



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

The Wisconsin Light

Mayor Norquist Will Meet Quarterly With Gay Community

By Bill Meunier

[Milwaukee]- In an attempt to restore and improve communication in the wake of Mayor John O. Norquist's veto of city festival funds for the annual Gay Pride Parade, twelve members of Milwaukee's Gay and Lesbian community held a cordial meeting with Mayor Norquist and five members of his staff on Wednesday February 5th. The meeting took place in the Mayor's office.

The subject of the veto came up early in the meeting, when Kitty Barber of the Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee (LAMM) reviewed the events of the last year, including the County Board's refusal to pass a Pride Week Proclamation, the Jeffrey Dahmer case, the School Board's "kneeling under to the fundamentalists," and the Mayor's veto.

In response, the Mayor defended his veto but not the language contained in the veto message. While he didn't apologize for that language, which equated Lesbians and Gays with an advocacy group, he did say "I didn't feel comfortable with it." But the Mayor explained that he doesn't believe in having the government fund political movements. Citing his opposition to state funding for the Women's Issues Council while he was in the State Assembly, Norquist told the group that he doesn't always agree with groups whose agendas he normally supports.

The Mayor Speaks

"I value the contributions that Gays and Lesbians have made to the community," said Norquist. "I support your efforts. For example I think the issue of whether or not you are getting good service and respect from the police is a serious issue. Using police overtime to pay 30 to 40 officers to raid a bar is ridiculous. If it had been Rickey's or Hoops there would have only been two or three officers there. I spoke to Chief Arreola about this and expressed my concerns and he is concerned as well. But I don't think it's wise to use government money to support a political movement."

Several of the Gays and Lesbians in attendance attacked the language of the veto and the lack of communication with the Gay community about the pending veto. Karen Gotzler of LAMM told the Mayor that his veto message "made the parade an issue even for those who don't care about the parade." "It became a symbol," Gotzler said.

Wendy Pologe told the Mayor: "I am not a movement or an agenda. I am a Lesbian."

Several others also tried to drive home their view that being Gay or Lesbian is a fact not a political cause and that the Pride Parade is a celebration of who we are, in the same way that "celebrations put on by other groups are celebrations of who they are."

Gary Hollander, who served on the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Police Community Relations, bluntly told Norquist that he should have communicated with the Gay and Lesbian community before vetoing the funds.

"Can't Believe It"

After pointing out that the Mayor knew several of the people in attendance he could have contacted, Hollander told the Mayor: "I cannot believe any other group would be treated this way. There are two things that those who hate us say about us, that we molest children and that we choose to be this way. As a psychiatrist I know how important language is. The language in your veto message reinforced the stereotype that we choose to be Gay. If you had come to us we could have helped you with the language. It wouldn't have become an issue."

The Mayor then reiterated that he "didn't feel comfortable with the analogy"
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UW Must Do More To Stop Gay Violence and Harassment

By John Quinlan

[Madison]- An aggressive effort to combat homophobic violence and harassment in university housing is among the actions recommended by a special committee on January 23, 1992, to the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Dean of Students' office.

"There are major problems being reported by students, especially in the residence halls — everything from people being assaulted to having 'kill the fag' spray-painted across their door to receiving threatening notes," Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee (GLIC) co-chair Kevin McIntyre told *The Light*. "The dorms are home for a lot of new students — and it's a pretty significant concern when you can't even feel safe in your own home."

GLIC members — who included student, administration, faculty, and community representatives — released the 36 page report, "Issues of Concern to Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Students on Our Campus," after two and a half years of work.

McIntyre asserted the committee's belief that "we need to hear from the top down that this university is willing to accept all people regardless of their sexual orientation for who they are and provide them the opportunities to become whoever they can become within the university setting."

When asked whether Chancellor Donna Shalala was doing enough for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals, McIntyre answered with an emphatic "No." He says that in private conversations, he senses a strong level of personal support for Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual rights.

"What confuses me is why that doesn't translate into a more assertive public stand on her part as the premier representative of the university, like the kind of stand she's taken on the Madison Plan," he said. "I wish I could explain why that is, but I can't."

Homophobia in the Dorms

In response to concerns about homophobic violence and harassment in the dorms, the report recommended significant new efforts to train UW housing staff, and provide campus-wide sensitivity training to all incoming freshmen and residents of UW housing. Current disciplinary policies must be strengthened to reflect the seriousness of these offenses, McIntyre said.

