



Give the People Light and they will find their own way.

The Wisconsin Light

State Official Cancels Meeting With ACT-UP

[Madison]- According to a press release issued by ACT UP/Madison and ACT UP/Milwaukee, Patrick Fiedler, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC), canceled a meeting he had requested with ACT UP on July 22, 1991. The meeting was to be held to discuss ACT UP's continuing protests regarding the refusal of the DOC to implement the recommendations of Governor Tommy Thompson's HIV/AIDS Technical Advisory Committee. (see article, this issue)

Five members of ACT UP arrived at the DOC building and were shown to a conference room. A video documenter, who has been present at previous meetings between ACT UP and the DOC, accompanied the activists.

ACT UP has not released the tapes of previous meetings at DOC to the press, and had no intention, the group said, of making this one available.

The purpose of taping the meeting was to provide both sides with an indisputable reference document. ACT UP said they viewed the tape as a tool to facilitate open, good faith negotiations.

Upon seeing the video equipment, Patrick Fiedler refused to proceed with the meeting he had requested. Fiedler said the presence of the video camera would "inhibit his ability to negotiate." He also accused ACT UP of wishing to turn the meeting into a "media event," despite the fact that ACT UP had invited no representatives of the press to attend and had not issued a press release regarding the DOC's request for a top-level meeting. ACT UP offered to make available to the DOC a copy of the tape should the meeting proceed. This was unacceptable to Fiedler.

Unable to accept the presence of the camera, Fiedler broke off the meeting.

ACT UP has stated that it is willing and anxious to meet with Fiedler, but that ACT UP's commitment to openness and verifiability cannot be suspended to accommodate Fiedler.

In a letter sent to Fiedler and signed by ACT UP/Madison and ACT UP/Milwaukee, the groups reaffirmed their belief in "an indisputable audio/video reference" and pointed out that "Similar documentation has taken place in our previous meetings with DOC."

The two groups also reaffirmed their desire to meet with him. "We recommend meeting in a neutral space where your penchant to patronize will not hamper good faith dialogue."

Gunderson Labels His Critics 'Crazy People,' 'Pathological Liars'

By Jamakaya

[La Crosse, WI] - In his first public response to allegations that he is a closeted Gay, Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-WI, 3rd District) accused those "outing" him of being "crazy people" and "pathological liars." His comments were reported in the July 21 *La Crosse Tribune*.

On June 30, Gunderson was accosted in a suburban Washington, D.C. Gay bar by Michael Petrelis, a Queer Nation activist, who reportedly threw a drink at the Congressman and challenged him to "come out of the closet."

Witnesses say Gunderson replied: "I am out. I'm in this bar, aren't I?" Gunderson's spokeswoman, Jennifer Koberstein later denied the Congressman made that remark.

During an Independence Day parade in La Crosse, Gunderson was again confronted with the issue. Tim Campbell, editor of the *GLC Voice* of Minneapolis and a proponent of outing, distributed hundreds of flyers that mentioned the bar incident and urged Gunderson to "come out for Gay rights" and to "join the sponsors of the Gay and Lesbian rights bill in Congress."

Community Stunned by Murders, Angered By Press Coverage

By Jamakaya

[Milwaukee] - Allegations of "homosexual overkill," which first emerged at a murder trial in Racine County on July 19, have been reiterated by authorities and the media in reference to the separate and more recent mass murder discovered in Milwaukee on July 22. The multiple murders uncovered that night are the worst such crimes ever recorded in the history of Milwaukee.

Jeffrey L. Dahmer, 31, is being held by Milwaukee police as the primary suspect in at least eleven grisly homicides. The skulls and severed heads of eleven people, along with numerous organs and limbs in varying states of decomposition, were discovered in Dahmer's apartment at 924 N. 25th Street late in the evening of July 22.

Police were alerted to the murders by a man who had apparently fled Dahmer's apartment that night. The man, who had a handcuff locked around one of his hands, hailed a police car and led officers back to the scene of the alleged crimes.

After a July 24 hearing before Judge Frank T. Crivello determined that there was probable cause to hold and charge Dahmer, bail was set at \$1 million. Formal charges were expected to be filed on Thursday, July 25. (The *Light's* press deadline for this issue was 6 p.m. on July 24.) Gerald Boyle, Dahmer's attorney stated that his client was cooperating with police and helping to identify the victims.

