

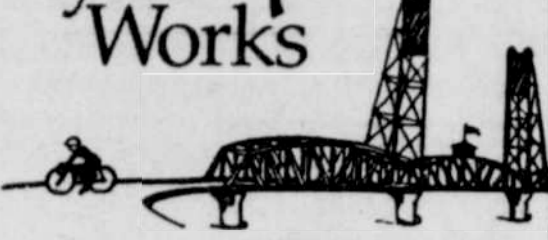
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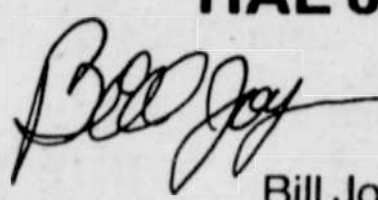


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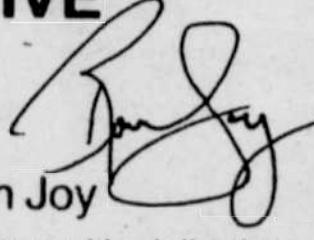
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*quoted with very kind permission from Mr. Quentin Crisp in "Manners from Heaven," 1984.

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A chemical dependency treatment center for the gay and lesbian community.

AIDS-a-rama in Washington

The Third International Conference on AIDS was held in Washington D.C. early last month. 6300 scientists assembled to confer, 850 journalists gathered to report, and innumerable politicians issued statements. Some of the highlights:

Medical

- Dr. Robert Gallo of the National Cancer Institute announced the discovery of a **third virus that causes AIDS**. The virus was isolated in Nigeria where ten patients are "known" to be infected with it. Gallo said the new virus poses no unknown danger, and that there is "no reason to panic." The virus has not yet been named.

French researchers confirmed in May that HIV-2, discovered in Africa in 1984, also causes AIDS. At the Washington meeting, the Pasteur Institute announced that the second AIDS virus has now been found in Western Europe and Brazil.

The new AIDS viruses are no immediate danger to North Americans. However, if current blood tests for HIV-1 antibodies do not also screen for the new viruses, there is a danger that they might go undetected in the medical blood supply.

- Statistics from San Francisco indicate that **people infected with AIDS virus face increasing risk of developing AIDS or AIDS related conditions**. Researchers estimate that within seven years of infection, over one third of those carrying the virus will develop AIDS, and up to seventy-five percent of those infected will eventually develop outward signs of the infection.

- Surveys of physicians show a **fear of AIDS and AIDS patients**. Sixty-nine percent of doctors responding believe they can get AIDS from patients, and twenty-five percent said they personally would not continue to care for an AIDS patient if given a choice. Twenty-seven percent did not think refusing care to AIDS patient would be unethical. Eighty-four percent of male respondents feared getting AIDS infections through professional contact, while only forty-eight percent of female doctors shared the same fear.

Politics

- Washington police were not the only people wearing rubber gloves that week. During the conference, President Reagan, in his first public address on the subject of AIDS (remember, he never publicly uttered the word until 1985) outlined an **extensive program that mandates AIDS blood tests** for people under federal jurisdiction — immigrants, aliens, and federal prisoners — and urged "routine" testing of couples seeking marriage licenses.

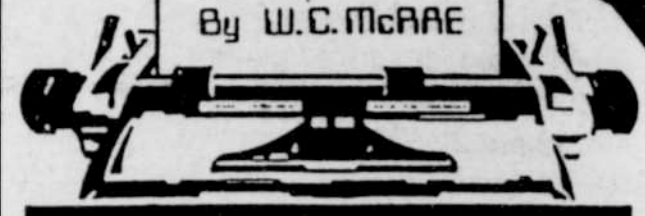
- Reagan has asked for the **formation of a national AIDS policy commission** to make recommendations on public policy. The White House is resisting pressure to appoint an openly gay member to the commission, despite leverage from AIDS activists and public health officials. A White House spokesman said "it would be absurd to turn around and start appointing people based on sexual preference." The official added that outspoken opponents of gay rights would also be barred from the panel.

- While the Centers for Disease Control will soon recognize two more conditions as confirmation of frank AIDS, people suffering from these afflictions will not

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FOR YOUR
INFORMATION

By W.C. McRAE



automatically receive Social Security disability benefits. Under the new definition, dementia and emaciation, along with pneumocistis carinii and Kaposi sarcoma, will officially confirm an AIDS diagnosis. Inclusion of the two conditions as AIDS will increase the number of AIDS cases by about twenty percent, mostly by re-evaluating cases of ARC as AIDS. However, Social Security will not automatically accept diagnoses of AIDS dementia or AIDS emaciation as disabling. People who meet the new AIDS criteria will have to prove their cases are disabling through regular eligibility channels.

Media

- Not only is AIDS big politics, it is big media. Consequently, the greybeards of journalism, from Ted Koppel to Paul Harvey to William Safire drew long breaths and declaimed on AIDS. While most editorialists were fair-handed to good, there was a notable exception. **The most repellent editorial came from Chicago pundit Mike Royko**. Royko, never known for an indefatigable intellect, usually scores his points through an appeal to "common sense" or conventional intolerance to change. This time the shared prejudice appealed to was anti-gay: Why, he repeatedly asks, did gays boo Reagan when he advocated mandatory AIDS testing? He creates a series of gay "straw men" to offer insipid answers, which he conveniently ridicules. His argument, for what it's worth, is a paean to testing over education. He reasons, in my paraphrase: "Since gays and drug users are too stupid to gain anything from education, we're going to have to test all of them and shadup your mouth about the President." Royko's arrogant paternalism assumes that it was gays who booed Reagan. But there are plenty of non-gays who would pay for the chance to boo the president.

High Court to hear gay case

The US Supreme Court has agreed to review a case in which the CIA fired an openly gay worker solely because of his sexual orientation. The CIA maintains that the employee's sexual orientation made him a security risk. An appeals court has found that the CIA must defend itself at trial against charges that the firing violates federal law and the employee's constitutional rights. The lower court held that the firing would be legal only if the CIA could prove that the employee was actually a security risk.