



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

The Wisconsin Light

Hate Crimes Against Gays In Superior and Duluth Increasing

[Duluth, MN]-Betty Hupperich picked up the phone one afternoon to hear a man's voice threatening her.

In low tones, he told her that he and his friends planned to crash the meeting that night at the Lesbian center where she works.

The women would know them, he said, by their white sheets and swastikas.

And then he hung up.

According to an article in the *Duluth News-Tribune* by-lined to Laurie Hertzfel, this incident is only one of many being experienced by Lesbians and Gays in Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin. It, and others like it, is an example of the homophobic backlash due, in part, to growing acceptance of Gays and Lesbians in these two northern cities. It is also due in part, to the fact that Gay people are less hidden than they once were. This follows the pattern seen in the rest of the country.

Hertzfel reports that people notice it in hate-filled letters to the editor of the local newspaper, in anonymous threatening phone calls made to Lesbian and Gay organizations and to the homes and businesses of Gay individuals.

Hertzfel writes that Duluth and Superior police records show very few crimes against Gays. This may be due to the fact that Superior police don't categorize hate crimes while Duluth police have just started such a system.

According to Bob Jansen, Superior Gay activist and owner of the Main Club in Superior, employees call police several times a week with complaints of harassment.

"One of the guys was harassed in the parking lot of the bar recently," Jansen is reported as saying. "I had another guy who was in the bar on March 28, and he was followed by two guys."

At the Main Club, a carload of people from Duluth crossed the bridge a couple of times last summer to cruise in front of the bar, shouting insults and threats through loudspeakers.

Jansen reports that while Superior police have been "good in terms of response," he has found them unaware of Gay issues.

Jansen said that he had met with the Chief of Police, the Mayor and the District Attorney and said they thought Gay bashing was a form of dance, like slam dancing.

Police Liaison Appointed

In response to conversations with Jansen and others, Hertzfel reports that in the last week of March, Capt. Richard Pukema of the Superior Police Department appointed an officer to act as a liaison between the department, the Gay community and the District Attorney's office.

The officer volunteered for the position and is reported to have seemed eager to make a difference. He was, however, reluctant to allow his name to be published.

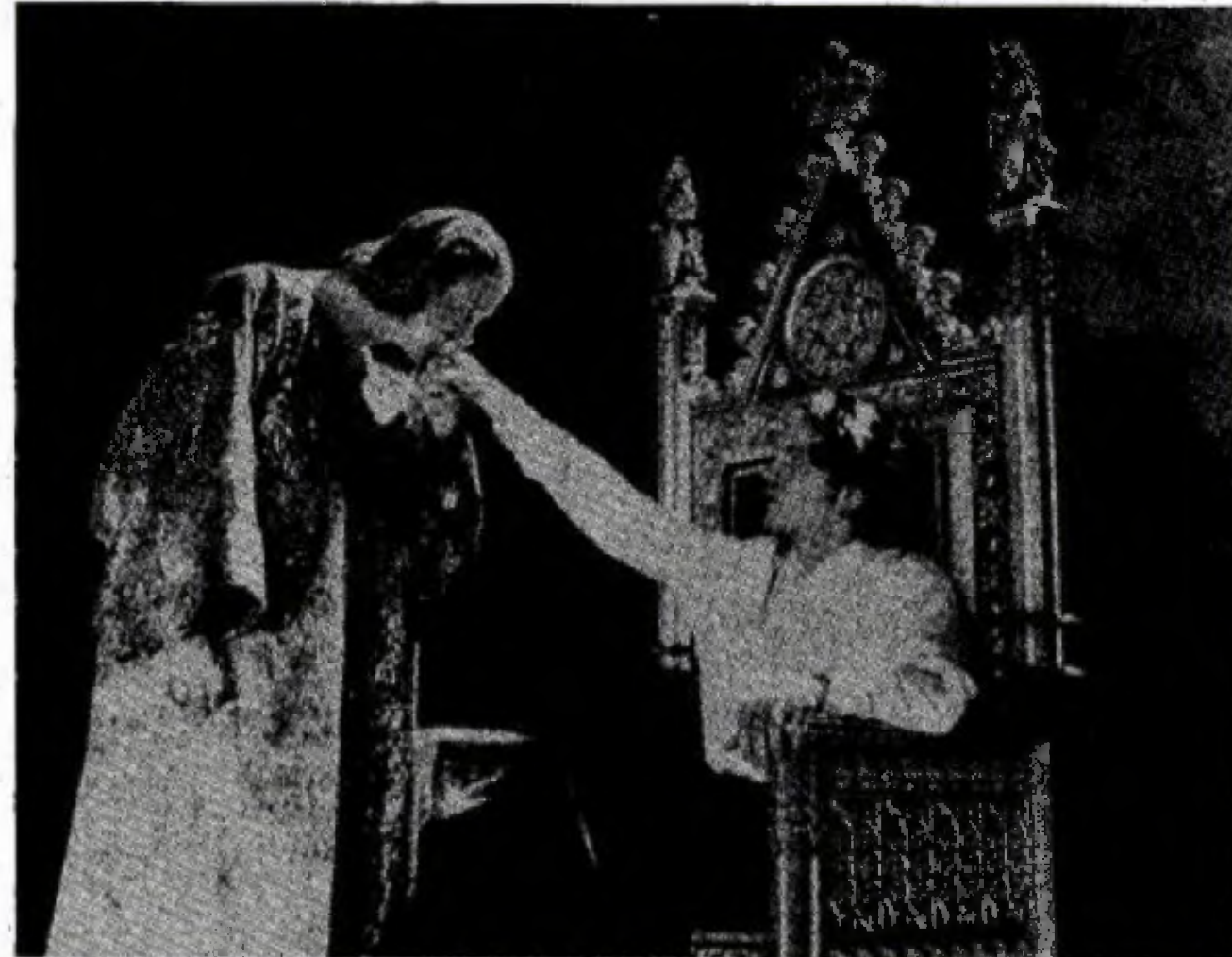
The officer wants a chance to get to know members of the Gay community and see how they accept him, he is reported to have said. He wants time to explain to his parents the new work he'll be doing. He's afraid that his family might get harassed.