"Victims of homophobic violence have been quietly moved to different dormitories [while] the perpetrators of violence have escaped any penalties," the report notes. "A student who turns in a false fire alarm would be immediately dismissed from the [dorms] if caught. A student committing an assault or a

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JEFFREY DAHMER

Obscuring Dahmer's Homosexuality Hinders Our Understanding of Him

Commentary by Terry Boughner

[Milwaukee]- In the ongoing trial of Jeffrey Dahmer, both Milwaukee District Attorney E. Michael McCann and Defense Attorney Gerald P. Boyle have made the point in opening remarks and other statements before the jury and the world, that the case is not about homosexuality; that, as Boyle said, Dahmer just "happens" to be a homosexual.

I would imagine that many Gays breathed a sigh of relief. I know I did, thinking that at least, with all that our community has been through since last July, we would be spared that. It was Jeffrey Dahmer who was on trial, not being Gay. But on further reflection, I think there's something that needs to be considered.

It is still true that homosexuality is not on trial, but Jeffrey Dahmer is and in his confession, he says he is Gay, that he has realized his Gayness — as most of us do — since he knew what sex was.

I have discovered something else too, about myself. As horrified as I am by it all, I can empathize with Jeffrey Dahmer. He is another Gay man. To obscure that or deny that is at least insensitive, at worst, homophobic. It is astounding considering what the trial is supposed to be about — understanding why one man did what he did.

"A Walking Tragedy"

We need to understand Jeffrey Dahmer. The whole world needs to understand Jeffrey Dahmer. He is a walking tragedy, a Greek tragedy. We've got to understand the flaw.

The jury, everyone, needs to know about the anguish, the pain, that this society forces so many of us to experience growing up Gay or Lesbian. How many never really get over the trauma?

They need to find out what it's like not to be able to conform — at the precise time in life when you want most to conform, when you're a teenager.

There are no mechanisms for dating, no ways to learn about relationships and love. There are few if any support systems. Who do we turn to? To our families? Many reject us out of hand. To the priest, minister or rabbi? For many of us, religion is worse than useless. It's spokespeople do nothing but condemn what we cannot help.

How many of us think we're all alone, we're the only ones like us there are? How many of us think we can never have love, a home of our own, a family? How many sink into despair?

I was sitting in the court room waiting one day before the session began. A

woman, a reporter for one of the major media, asked if she might interview me, get my reactions. I agreed.

Then, when the interview was finished, she began to tell me about her daughter, now in college. The daughter has a friend, a young man who is Gay. After a long fight, he'd come out.

The reporter said: "My daughter likes him. She admires him and feels for him. She wants to know if he can expect to be happy. Can he date? Can he ever have love? Who do I tell her?"

Fierce Struggle

I told the reporter not to worry, to tell her daughter that as fierce and painful as her friend's struggle had been, he had as much expectation of love as anyone else. We were strong, I told her, like Jews and Blacks are strong, like any persecuted minority has to be strong. The reporter's eyes were liquid. She thanked me for what I'd said.

From reading his confession, I would guess that Dahmer went through all that and more. Most of us weather it, fight the good fight, win out. He did not. Why? No "expert" can tell about it. The only one who can do that is one who's been through it — one who is Gay.

Sadly, a lot of young Gays assimilate society's hatred and turn in on themselves, collapse in on themselves. They learn to hate themselves — "homophobia" to coin a term. Many teens think about suicide. Many go to the brink. Many go over that brink. And society wonders why.

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Activist Disrupts Secretary of Defense's Madison Speech

[Madison]- A January 27 speech here by Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney was disrupted by a member of Madison's Ten Percent Society.

According to Ten Percent President, Michael Dixon, he and Ten Percent member, Andrew Miller, "disguised in business drag," obtained tickets to Cheney's speech to the Wisconsin Manufacturing Association convention at the Concourse Hotel.

A few minutes into Cheney's speech, Miller screamed out "We demand a new chestnut! When are you going to let Gays and Lesbians serve in the military?"

This was a reference to Cheney's recent comments that the military's prohibition against Lesbians and Gays was "an old chestnut" that he had inherited from previous administrations.

According to Dixon, five undercover

police jumped out of the crowd, forced Miller to the ground, hand cuffed him, and carried him away. Miller was held and questioned by the police while Cheney completed his speech and then released without any charges being filed against him. Dixon says that Miller received a small cut on his hand during the struggle.

Dixon, who had planned to disrupt the speech again when things had calmed down, says he found himself on the other side of a closed door, with an undercover officer on either side.

Cheney made a brief joke from the podium about the incident and continued with his speech. Despite the implications of his earlier comments that the policy is outdated, Cheney has continued to defend the military's exclusionary policy against Lesbians and Gays at every opportunity.