

COMMUNIQUE

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Off the Top of My Head

Thoughts on Politics, People and Periodicals

by Dick Harrison, Editor

If you hadn't heard by now, many of the people who were sitting in policy-making chairs in the United States Capitol have been asked to give up their seats and allow other, more right-wing thinkers to take their place. The new people in control of the national legislature would like to get the government "off our backs". There's too much interference from Washington. Too many regulations. Let's ease things up. All those rules about

mouths to feed. Let them go to work, too. They'll figure out some way to handle the day care for those kids. And if they lose their government health benefits, well their employer should provide that, or at least pay them enough to buy their own health policies. You know that if we have a universal health care system, it may hurt the insurance industry, and we can't do that because those folks provide jobs. And we're right on social policies, too. It may not be easy, but we're going to put our stamp, our values on the way this country works. Abortion may be legal but we'll put back

laws to make access more difficult. You know Clinton should never have removed those laws. And for gays in the military, they shouldn't be there. They're anti-family, anti-God, anti-American. Why, just look in your Bible. It says so. *We're* in charge of Congress, now, and for the next two years *we* know what's best for America. A chicken in every pot, a gun by every bed, keep the women makin' babies like God intended, don't let my son turn queer and all will be right with the world. Amen.

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Politics, politics, politics. Did you hear that Ottawa

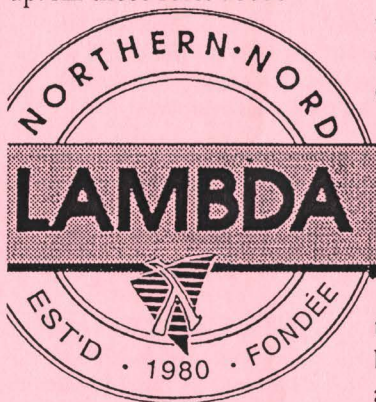
now has a second openly-gay Member of Parliament? In addition to long-time MP New Democrat Svend Robinson from BC, now there's a *Bloc Québécois* member (I don't remember his name.) It seems that Liberal MP Roseanne Skoke from Nova Scotia began attacking gays in the House of Commons. She referred to homosexuality as immoral, unnatural, and a threat to the family. She wouldn't apologize; she said she was defending "The Family." In light of her verbal diatribe, the *Bloc Québécois* member decided he would stand up and be counted, or rather "outed!" *Bravo!*

South of the border another Member of the U.S. Congress has also come out. In a recent issue of *The Advocate*, Steve Gunderson, Republican from Wisconsin, admitted that yes, he, too was of the homosexual persuasion. That makes three openly-gay members of the U.S. House of Representatives. (The others are Barney Frank and Gerry Studds, both Massachusetts Democrats). And earlier this month *all three* won reelection to Congress. In Maine, Dale McCormick, our darling lesbian State Senator from Monmouth, was reelected to her seat in Augusta. It's a bit early to say how the Maine gay-lesbian

civil rights bill will fare in this new legislature. The State Senate has an equal number of Republicans and Democrats (17) plus one independent. The House of Representatives is dominated by Democrats, who tend to be more supportive of non-discrimination laws for gay people). Independent governor-elect Angus King was at the Maine Lesbian-Gay Political Alliance banquet last February where he pledged to sign the bill if it reached his desk. Let's tell him he must do *more*; he must *lobby* for its passage, *issue an order* banning discrimination in the Executive Branch of state government, and be very *outspoken* both in favor of amending the Maine Human Rights Act and in opposition to the Carolyn Cosby/Concerned Maine Families' anti-gay referendum.

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Changes, changes, changes. People moving away, people moving in. We've lost several of the most active gay and lesbian activists in this area; either they've already moved away or they'll be gone by Christmas. First Stephen moved to Bangor. Then Roger moved to Bangor. Soon Jody and Sara will be in Portland. But as they were leaving, new faces appeared. Bill moved here from Boston, Jim and Jim moved here from Wyoming, and Sheila, well



protecting animals, why that just keeps the big companies from cutting trees and building things for people. Those companies make jobs, and that's important. And the poor people who live on handouts from the government, well they'd better get a job; we don't care if they can't find work; let them pull themselves up by their bootstraps. And those women with babies, we're not going to pay for any more

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she was already in the area but now she's becoming active in Lambda. Which reminds me of the Steering Committee elections for this organization. There are 10 members on the Committee. With the last issue of *Communiqué*, you were sent copies of the position descriptions and a nomination ballot. If you like the kinds of things that Lambda has been doing, good; get involved and put in some energy. If you *don't* like what the group's been doing, good; get involved and change the direction. This may be an obvious statement, but I'll say it anyway: Northern Lambda Nord is not some abstract blob of plasma floating 250 metres above the surface of the planet; NLN is people. The library books belong to all of us, the Lambda members. The community center in Caribou may be paid for with a check that says *Northern*

Lambda Nord, Inc. at the top, but the Center belongs to *all* of us. Have you visited the only gay-lesbian-bisexual community center in Maine or New Brunswick yet?! It's *your* money paying the rent!