Police and medical authorities believe that all of the victims were men and it is

likely that all were African-American or men of color. Dahmer is white. The first victim to be identified was Oliver Lacey, 23, of Chicago.

According to an affidavit filed in Milwaukee County Circuit Court, Dahmer met individuals at taverns and shopping malls and induced them to return to his home by offering them money so he could take photos of them. Patrons in several of Milwaukee's Gay bars claim to have seen Dahmer in those establishments.

The relatives of Tony Hughes, 21, who disappeared in Milwaukee on May 24, fear that he may be one of the victims. Hughes was last seen leaving Club 219, a Gay dance bar on Milwaukee's south side.

Police reported that along with the human remains confiscated at Dahmer's apartment were photos of mutilated bodies, body parts and homosexual acts. Police were quick to label the murders "homosexual overkill," and that phrase was again reported throughout the local print and broadcast media.

The term "homosexual overkill" was first employed only days before at the Racine County trial of another alleged murderer. The phrase was repeatedly used by Milwaukee County Medical Examiner Jeffrey M. Jentzen and Racine County District Attorney Lennie Weber in the murder trial of Joachim Dressler, 43.

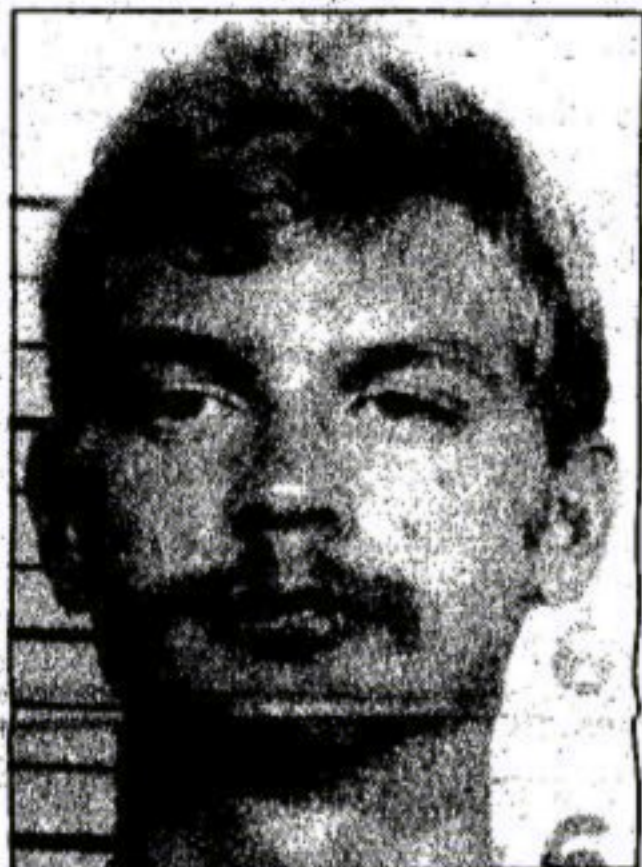
Dressler is accused of murdering and dismembering the body of James Madden, 24, on June 27, 1990.

TURN TO MURDERS, PAGE 5

By Terry Boughner

[Milwaukee]- Members of Milwaukee's Gay and Lesbian community, both political leaders and average bar patrons interviewed by the *Light*, have reacted with wide-spread shock, sorrow and dismay at the news of the grisly murders/dismemberments discovered on Monday, July 22, 1991. The mass killings are believed to be the worst such crimes ever perpetrated in the city of Milwaukee.

Anger was also expressed over the fact that the media was seen by most as labeling the crime as being brought about, in part, by homosexuality.



Jeffrey Dahmer in a 1982 Police File Photo.

"I'm disappointed with the press for the 'homosexual' angle," said Stan Straka. "They were so quick to take off with it. There's been over 90 murders in our city this year and none of them was labeled 'heterosexual.' This type of reporting just brings more hatred towards our community."

Tim Grair, a member of Queer Nation/Milwaukee commented that to him it was "a horrifying and frightening experience." Grair went on to add: "To me this whole situation makes grotesquely clear that it is imperative that we recognize the importance of self-awareness training and I hope this spurs more people into action with the street patrol."

