

COMMUNIQUE

▼▼▼ NORTHERN LAMBDA HORD
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▼ RIGHTS BILL DEFEATED ▼

For the fourth time, the Maine Legislature failed to pass a bill to include the term "sexual or affectional orientation" in the Maine Human Rights Act, which would have provided people of all sexual orientations a means of legal redress against discrimination in housing, public accommodation, and credit. The Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill "ought to pass" by a vote of 8-5; the Senate, under the leadership of Senate President Gerard Conley (Democrat from Portland), chief sponsor of the legislation, passed the bill. Conley left his rostrum to make an impassioned plea for enactment of this legislation, the only bill he sponsored this session. But in the House, where it was expected to meet heavy opposition marshalled by conservative and fundamentalist forces, the bill was clearly dead after the first vote: 101-37 against. According to Betsy Sweet of the Maine Women's Lobby, the arguments in the House against giving us protection against discrimination are generally the "same ones used against Blacks and women. Any civil rights struggle is difficult. It took 250 years for women to get the vote. We'll redouble our efforts in behalf of homosexuals next year." Pat Ryan, director of the Maine Human Rights Commission, said her agency will assist in exploring ways of enacting an anti-discrimination statute for homosexuals. "It's a problem that can't be ignored," she said. (MAINE TIMES, May 27, 1983) ▼

▼ LOCAL TV STATION DISCUSSES RIGHTS BILL ▼

On Thursday, May 19, 1983, viewers of the only television station serving northern Maine and New Brunswick, WAGM-TV in Presque Isle, interviewed the back of a Lambda member. Susan Kimball, reporter for WAGM, phoned the Gay Phoneline and requested an interview with a member/s of the Community to discuss our feelings about the defeat of the gay rights bill. That interview is on tape in the audio section of Bibliotheque Lambda. After the interview, Ms. Kimball expressed interest in a interview with several Lambda people, discussing being gay and lesbian in this region. The interview will be part of a series on 'lifestyles' which she is doing for the local, 6 pm news. (N.B.: WAGM is the only locally-originating TV station in this area; cable stations serve our area but do not have Aroostook/western N-B news.) This interview may be on TV during the week of June 26th WATCH FOR IT!

▼ SYMPOSIUM X ▼

Portland was the place and May 13-15 were the dates of the TENTH annual Maine Lesbian and Gaymen's Symposium. About 25% of our membership was there, a good turn-out considering the 6 hour drive (last year in Orono, 2-3 hours south, one-third of our membership attended.) The highlight of the weekend surely was the extravaganza, GAY SIDE STORY, a play based upon West Side Story, but the characters were the gays vs. the hets. A lesbian and a gay couple were the main characters. The production, several years in the making, made the audience laugh and cry repeatedly, and definitely deserved the prolonged ovation which it received.

The guest speakers, John Preston, and Kate McQueen, delivered their addresses Saturday morning. Kate spoke on where we go after our rights are gained through legislation -- the direction of the lesbian and gay rights movement; John spoke about AIDS and the effect it is having on our community, the division and isolation we are experiencing when we shun those who have contracted the disease, and the sometimes callousness with which the medical profession views AIDS, as a "test" for experimentation with a new disease.

Several films were shown throughout the weekend, and the workshops were varied, as usual. AIDS, S and M, and "man-boy love" were three of the topics upon which the workshops focused.

As in the past, NLN was the most visible of the state's organization, with a display featuring a collage of photos of our year-round activities and a map locating our homes, (still on display in the Lambda office).

Next year's Symposium should be in Orono again. Maybe in the future, NLN can host the statewide gathering at Presque Isle or at the Fort Kent campus of the University of Maine!?

