

## Friction heats up condom controversy

To The Editor:

I am writing in response to the article in the May issue of *Just Out* in which it was reported that the Gay and Lesbian Press Association [GLPA] has called for a boycott of condoms manufactured by Ansell, Inc. By publishing what is clearly a one-sided and biased article, it is apparent to the reader that *Just Out* supports such a boycott. I find this totally irresponsible journalism which does a great disservice to the gay community.

Ansell, Inc. is one of the largest manufacturers and distributors of condoms in the nation. They make a wide variety of products which are marketed under names such as Sultan, Prime, Rough Rider and Tahiti. They are top quality condoms (approved by the Oregon State Health Division), and Ansell's prices are among the lowest in the industry. Because of this, Willamette AIDS Council in Eugene, as well as many other AIDS organizations throughout the country, purchase bulk orders of condoms for free distribution to men in the gay community. We have not received one complaint about any of Ansell's products, and in dealing with Ansell, the members of our organization have always been treated professionally and courteously. I might also add that they have sold large orders to us on credit when our organization was experiencing cash flow problems.

For your newspaper to run an article encouraging a boycott for the reason that Ansell will not advertise in gay publications is totally self-serving. Moreover, it is potentially harmful to gay men, for it may give some readers the idea that not using a condom at all is better than using an Ansell condom. That is, after reading your article, some men may feel that being politically correct about their condom choice is more important than practicing safe sex. This is exactly the type of thinking that AIDS organizations such as ours are trying to overcome. In this respect, your article was very damaging because of the implicit message that safe sex is not as important as condom choice.

To conclude, I would urge all gay men not to boycott Ansell condoms, but rather to purchase them or take them from the free distribution points which are located

in many of the gay bars in Portland and Eugene. Ansell produces a good product, and there is absolutely no good reason for the gay community to boycott these condoms. If *Just Out* and other gay publications can't attract major advertising, perhaps they should examine the quality of their own product before calling for a boycott of someone else's.

Harry E. Jones  
Executive Board,  
Willamette AIDS Council  
Eugene

*The Editor responds: We believe Mr. Jones missed the point entirely; we refer him to "Can anything stop homophobia in the condom industry?" by Joe DiSabato (Just Out, April 1987). The point made by Mr. DiSabato and endorsed by the Gay/Lesbian Press Association and Just Out is that some of us are no longer content with being discounted.*

*Lewis Brenner of Ansell Americas said, "The danger, the threat, is in the heterosexual population. Very simply, there are more heterosexuals than homosexuals." (Adweek, 3/2/87)*

*AIDS is a "condom marketer's dream," says John Silverman, president of Ansell Americas. (Time, 2/16/87)*

*We are not encouraging unprotected intercourse. We continue to encourage safe-sex practices, but we refuse to ignore the insensitivity, the callousness, exhibited by the condom manufacturers.*

*Safe sex and political awareness are not mutually exclusive.*

## TV evangelists could not stand scrutiny

To the Editor:

Jesus told his disciples to go to the uttermost part of the world and preach the Gospel. So, Jim and Tammy Bakker left the 700 Club to go forth to Fort Mill, South Carolina, the uttermost part of the world.

The disciples were told to feed and house the poor. So, Jim Bakker built the Heritage Grand Hotel and put restaurants in it to feed the poor Christians who come to Heritage, USA.

The disciples were told to clothe the naked. So, Jim and Tammy started a line of panty hose.

And then, the disciples were to baptize people. So, Jim built a great water slide.

The Bakker/PTL affair has brought to the public attention what a bunch of scoundrels many of the TV/radio evangelists really are. Of course, this doesn't include Republican presidential hopeful, the Rev. Pat Robertson. He is, according to him, merely a TV commentator.

News reports have revealed the Bakkers have raked in millions for their own personal profit. But, they are not the only TV/radio evangelists to do so.

Jimmy Swaggart, who is constantly pleading poverty, owns several radio and TV stations. Given the price of such things, he could be sitting on upwards of a half billion dollars in assets.

Jerry Falwell has said the TV/radio

ministries need to clean up their act, to be more open and aboveboard with and accountable to the public.

Setting up dummy corporations through which they buy their trinkets, books, records, tapes, etc., is one way some TV/radio evangelists siphon off money into their own pockets. This strategy allows the evangelists to say they only get X number of dollars in salary from their ministry. These dummy corporations are usually fronted by Mrs. Evangelist or a close relative.

