

Ordinance affirms rights policy

In November 1986 voters, by charter amendments, authorized reform of the personnel system of the City of Portland, through the transfer of administrative functions from the Civil Service Board to the Bureau of Personnel Services. With unanimous approval of the City Council on May 7, the City Charter was amended to include chapters on personnel policy and attendant definitions.

The first section of the first chapter reads as follows:

4.01.010 Policy Statement. *To ensure the provision of high quality services which are responsive to the needs of the community, it is the policy of the City Council to provide a fair and equal opportunity for public service to all interested citizens. It is also the policy of the City Council to provide for conditions of service which will attract, develop and retain officers and employees whose integrity, skills and abilities will promote excellence in the organization. To accomplish these policy objectives requires that the City Council authorize and direct the adoption of a uniform system of personnel administration.*

Furthermore, the duties of the Personnel Director include the implementation of regulations which must include: *Provision for fair treatment of applicants and employees in all aspects of personnel administration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, age, handicap, or other nonmerit-based factors and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens (4.01.050 [11]).*

Chapter 4.02 Definitions includes the following:

4.02.010(23) **DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT:** *A complaint that a personnel action was motivated by discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status, national origin, family relationship, sexual orientation, handicap or political affiliation.*

and:

4.02.010(27) **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY:** *A directive that the hiring of persons into classified service shall be based solely on job related standards regardless of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, handicap, sexual orientation, marital status or political affiliation.*

So, who could find fault with that?

Know your enemy

“One of the most dangerous men in America” says Surgeon General C. Everett Koop of discredited psychologist and homophobe, Paul Cameron. In Portland over the Memorial Day weekend to advocate “elimination” of gays, Cameron played true to Koop’s characterization.

Cloaking his homophobic diatribe under the topic, “Will condoms and education stop AIDS,” Cameron lectured his small audience on his urgency of need to “incarcerate and eliminate” gays. Concerned Women of America, a clone of Phyllis Schlafly’s Eagle Forum, sponsored Cameron’s appearance, which was billed as a debate with Joan Binninger, director of community services for Planned Parenthood of the Columbia-Willamette.

Cautioned beforehand that Cameron would try to set her up as a foil for his

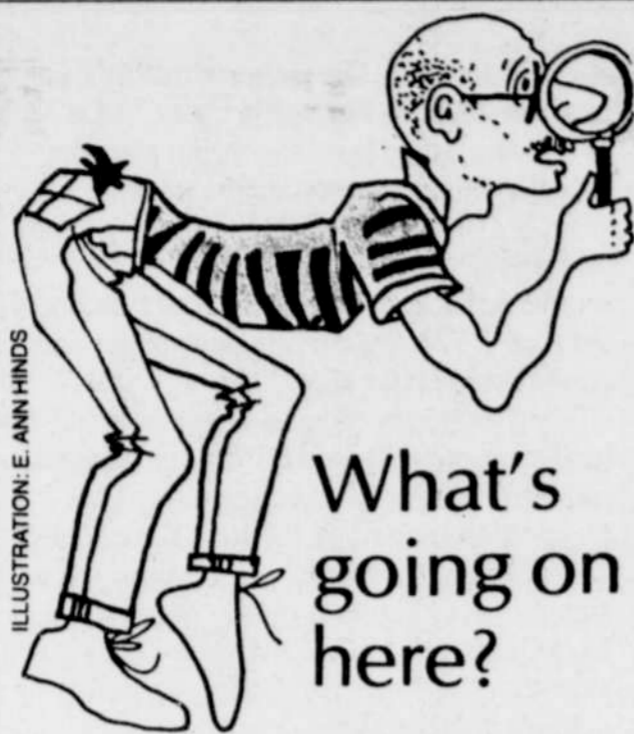


ILLUSTRATION: E. ANN HINDS

What's going on here?

B Y J A Y B R O W N

specious arguments, Binninger walked out on him when he did just that. After Binninger’s departure, Cameron continued to spew venom under the guise of answering questions from the audience.