▼ IT'S MOVING TIME AGAIN, FOLKS! ▼

Every year at this time, it seems those two fellows who provide space in their home for the Lambda office move to a new location. In the past three years, they've moved from Houlton to Presque Isle to Caribou, and now, moving even further north, they're moving to New Sweden. But, this should be the last move for some time, because they're buying the house they will live in; and it has plenty of room for all of the Lambda paraphernalia to be kept in one small room of its own, rather than spread out throughout the house. A moving party will be held soon. Moving day should be by the end of June, so if

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you can help, there's plenty to do. In addition to the Lambda things and their own furniture and household items, they still have 2½ cords of wood left over from last winter! And we all know THAT won't be left behind, not after 8 months of seasoning! (it should burn really well next winter!) Call them if you can lend your back, hands, truck, or spirit to the move. ▼

▼ IT'S YOUR HEALTH ▼

Hepatitis B. An illness whose primary risk groups include gay men. A debilitating and potentially fatal disease. During the past two years, no cases of hepatitis B have been reported in northern Maine. In the past 6 months, 4 cases have been reported -- one local physician and 3 gay men. BE AWARE. Hepatitis is transmitted through body fluids: blood, semen, saliva, (not through urine). Incubation period is 6 months. You may have the disease but not know it; you may just feel "out of sorts." You may be a carrier, not feeling ill but transmitting hepatitis B to others. There are no symptoms to look for. A vaccine has been developed. It is a series of three shots, and after the 3rd you are 95% protected. The vaccine is expensive -- around \$100 US\$

Dr. Nina Higgins Morse of Caribou notified NLN of the local increase in hepatitis B. She stresses that we be aware of the disease, and she can administer the vaccine if you desire it. Though it provides immunity after the series of vaccinations, the duration of protection is not known; booster shots may be necessary at a future time.

The matter of our personal health is important. If you don't feel you can be open about your sexuality to your own physician, it's a good idea to find one who is non-judgmental about our lifestyles. NLN can compile a list of local physicians in Aroostook and northwestern New Brunswick who are easy to talk to about gay-related health problems, but we would need your help. If you feel your doctor should be on the list, contact us. We will add his/her name to that of Dr. Morse's. Merci.

▼ CROSSING THE BORDER ▼

Existing U.S. law continues to permit the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of the Justice Department to deport or refuse entrance to individuals on the grounds of "sexual deviation." Representative Julian Dixon (Dem, Calif) has reintroduced legislation to repeal this 1950's McCarthy-era law. In 1980, after considerable deliberation and in response to public and Congressional pressure, the Justice Dept. announced that it would no longer detain aliens under this provision,

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unless they made a voluntary unsolicited admission of homosexuality. Rep. Dixon said that "while this represents a significant step forward, the only real solution is the repeal of this antiquated, offensive, and discriminatory provision." The bill, H.R. 2815, was reintroduced on April 28, 1983, and now has 35 co-sponsors. A companion bill has also been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Alan Cranston (Dem, Calif). The late Supreme Court Justice, William O. Douglas, felt that denial of entry to aliens because of their private sexual orientation would be "tantamount to saying that Sappho, Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo, André Gide, and perhaps even Shakespeare, were they to come to life again, would be deemed unfit to visit our shores." ▼

▼ PRISONER PEN PALS ▼

•GWM, age 22, 170 lbs, 5'10½", light brown hair, hazel blue eyes. I am a very lonely 'hot boy' who needs a friend to love and be loved by. I'm in prison now but will be out soon and I plan to return home. If you are interested, please write: WILLIAM GIBSON, Indiana State Prison, POB 41, (#15086), Michigan City, Indiana 46360

•LESBIAN, 5'5" tall, 98 lbs, brown hair, brown eyes. I have a slim, smooth, and kissable body, have many interests in life. In jail for 18 months for modeling for a porn movie. I receive no lesbian literature to read and would like to keep up-dated on lesbian happenings. JO C. RIVERA, #99632, CBC Upper Right 8, Angola, Louisiana 70712

•GWM, 24 yrs old, 6'2", 179 lbs, blond hair, blue eyes, and in real need of a permanent companion. I am in prison and have only 7 months to go -- 12/7/83. Will relocate. Only serious minded need write. STANLEY DUNSON, #23528, POB 41, Michigan City, Indiana 46360

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