leading lights of the nineteenth-century Gay Rights movement in Germany. Hirschfeld himself was beaten up by Nazi thugs in Vienna and left for dead. An attempt by any Gay person to silence others, as *Newsweek* said, is a dangerous example.

One is at a loss to understand what Goodstein is trying to accomplish. It appears that he wants to insinuate himself and other "respectable" Gays into the good graces of conservatives in power. If so, he is leaning on a weak reed that will pierce his hand. Marshal Ernst Rohm, a homosexual Nazi, thought he had done the same--until the Night of the Long Knives, when Hitler ordered the murder of Gay Nazis and others out of favor with the ruling clique. Rohm was chief among the victims. Goodstein should know better; rumor has it that he was unwelcome on "Wall Street" when his homosexuality was discovered. Talk about kissing the hand that just gave you a beating!

The *Advocate*, in this observer's opinion, has not improved since Goodstein's take-over. The Trader Dick section, composed of sleazy sex ads, has expanded from a few pages to half of the paper. News coverage has shrunk, to be replaced by Southwest-oriented features about bars and vacation spots. Intellectual content is fairly adequate, but advertising crowds the entire copy. Its motto to the contrary notwithstanding, the *Advocate* doesn't touch the lifestyle of most Maine Gays--only a few issues ago, there was a feature on skiing which gave a bare paragraph to all of New England. Most Maine Gays could not afford the products and businesses advertised (even supposing they were not all located in the Southwest), and those who can hopefully have the good taste not to (Locker Room cologne, indeed!) Goodstein, however, has only contempt for poor people. In a friendly interview in *Vector* (December, 1975), the interviewer remarked that Goodstein's most vocal critics "would never think about putting the 50¢ in the machine" [for a copy.] Goodstein replied, "Tough. They also can't afford to buy what our advertisers want and do a whole lot of other things in this world." So there, all you Grant's employees, out-of-work fisherpeople, woodcutters, welfare mothers, etc. See what you have to look forward to when David Goodstein touches your lifestyle?

I could rant at length on this topic, but I have an incipient rebellion on my own hands. My unkempt, unemployable, megalomaniacal cats have just delivered a non-negotiable demand. I am to stop lining their litter box with the Trader Dick section of the *Advocate* that we get in exchange for our *Newsletter*. In fact, the brown tabby (who has been teaching the black and white kitten that they are descended from the Sacred Cats of Egypt and should properly expect to be worshipped) informed me that if I do not accede forthwith, he will transact his business on the bedroom rug. The rebellion should be short-lived, however. When the *Advocate* staff gets hold of this editorial, there may not be any more Trader Dick sections from exchange, and I am certainly not going to climb up to Congress Street and shell out seventy-five cents to have my lifestyle missed by a mile.

[Ed. note: The staff of the *Newsletter* welcomes comment from readers concerning the David Goodstein/*Advocate* controversy. Letters on the subject should be addressed to "Editorial Staff, MGTG Newsletter, Box 4542, Portland, Maine 04112." Back issues of the *Advocate* are available in the MGTG office at 193 Middle St., 4th floor, Portland or may be purchased on the newsstand at Russell's store on Monument Square, Portland.]

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NEW ENGLAND GAY CONFERENCE

WORCESTER, MASS.--Gay people at Clark University and the Worcester Gay Community will host this year's New England Gay Conference to be held the weekend of March 26-28. The conference theme is "Our Diverse Selves," and workshops will take

place at the Clark University Academic Center. A keynote speech will open the conference on Saturday at 10 AM. A dance on Saturday evening as well as other entertainment is being planned. Housing will be available, though limited. Persons seeking additional info should contact: G.P.C., Box A-70, Clark Univ., Worc.

HISTORY (Cont.'d from Front Page)

The only unequivocal references to homosexuality in the Old Testament are in the Book of Leviticus. Male homosexuality is labeled an abomination to be punished by death. In Leviticus, the Lord also decrees death for anyone that "curseth his father or mother," for adultery, and for any divorced person who remarries. These prohibitions are only a few of many to be found in Leviticus, yet they form the basis for three thousand years of persecution of Gay people.

THE CHRISTIANS Jesus never alluded to homosexuality. Only one figure in the New Testament is responsible for carrying the Jewish tradition of homophobia into Christianity. This was Saint Paul, the vengeful rabbi who persecuted Christians until his sudden and hallucinatory conversion--after which he began persecuting women and homosexuals with equal fervor. According to Paul, "neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind" may inherit the kingdom of God. Paul also condemns liars, thieves, drunkards, men with long hair, women with short hair, women who speak in church or pray with their heads uncovered or who are not silently obedient to their husbands. Paul was so anti-woman that he wrote in Corinthians I that "it is good for a man not to touch a woman."