There are four monthly publications in the state which regularly cover issues of interest to lesbians, gays, and bisexual people. 1) *Community Pride Reporter* 2) *10%*, and 3) *Apex* are all based in Portland and are written by gay people. 4) *The Maine Progressive* is produced by both gays and non-gays from several communities in the southern half of the state (i.e. Bangor and south). NLN's community center has been open since September. Guess which is the only publication to include an article about the first and only gay-lesbian-bisexual community center in Maine and New Brunswick. Maybe I

should rephrase that. Guess which three publications have yet to say anything about the only gay-lesbian-bisexual community center in Maine. *Hello, is anyone there?*

Which reminds me of what someone from S.O.B. (south-of-Bangor) said to me: *Yeah, I've been to northern Maine; I was in Bangor once.*

Finally, in this abbreviated *Communiqué*, Northern Lambda Nord is approaching it's 15th

anniversary. The first meeting was in Van Buren at the end of January, 1980. An anniversary dinner party will be held at the Carriage House Restaurant in Presque Isle, but is there something special Lambda people can do to mark the occasion? After all, NLN is the oldest community-based group in Maine, maybe even in New Brunswick, maybe even in all of northern New England and Atlantic Canada, maybe even in the entire galaxy! ▼

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GAY-LESBIAN PHONELINE 207.498-2088 TTY/Voice - staffed Wed, 7-9pm (Maine), 8-10pm (N-B)

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AIDS New Brunswick 800.561-4009
AIDSLINE/Maine 800.851-AIDS - Mon-Sat 9am-5pm, Mon & Wed till 7:30pm
AM CHOFSI Maine Jewish group, meets monthly; POB 5017, Portland 04101, 207.874-2970 (Rheatha)
APEX: A Point of Departure, published monthly by Phoenix Press, POB 4743, Portland 04112
COMMUNITY PRIDE REPORTER: The newspaper for the lesbian, gay,

bisexual and transgender community of Maine, published monthly, 142 High St, Suite 634, Portland 04101, 207.879-1342
DIAL KIDS, 774-TALK for lesbian, gay, bisexual & unsure youth under 19
DIGNITY/MAINE Catholic group, POB 8113, Portland 04104
EASTERN MAINE AIDS NETWORK POB 2038, Bangor 04401-2038, 207.990-EMAN
FREDERICTON LESBIANS & GAYS (FLAG) POB 1556, Station A E38 5G2, 506.457-2156 (Mon & Thurs 6-9pm)
FRUITS OF OUR LABORS Lesbian-Gay-Bi events calendar published monthly, POB 125, Belfast ME 04915
GAEZETTE For Lesbians & Gay Men in Atlantic Canada, published 10 times yearly, POB 34090, Scotia Square, Halifax, NS B3J 3S1

GAIS.ES NOR GAYS (GNG) CP/POB 983, Bathurst E2A 4H8
GAY/LESBIAN ALLIANCE University of Southern Maine, 88 Winslow Street, Portland 04103, 207.874-6596
GAY/LESBIAN COMMUNITY NETWORK POB 212, Bangor 04401, 207.862-5907/941-2189
GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP Portland, 207.772-4741 (Frank)
HARBOR MASTERS, INC. leather-levi group, POB 4044, Portland 04104
INTEGRITY Episcopalian group, St. Matthew's Church, 18 Union Street, Hallowell 04347, 207.622-6631
LESBIAN/GAY COMMITTEE, MAINE CHAPTER, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS POB 5112, Station A, Portland 04102
MAINE BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S

NETWORK POB 10818, Portland 04104
MAINE LESBIAN & GAY LAW ASSOCIATION (LeGal) POB 443, Portland 04112, 207.829-3379
MAINE LESBIAN-GAY POLITICAL ALLIANCE POB 232, Hallowell 04347
NEW BRUNSWICK COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REFORM/LA COALITION POUR LA RÉFORME DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE DU NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK POB/CP 1556, Station/Succursale A, Fredericton E3B 5G2 506.457-2156
NO BORDERS/SANS FRONTIÈRES POB/CP 461, Campbellton, NB E3N 3G4
OUTRIGHT: Portland Alliance of Gay & Lesbian Youth, age 22 and under, POB 5028, Station A, Portland 04102, 800.339-4042

OUTRIGHT CENTRAL MAINE for age 22 & younger, every Fri, 7:30pm 1st Unitarian Church, Pleasant St, Auburn; POB 802, Auburn 04212, 800. 339-4042
OUTRIGHT TOO Bangor area Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual youth group, c/o POB 212, Bangor 04401
PWA (People With AIDS) COALITION OF MAINE 377 Cumberland Avenue, Portland 04101, 207.773-8500
SIDA Nouveau-Brunswick 800.561-4009
10%: Maine's monthly newspaper for lesbians & gay men, POB 10536, Portland 04104
TIME OUT outdoor activities, monthly calendar, POB 11502, Portland, ME 04104
WOMYN'S GROUP POB 20082, Fredericton E3B 6Y8, 506.457-2156