"I think it's important," Hertzfel reports the officer as saying. "There seems to be some acceptance of the Gay and Lesbian community nationwide. But it's nowhere near what it should be. They're still a minority group."

The officer went on to say, "They're citizens like anybody else. They deserve respect as humans. Their sexual preference is their own private concern. They have rights like anybody else, and they should be able to live their lifestyle as they see fit."

Jansen said many Gay people are afraid to report crimes to the police because they don't want to reveal their names. But the liaison officer said it's difficult to help people who wish to remain anonymous.

WVTV and WISN TV Reject AIDS Related Ads In Milwaukee



ADVANCE ANNOUNCEMENT — The Wisconsin Light and In Step will be co-sponsoring the Wisconsin premiere opening night of Derek Jarman's film, "Edward II" at the Oriental Theatre on June 19. This event will benefit Milwaukee's Pride Committee. See the next issue of Light for complete details. In the photo above, Edward II (Steven Waddington) kisses the hand of Gaveston (Andrew Tierman) as he sits on the throne.

Complaint by Madison Lesbians Over Insemination Refusal Upheld

[Madison]- A Madison health clinic probably discriminated against a Lesbian when it canceled her appointment regarding artificial insemination, an investigator for Madison's Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) says.

Mary Pierce said the Roley, Anderson and Torhorst Clinic probably broke Madison's anti-discrimination laws by canceling Stacie Neldaughter's November 21, 1991 appointment. Neldaughter, who was denied artificial insemination by University of Wisconsin Hospital last year, filed a complaint against the clinic with the commission.

Pierce said after interviewing Neldaughter and several health-care workers that the clinic probably discriminated against Neldaughter on the basis of sexual orientation. Neldaughter, a 28-year-old nurse, said she was satisfied with Pierce's finding and hopes the clinic will change its policies and attitudes.

Cracker Barrel Continues Anti-Gay Policy as Kenosha Site Nears Opening

[New York, NY]- "This employee is being terminated due to violation of Company policy. The employee is Gay." This pink slip was sent to Cheryl Summerville and at least 16 other employees of Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, a chain of "family style" restaurants with more than 100 locations in the South and Midwest. One is soon to open in the Kenosha area.

In response, Queer Nation (QN) chapters in various cities throughout the country have mounted demonstrations and other kinds of protests against the chain.

New York

On Tuesday, March 31, 1992, nearly 100 members of QN marched on Wall Street to "Crack the Barrel" by asking Cracker Barrel shareholders to pass a resolution demanding that the company rehire the fired employees with back pay and put an end to Cracker Barrel's discrimination against Gays and Lesbians.

The Gay activists made their way to the steps of George Washington's inaugural site, across the street from the New York Stock Exchange to perform a "kiss in" after which the demonstrators dispersed,

"It's not just a matter of getting an appointment," Neldaughter said. "Discrimination goes much deeper than that." Neldaughter believes the clinic should educate its doctors and staff to be more sensitive to Gay men and Lesbians, she said. "I want the right to go in there and get the information (regarding artificial insemination)," she said. She also wants the visit, which is no longer covered by her insurance, to be paid for by the clinic.