Homophobia became further embedded in Christian theology through the efforts of Saint Augustine, one of early Catholicism's most prominent philosophers. In 386 AD, Augustine converted to Christianity at the age of thirty-two after spending his youth in what he describes as an "abyss of vileness." Like Saint Paul, Augustine had a distinct aversion to sexuality. Deriving any pleasure from sexuality he deemed sinful. Homosexuals, according to his *Confessions*, are polluted by perversity and homosexuality was seen as a foul offense against nature "to be every where and at all times detested and punished."

Christianity's homophobia was further enhanced by the *Penitentials* [a set of church rules concerning the sacrament of voluntary punishment] which appeared around the year 400. The *Penitentials* set forth exact punishments for various sexual sins that ranged from kissing to bestiality. The penalty for sodomy could be from three to thirty years of penance and might involve fasting, vigil, exile, or exclusion from communion. The first *Penitential* to mention Lesbianism was written several hundred years later by Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury, who died in 690. Lesbians, according to Theodore, were subject to three years penance.

Catholicism did not develop a rationale for its punishment of homosexual conduct until the thirteenth century when Thomas Aquinas wrote his *Summa Theologica*. Saint Thomas, expanding on Augustine, theorized that God created sex only for the purpose of procreation. Sexual acts--whether homosexual or heterosexual--for pleasure or any reason other than procreation were therefore "unbecoming and a species of lust," which is contrary to "right reason." In addition to being contrary to right reason, Thomas singled out homosexual acts as being contrary to the "natural order of things." Being contrary to reason and nature, he wrote, made this sin the gravest of all. At the Council of Trent in 1563, the arguments of Augustine and Aquinas were crystalized into Catholic dogma and became unshakeable law for the faithful.

THE ROMANS Secular homophobia, as far as we can tell, begins with the Romans, who were the first to enact laws against homosexuality. By the year 226 BC the *Lex Scantinia* had been promulgated, making male homosexual practices criminal. This law remained dormant, however, and apparently was not enforced. Homosexuality did not attract the attention of the Roman legislators again until 18 BC. In that year, Julius Caesar decreed the *Lex Julia de Adulteriis* which prohibited married persons from engaging in homosexual acts. Under the *Lex Julia*, the upper classes were subject to forfeiture of one-half of their property and commoners were subject to corporeal punishment and possible banishment. This law was intended to protect the institution of marriage rather than proscribe homosexual conduct and in any event was probably not enforced in view of the documented prevalence of homosexuality during the next few centuries. It was not until the Christianization of the Roman Empire that homosexuals became actively persecuted.

In the fourth century, Christianity became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire under the Emperor Constantine. Until this time the Greco-Roman world generally had treated the homosexual with tolerance

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HISTORY (Cont.'d from page 7)

and, in some instances, acceptance. With the unholy union of church and state, however, homophobia took off with a vengeance. In 341, shortly after the Christianization of Rome, Constantine's sons decreed that "the laws be armed with an avenging sword, that these infamous persons who are now, or hereafter may be, guilty [of homosexual acts] may be subject to exquisite punishment." And in 390, Valentinian II, Theodosius and Arcadius enacted another law commanding that homosexuals "shall expiate [atone] a crime of this kind in avenging flames in the sight of the people." The codification of Roman law by Theodosius in 438 and by Justinian in 529 retained the death by burning penalty. Justinian, however, issued two edicts in 538 and 545 which kept the death penalty intact but offered mercy to those who would repent from their "wicked" ways.

HENRY THE EIGHTH Under the early English legal system, moral offenses were within the jurisdiction of the Church. Punishment for homosexual acts varied considerably, depending upon the particular offense. Punishments included exile, castration, flogging and--most commonly--penance. The death penalty remained a possibility but the ecclesiastical courts lacked authority to impose such a punishment and were obligated to relinquish offenders to the civil courts for capital punishment. Such release to the civil courts is thought to have been quite uncommon. Early English legal treatises, however, invariably mention some form of death penalty as the proper punishment for homosexuals. According to Matthew Bacon's 1736 *Abridgement of English Law*, the practice at the time of Richard the First was to hang a man and drown a woman found guilty of this offense. Other early treatises refer to burning or burying alive as the proper method of execution.

Homophobia was secularized by Henry VIII who, in 1533, decreed the first law against homosexuality in the Anglo-American legal system. This statute, after stating that "there is not yet a sufficient punishment appointed for the detestable and abominable vice of buggery" prescribed death without benefit of clergy and loss of property for those convicted of the crime. Benefit of clergy was a legal concept prevalent at the time which allowed those convicted of a capital offense for the first time to go free by invoking the "benefit of clergy." Homosexuals were denied this advantage. It is thought that this law resulted from Henry's efforts to reduce the power of the Church. The phrase "there is not yet sufficient punishment" suggests that the Church was reluctant to seek the death penalty by relinquishing offenders to the civil courts.

