

# National News

## 1979 GAY CIVIL RIGHTS BILL BEFORE CONGRESS

The introduction of a Gay Rights Bill into Congress was announced by Steve Endean, Executive Director of the Gay Rights National Lobby. For the first time, the bill has two co-sponsors, Rep. Henry Waxman (D-New York) and Rep. Ted Weiss (D-Los Angeles). Both Congressmen have large gay groups in their constituencies, and these groups have supported them in the past. They have written a letter to other members of Congress, saying they believe the bias against gays is opposed by most Americans, who also reject discrimination based on race and religion.

Endean added that other co-sponsors are being sought from both former and new members. He emphasized that much of the progress in obtaining support for Gay Rights legislation is due to local grass-roots organizing and pressure.

## NEW ANTI-GAY LOBBY FORMED

The first anti-gay lobby, Christian Voice, has opened an office in Washington, D.C. and is aimed at enlisting evangelical Christians in a battle against gay rights. The lobby claims to have a budget of over one million dollars and over a million supporters. It hopes to use religious broadcasting networks to reach large numbers of voters. Eleven members of Congress have already promised support.

Steve Endean, executive director of the Gay Rights National Lobby, warned that the lobbying efforts of Christian Voice could have several effects. They may well endanger the passage of currently introduced gay rights legislation, might result in the introduction of anti-gay bills, and could have a negative impact on community relations at the local level. Endean also pointed out that the basic civil rights which were fought for recently in several parts of the country don't even exist in most areas. He called for support of the Gay Rights National Lobby, which will continue its activities in Washington to promote 1979 Gay Civil Rights Bill and maintain a watch over possible anti-gay legislation which Christian Voice might introduce.

As an outgrowth of the organization American Christian Cause, Christian Voice can act as a legal lobbying focus for other anti-gay

organizations, such as Anita Bryant's "Save Our Children," which are supposedly restricted from direct lobbying action in order to maintain a tax-exempt status.

## METHODIST OPINION CHANGES

Delegates to the January Convocation of United Methodist Clergywomen in Dallas voted to delete from the church discipline the condemnation of homosexuality. They agreed such condemnation was "incompatible with Christian teachings."

## LESBIAN MOTHER GETS CUSTODY

A New York State Supreme Court judge awarded custody of four children to their lesbian mother. He ruled that "amorality, immorality, special deviation and what we conveniently consider aberrant sexual practices do not ipso facto constitute unfitness for custody."

## ARIZONA: BAN ON ADOPTION?

The Arizona House Judiciary Committee approved 8-0 an amendment barring the adoption of children by gay people. Five members abstained from the vote. The amendment was tacked onto a bill outlining the technical adoption procedures. The bill has not yet been presented before the full state legislature.

## AAAS FORUM ON HOMOSEXUALITY HELD

The American Association for the Advancement of Science held its first forum on homosexuality as part of its annual convention in January in Houston. Various aspects of homosexuality were discussed in papers. Some of the topics were the possibility of a genetic basis for sexual preference, the role of choice in sexual orientation and other issues. One paper questioned the traditional view that non-monogamous homosexual couples were less well-adjusted than monogamous ones; another suggested that homosexuality may be the human equivalent to the tendency in some other species to form relationships which protect their kin, rather than those for propagation of the species.

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