Officials at the clinic, which is headed by Dr. James Torhorst, declined to comment. But in a letter to the EOC, Torhorst argued that the clinic was not subject to the anti-discrimination laws because it is composed of the private offices of independent physicians. The doctors do not discriminate, but each one decides whether a patient is psychologically capable of dealing with the emotional procedure of artificial insemination, Torhorst wrote.

leaving a pink "Defy Homophobia" sign pasted on Washington's statue on the crotch.

Bigotry Not Unfamiliar

QN charges that besides being homophobic, the Tennessee-based Cracker Barrel chain shows other evidence of bigotry. Many of Cracker Barrel's restaurants are decorated with Confederate flags and the company sells "Mammy Dolls" and Amos 'n Andy tapes in many of its gift shops.

In spite of numerous protests, demonstrations and letters, the company has steadily maintained its discriminatory position, QN maintains, retaliating with lawsuits, assaults and the barring of Gay and Lesbian patrons from their stores.

In Virginia

On March 29, Tim McCarthy, a reporter for the New York City-based Gay Cable Network, was arrested by a Spotsylvania, VA, County Deputy Sheriff and charged with trespassing while covering a QN sit-in at a Cracker Barrel restaurant near Fredricksburg, 50 miles south of Washington. The arrest occurred while nearly 100 Lesbian and Gay activists

[Milwaukee]- With over 130,000 people dead of AIDS nationwide and one million believed to be HIV infected, 8000 in Milwaukee alone, WISN-TV Channel 12 and WVTV Channel 18 rejected a non-partisan, election eve ad designed to acquaint people with these and other facts about the dread disease.

The AIDS ad was sponsored by ACT UP Milwaukee and was professionally produced by Milwaukee's Dena Aronson Video with voice-over by Minneapolis-based actor Ric Oquita.

There was no explicit material in the 30-second ad, but only the face of a '60's style clock ticking ominously.

In the voice-over, an urgent voice was heard accusing politicians of being silent in the face of the epidemic; of not publicly addressing the homophobia "that hinders safer sex education;" of not changing the "sexist...definition of AIDS that keeps women with AIDS from getting benefits;" and "not addressing the racism that keeps people of color out of promising drug trials." The ad concluded by urging people to vote on April 7.

18 and 12 Give Reasons

According to Dan Fons of ACT UP Milwaukee, Channel 18 said that the station was accepting "no issue-oriented ads," but refused to put reasons for its rejection of the ad in writing.

WISN Channel 12 rejected the ad for similar reasons, telling Fons that the ad was "too controversial," comparing it to a pro-choice or anti-abortion stand. Fons said, but promised to put their reasons in writing. According to ACT UP, such a letter has not been forthcoming from the station.

Fons said that they were unable to reach executives of either station. ACT UP was told that anyone they wanted to talk to was "either in the hospital or on vacation."

Both stations did have representatives speak to the *Milwaukee Journal*. Michael Schuch, WVTV-TV vice president and general manager is quoted as saying, "We can take or not take whoever we want. We've turned down a lot of things here we don't want put on the air. We're just not taking any controversial issues," Schuch is reported saying.

Dean Maytag, director of WISN-TV operations is quoted as saying that the station had an "across the board" policy of not accepting controversial or issue-oriented ads "and this fell into that category."

Channel 12's rejection was not expected. According to ACT UP, on March 27, the station had accepted the ad, signed a contract and taken payment. It was only on Monday, March 30, that ACT UP was informed that the station would not run the ad.

"WISN has repeatedly shown itself to be in the Dark Ages with regard to AIDS and Gays in general," said Fons. He went on to describe WISN-TV's ratings sweeps news series "Flirting With Danger" as "blatantly homophobic" and cited as further evidence the station's ultra conservative radio talk show hosts.

Different Opinions

WITI-TV Channel 6's Maria Tully did not have the same opinion of the ad. Tully is the station's director of sales. She is quoted as saying, "We didn't find anything controversial" about the ad. "They gave AIDS statistics and then they said 'vote tomorrow.'" Tully said that the ad was so innocuous, "I couldn't figure out the point of their expenditure."

The AIDS activists say they are now concerned that the stations have violated their rights to free speech forcing the group to turn to the Wisconsin Civil Liberties Union for possible legal action.

The activists further note that since they are widely perceived as a Gay group and the commercial urges politicians to fight homophobia to help the struggle

TURN TO T.V. ADS, PAGE 11

TURN TO CRACKER BARREL, PAGE 11