The law was amended in 1548 by Edward VII who retained the death penalty for those convicted but abolished the provision that required the confiscation of property. This law was repealed in 1553 by Queen Mary in an effort to restore power to the Catholic Church. Then in 1562 Elizabeth the First reinstated the law. The Act reinstating the law said that the earlier repeal had made "evil-disposed persons the more bold to commit the most horrible and detestable vice of buggery aforesaid, to the highest displeasure of almighty God."

The death penalty was enforced periodically over the next 300 years. Among those executed were the Earl of Castlehaven in 1631, the Bishop of Waterford in 1640, an Oxford clergyman in 1739, an actor in 1742, and also a woman, Mistress Clap, in 1742. In the nineteenth century an army trooper caught with the Irish Bishop of Clogher, but not the Bishop, was executed in 1822, and two laborers were reported executed in 1860. The death penalty was repealed in 1861 and life imprisonment became the mandatory sentence. After 1860, however, the courts generally imposed a lesser penalty of 10 years for attempted sodomy and 2 years for procuring rather than life imprisonment. In 1967, the United Kingdom finally repealed its laws against sexual acts between consenting adults.

MASSACHUSETTS AND MAINE Colonial government in America was established by charters issued by the British Crown. These charters gave the Governor and Council of each colony the authority to establish its own laws. Initially, the colonies relied on the laws of England but gradually created their own legal codes during the seventeenth century.

Massachusetts wrote the first colonial legal code, in 1641, known as the Bodye of Liberties. Its provision on sodomy is directly from Leviticus: "If any man lyeth with mankind as he lyeth with a woman,"

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HISTORY (Continued from page 8)

both of them have committed abomination, [and] they shall surely be put to death." In 1646 the law was amended to exclude children under the age of 14 and persons who were forced to commit the offense. At some point between 1672 and 1804 the law was changed to prohibit the "crime against nature" and provided for a maximum penalty of up to 20 years in prison. Massachusetts law presently provides for a fine of up to \$1000 or up to 5 years in prison. It is not thought to be rigidly enforced among consenting adults in private, however.

Maine separated from Massachusetts and became a state in 1820. In 1821 Maine established its first law against homosexuality, which read in part: "That if any man shall commit the crime against nature with a man or male child," he shall be punished by solitary confinement for up to one year and subsequent confinement at hard labor for up to 10 years. Sex among Lesbians was not illegal in Maine until 1840 when the law was changed to provide up to 10 years imprisonment, but without the hard labor or solitary confinement, for any person "convicted of the detestable crime against nature." The law in force today and up to April 1 is substantially the same as it read in 1840.

It is interesting to note that the "crime against nature" is "too disgusting to require other definition," according to Maine's Supreme Judicial Court. The Court has added: "The statute fines no definition of the crime but with due regard to the sentiments of decent humanity treats it as one not fit to be named, leaving the record undefiled by the details of different acts which may constitute the perversion." Under the new criminal code, the Court will not have to concern itself with these details any longer.

[Note: Much of the religious information for this article was taken from an excellent review by Marilyn Riley on "The Lesbian Mother and Her Right to Child Custody;" June, 1975, San Diego Law Review.]

Summary of New Laws

Rape:
--Sexual intercourse with another under the age of 14, or using force or threat of serious injury. Class A crime.

Gross Sexual Misconduct:
--Sexual act with another using force or threat of serious injury. Class A crime.
--sexual act with another under the age of 14. Class A crime.
--Sexual act where other person's ability to consent is impaired or if any threat is used. Class B or C depending on the circumstances.

Sexual Abuse of Minors:
--If you are over 18, sexual relations with someone between 14 and 16 who is 5 years younger than you. Class D crime.

Unlawful Sexual Contact:
--Any touching of another's genitals, directly or through clothing for the purpose of sexual arousal, without implied or express consent. Class D crime. If the person is under 14 and the actor is 3 years older, it is a Class C crime.

Prostitution:
--Promoting prostitution is a Class D crime. Engaging in prosti-

tution is a Class E crime.

Public Indecency:
--Engaging in a sexual act in a public place or exposing one's genitals in a public place under circumstances likely to affront others or to a person under 12 is a Class E crime.

Penalties:

Class A = 10-20 years
" B = 5-10
" C = 1-5; and/or \$1000
" D = 6 mos.-1 year; and/or \$500
" E = up to 6 mos. and/or \$250

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Several months ago, we noted in these pages that the amount of reader contributions in the form of submitted articles (or comment) was somewhat less than overwhelming. Happily, we are now able to observe that a number of people are beginning to send us their thoughts, views, experiences, etc. for inclusion in the Newsletter.

However, this long-awaited windfall is not without accompanying hassles: seems that most of the contributors barely meet, and in many cases, miss the Newsletter deadline. We ask that ALL persons note and adhere to the deadline that appears on the Bits page.