Cameron’s appearance in Portland is something I have dreaded since I first read about him and his appallingly dangerous propaganda three years ago. At that time, Cameron inflamed the gay community when he appeared on a talk show in Philadelphia. Cameron’s heinous fabrications about gays contributed to his expulsion from the American Psychological Association in 1984, but his virulent homophobia has made him a rising star with the fundamentalist right wing.

In an interview published in the Village Voice [quoted above], Surgeon General Koop said that he hears Cameron’s “phrases coming out of mouths in the White House and that scares me.”

“His answer to everything is genocide of homosexuals,” Koop said.

Cameron’s slither through Oregon must be viewed by gays and lesbians as a resurgence of activity by the homophobes. Portlanders may face an initiative to strike from the City Charter recently approved civil rights protections for Portland City employees.

Looking ahead

Now that the Portland City Charter has been amended to guarantee civil rights protections on the basis of sexual orientation to employees under its jurisdiction, the community may face an initiative ballot measure to strike the protections from the charter.

The employment guarantees apply only to city employees and have no effect in the private sector, yet Drew Davis, a Lake Oswego resident, Beaverton attorney Henry Kane, and others who may or may not live in Portland are gearing up for an initiative campaign as soon as possible.

Three and a half years ago, Multnomah County Commissioners approved similar employment guarantees only to repeal them when challenged to an election battle by Drew Davis and Concerned Citizens of Portland. The County then approved a resolution which is not subject to initiative. The maneuver was challenged, unsuccessfully, in court by the same group of people.

Will the City follow the County and repeal the “offending” language? Or will the City Council progress to extending civil rights protections to all citizens of Portland by approving an ordinance to that effect.

Could we initiate our own ordinance?

Is Ginny in a draft?

A couple of months ago, we published a commentary by Boston City Councillor, David Scondras, in which he urged us to run an openly lesbian or gay person for president. Scondras urged us to advance the candidacy of Ginny Apuzzo, in particular.

We think the Scondras idea is terrific. It appears that a whole lot of other people think so, too. Scondras reports he has received hundreds of enthusiastic responses from all over the country. Articles about the Apuzzo campaign have garnered mainstream press and radio coverage.

Ginny Apuzzo, former head of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, is currently Deputy Director of the New York State Consumer Protection Board. Her experience in testifying before Senate and Congressional Committees on issues ranging from increased AIDS funding to opposition to President Reagan’s politicalization of the Civil Rights Commission has earned her respect in Washington as a forceful spokesperson for our community.

By fielding an articulate and attractive candidate, the lesbian and gay community will gain invaluable air time and press coverage by having *one of us* present our issues. Not only will the mainstream have to deal with our issues, millions of children will see that being gay or lesbian is a strength to be celebrated and utilized.

So, if you’re thinking, “Run, Ginny, Run,” write to Apuzzo and let her know of your support—tell her why it would make a difference to you if she ran: Ginny Apuzzo, 99 Washington Avenue, Room 1020, Albany, NY 12210.

Grassroots support is the key to success in this campaign. That’s why it’s so important to contact Ginny directly.

Right to privacy given reprieve

Seattle Superior Court Judge Warren Chan, on May 14, issued a novel legal decision in a three-year legal battle over First Amendment rights when he signed a default order against the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) for refusing to divulge its minutes, but in a surprise move announced that he would delay filing the order while the Washington State Court of Appeals considers whether to accept discretionary review of the constitutional issues in the case.

At an earlier April hearing, Chan had given the FSP and nine Northwest radicals also named in the suit 20 days to disclose party minutes. If the defendants refused to turn over the minutes by the deadline, Chan had ruled, they would forfeit their right to trial in a lawsuit brought against them by a former FSP member, Richard Snedigar, over a \$22,500 donation. However, at the May 14 default hearing, Chan acknowledged that no appellate court has yet reviewed the privacy claims raised by the defendants.

Visibly frustrated by Chan’s desire to protect the defendants from seizures of property and garnishment of wages, Snedigar’s attorney queried, “What makes these people so special?” In turn, Chan asked, “How do you weigh a claim for \$22,000 against a claim of invasion of constitutional rights?”

Attorney Valerie Carlson stated that the defendants (FSP, et. al.), will immediately ask the state Court of Appeals to consider the case. FSP spokespersons give credit to the many people who wrote to Judge Chan.



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