At the end of 1986, Falwell had a \$3.9 million financial crisis due to the fact, he said, he was behind in paying for TV time. He read a letter from the agency which books the TV time for the Old Time Gospel Hour. The letter asked Falwell to remit the \$3.9 million to the Sam K. Pate Agency by the end of the year.

Sam K. Pate is Falwell's brother-in-law! Most TV ministries say they use 70% of the money they raise to pay for TV time. If Falwell takes in \$100 million each year, then, he would use \$70 million to buy TV time.

According to people at our local TV stations, 10% to 15% would be a standard TV industry fee for the Pate Agency to handle the Old Time Gospel Hour account. This means the Pate Agency is taking in between \$7 and \$10 million each year!

Who are the officers and stockholders of the Sam K. Pate Agency?

If Falwell wants to be truly honest, open and aboveboard, and accountable to the public, then let him and all the TV/radio evangelists when they disclose the financial statements of their ministries also disclose the Federal Income Tax statements which they, their wives, and their families have filed with the IRS.

I personally do not think Falwell, Bakker, Swaggart, Roberts, Robertson, Robinson, Ankerberg and all the rest could stand that kind of scrutiny.

Reverend Jerry Sloan  
Sacramento, CA

## Linder working for us, too

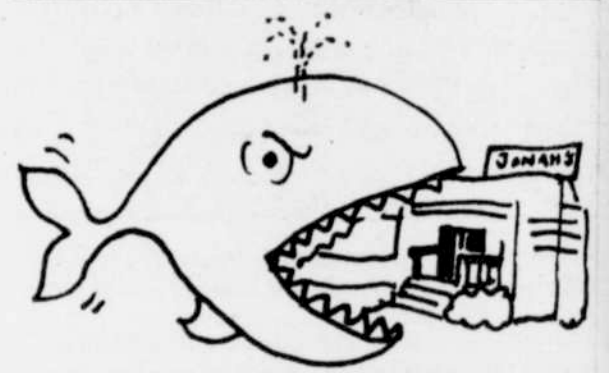
To the Editor,

Ben Ernest Linder, who was murdered by Contras while working with Nicaraguans to improve their lives, was working to improve our lives, also. The future of Nicaragua and the people of the U.S. are tied together. They cannot win their battle against the Contras and we can't win our battle for a decent life, and a foreign policy we can be proud of, until we free ourselves not just from the Reagan administration, but from capitalism, and its export, imperialism. Every movement working for decent wages, health care, and human rights for women, people of color and lesbians and gays, whether in the U.S. or abroad, is viciously attacked by both Democrats and Republicans and the right wing. They are determined to silence demands for peace and equality because capitalism cannot exist without war abroad and repression at home, and without plundering our labor and our resources. So they resort to red baiting to silence dissent

to the lie that this is the best system in the world. Well, the Nicaraguans are building toward a better system, socialism, and Reagan arms their enemies because he knows it. He'll never convince the Nicaraguans that Somoza's tyranny was better than education, jobs and health care. And he won't convince us that our diminishing freedom and shrinking standard of living is the best we can do.

We support the resolutions passed by the City Council and the Multnomah County Commission. Linder's murderers must be found and punished and all U.S. Funding, overt and covert, to the Contras must stop. We should honor Linder by carrying on his work to keep the U.S. government from using wealth, produced by U.S. workers, against the aspirations of the Nicaraguans and the U.S. people. And to work for peace by working for a socialist feminist system where shared affluence is possible and it is not a crime to work for equality and justice.

Adrienne Weller  
Radical Women, Portland



## Jonah's hard to swallow

To the Editor:

I have spent the past nine months settling into a new job (in which I am happy and accepted for the work I do without regard to my sexuality). I have also returned to graduate school and, at this point, feel comfortable writing to inform others in the gay community that Jonah's Restaurant at 7425 S.W. Barbur Blvd. was sold in August of last year and is no longer gay-owned. In fact, I was the only lesbian on the staff, and immediately upon transfer of ownership I was fired without warning or explanation.

In addition, shortly thereafter, another employee who was gay (and the only black on the staff) quit under duress, having endured racial slurs made by the new owner. At least one other gay waiter quit before he could be fired, and two others were refused jobs when they applied after the new owner asked the head waitress if she thought they were gay. I will refrain from elaborating on what I feel the new owner's attitudes are toward women, gays, blacks, and other minorities. I believe his actions speak for themselves.

I hope this information will be useful to others in the gay community in Portland. Thank you for providing a forum for us to communicate our concerns. I believe it is essential for us to remain informed of situations in which we can withdraw our support in the face of unfair and inhuman discrimination.

Kerry Hart  
Portland

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