

LETTERS

A call for a national lesbian and gay boycott

To the Editor:

In response to recent attacks on gay people by the Justice Department and Supreme Court we have decided to allocate all of our charitable resources to victims of AIDS and the legal struggle for gay rights.

Enclosed is a copy of a letter we are sending to all those charitable organizations which we have supported in the past, explaining why we can no longer finance their work.

Charity begins at home. We would hope that other individuals and social organizations in your community might consider similar actions. It certainly would be a significant way of helping ourselves while educating others.

Richard Sacher, Bill Dailey,
Kenneth Kohn, Mark Rice
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 15, 1986

(This is being sent to all gay publications in the United States)

Dear Friend:

I have been pleased to support your worthy cause in the past, but

BECAUSE the Supreme Court ruled that States may continue to make criminals of gay people for engaging in consensual, private sexual relations, and

BECAUSE the Department of Justice ruled that employers may fire AIDS victims (or anyone who may have been exposed to AIDS) from their jobs, and

BECAUSE the Reagan Administration has consistently refused adequate funding for AIDS education, treatment and research,

I am no longer able, in conscience, to use my limited resources for anything except to support people with AIDS, and to fund the legal struggle to secure basic human rights for gay men and women.

NW action Against Hanford

To the Editor:

On August 6 at 7:45 am about 60 folks from all over the northwest blockaded the

cars of workers on the main highway going into the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, where the N-Reactor and the PUREX plant produce plutonium for nuclear bombs. This is where the plutonium for the bomb dropped on Nagasaki was made.

The NW Coalition for Hanford Action Week wrote to Michael Lawrence, Manager of Hanford Operations for the U.S. Department of Energy to notify him of the urgency of shutting down the N-Reactor and PUREX that we would be obliged to take non-violent action to interfere with the operations of these facilities.

Our action was taken to actually shut down Hanford. And we did, if only for 37 minutes before the police arrived and placed us under arrest. Twenty-nine of us were taken to jail and charged with the misdemeanor of disturbing the peace. But our actions were in accordance with international law, which clearly says that any steps which lead to mass destruction of civilian populations are illegal. Ironically, it is the activity of the US government at Hanford which is illegal; it is their actions which are, in fact, disturbing the peace.

The Nuremburg principles, which the US government signed following the Second World War, state that it is the responsibility of citizens to prevent their governments from taking such actions.

Nineteen of us pled non-guilty. We will attempt to put the US government on trial for its crimes against humanity and our entire ecosystem. Hiroshima and Nagasaki happened 41 years ago. We know the consequences.

Last year four defendants used the same defense. The judge in that case allowed them to use a "justification" defense and bring in expert witnesses on international law and nuclear weapons. But as soon as this ruling was handed down, the prosecution dropped the charges. They were obviously unwilling to have the true facts and issues presented in an open court of law.

We are hoping that we, too, will be allowed to use the justification defense and that this time the trial will proceed.

Peace,
Mike Barnes

Barbie under scrutiny

To the Editor:

I am a writer and photographer working on a project involving our perception of Barbie

and other so-called "fashion dolls" and their symbolism. My project involves challenging the societal view of these dolls for communicating traditional male-female sex roles by using the dolls in situations that one might not ordinarily find them in. Although I do have my own opinions about these dolls, I find that I need to hear the perceptions of others. As such, I would appreciate hearing from *Just Out* readers with their ideas about Barbie dolls, their place or "non-place" in society, and their effect upon children and parents.

Of course, any comments will be confidential unless I have your permission to use them as captions for the photographs or in accompanying text. In any case, the comments will definitely serve as inspiration and as a type of guideline for my work. Please write to: Linda Collette, Box 1774, Pawtucket, RI 02862.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Linda R. Collette

No "Temple Madness" at MCC

To the Editor:

This letter is regarding the poster advertising "Temple Madness." It is not about censorship or moral superiority. It is about sensitivity to the values and standards of groups being asked to support an important and worthwhile event.

When Metropolitan Community Church received its mailing, I immediately called Cascade AIDS Project, who referred me to City Nights (I could not contact City Nights first because they have no listed telephone number.) In both calls, displeasure at the poster was expressed and a clear statement that the sponsors were free to do whatever they pleased in promotion was made. Additionally, a replacement poster was requested so that we could promote the event in a way that is not offensive to our membership.

To date, I have received no call stating that such a poster is being prepared, nor has there been more than a week seen a suitable poster delivered. I am firmly convinced of two things: first, the current poster will preclude promotion in many organizations such as churches and lesbian or feminist groups, as well as other groups operating out of some real sensitivities; second, the poster is politically dangerous in the hands of the political/religious right who already tell lies about us and seek our destruction.

Above all, my deepest concern is the real losers will be the Cascade AIDS Project and

its very worthy programs and clients. Hopefully, CAP will dissociate itself — not from the event, but from the advertising poster — in a clear and prominent way. The credibility of the organization within the community, not just the gay and lesbian community, may well rest in such a statement.

I wish the fundraiser well and especially wish I were able to advertise it in the church.

In Christ's Service,
Rev. Gary L. Wilson,
Pastor

"Safe sex"? What is it?

To the Editor:

This thought has been nagging me for a long time, so I thought I'd finally ask a likely party.

Maybe I am naive (not being gay or male) but, while I read much about the advisability of "safe sex" I have yet to see, say, a couple paragraphs in the gay or (sadly, more explicitly) in the straight press exactly detailing what "safe sex" practices are. News about that would be helpful to everyone, no?

If this could be said in a few lines ("Do a, b, & c." or "Don't do d, e, or f.") it would be helpful to run a box on this regularly as a public service, wouldn't it?

It seems so obvious that this is a good idea, but is it considered bad taste or something? I don't get it?

There may be those who would not feel comfortable taking the so-called AIDS test, or who would not ask their own doctors about domestic AIDS-prevention practices — but who would benefit from useful information on state-of-the-art prevention if they could easily pick it up in one of the everywhere-and-free periodicals (like, say, *Just Out*). How 'bout it?

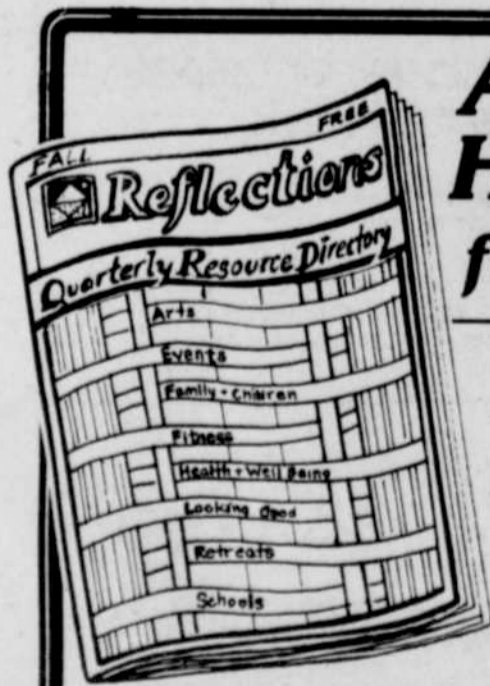
Best,
Kathleen M. Reyes

Dear Ms. Reyes:

Unfortunately, many people do consider discussing "safe sex" and "exactly detailing what 'Safe sex' practices are" bad taste. Center for Disease Control bureaucrats recently squelched an extensive educational campaign which would have answered all your questions. The educational materials, they said, were too "controversial." (Better dead than read, n'est-ce pas?)

But *Just Out* likes your idea. Look on page 23.

Jay Brown, Editor



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