Scott Gunkel, President of the Lambda Rights Network, expressed stunned shock over news reports and added that "there can be no excuse for blaming the whole Gay community for this deranged act."

Gunkel said that Lesbian/Gay organizations would be holding a strategy session on Thursday, July 25, 1991 at 7:00 p.m. at the Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 N. 4th Street, to voice the community's concern and position.

Karl Olson condemned the "accusations that the murders are examples of 'homosexual overkill,' which seems to imply that all Gay men are culpable. As a community," Olson said, "we need to rise up in pride and counter the insinuations that underlie this act."

Olson urged Gays to "affirm the power of coming out" so that Lesbians and Gay men can free themselves as well as teach others that Gays and Lesbians are "not the monsters some fear us to be."

Olson went on to say he believed that "this man Jeffrey Dahmer, the suspect in the crimes had been a self-affirming, openly Gay man who loved himself and others. Milwaukee would very likely have been spared this tragedy."

Olson concluded saying, "We the Gay community — with the rest of the community — mourn the senseless loss of life and deplore the manner of their deaths."

Kitty Barber, spokeswoman for the
TURN TO DAHMER, PAGE 5

Waupun Prison Inmate With AIDS Dies In Suspicious Circumstances

[Madison]- According to ACT UP/Madison, another Person With AIDS (PWA) living in a Wisconsin prison has died under suspicious circumstances.

Ricardo Thomas, 31, a PWA incarcerated at Waupun Correctional Institution, died June 27, 1991 at University Hospital 6 hours after he was admitted. In the days leading up to his death, Thomas was being held in isolation in the Health Service Unit (HSU) of the prison.

"Why was Mr. Thomas held at Waupun until six hours before he died and only then transferred to UW Medical?" asks Dan Savage, prison issues spokesperson for ACT

UP/Madison. Savage went on to say that "Mr. Thomas was extremely ill in the days leading up to his death. Why wasn't he transferred sooner? The HSU at Waupun is not equipped for caring for terminally ill inmates, yet Mr. Thomas was held there until he was too sick to live, and only then transferred to the hospital."

An issue paper submitted by the Governor's HIV/AIDS Technical Advisory Committee to Governor Tommy Thompson and the Department of Corrections (DOC) in May, 1990, states that the prison HSUs "...are ill equipped to provide care to persons with terminal illness..." They provide "routine ambulatory care services, including health assessments, management of minor injuries, routine monitoring of chronic diseases, and referral for specialty care."

Regarding the HSU at Waupun, the report goes on to state: "The physical facility... is over one hundred years old and is inadequate to provide skilled nursing care." The report describes the staff at prison HSUs as lacking the skills "specific to caring for seriously and terminally ill inmates."

ACT UP/Madison has been protesting the treatment of PWAs in Wisconsin prisons since April 17, 1991. ACT UP states that it would like to see the DOC enact all of the recommendations of the Governor's HIV/AIDS Technical Advisory Committee. These recommendations concern issues of treatment; access to health care; education for guards, staff and inmates; compassionate early release; distribution of condoms and communication between prison HSUs and outside care providers.

ACT UP/Madison has called for an investigation to resolve what it regards as the questions surrounding the circumstances of Mr. Thomas' death.

Steve Kronzer, administrator of program services for the DOC, said that "inmates receive the best care available."

However, Savage said, "The DOC
TURN TO ACT UP, PAGE 7

Both Petrelis and Campbell cited Gunderson's failure to co-sponsor the federal Gay rights bill and his failure to publicly advocate in favor of Gay issues as motivation for their outing campaign. In revealing his alleged homosexuality, the activists hoped to expose the "hypocrisy" and "double standards" they perceive in his public and private lives.

Petrelis, in particular, objected to Gunderson's presence in the Gay bar. In his confrontation with the Congressman on June 30, he reportedly yelled out that because Gunderson did nothing to help the Gay rights movement, he "should not be allowed to enjoy the fruits of Gay liberation."

In his interview with the *Tribune*, Gunderson said he was busy with dairy and education issues and had not studied Gay rights measures. He also accused Petrelis, Campbell and the group Queer Nation of "despicable tactics" and "pathological lies." "We're dealing with crazy people," he said.

Campbell told the *Wisconsin Light* in a telephone interview that Gunderson's defamatory statements were "the
TURN TO GUNDERSON, PAGE 7