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The government grants lesbian, bisexual and gay Cubans the same rights as everyone else and guards against discrimination

by Howard N. Dana

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HAVANA, CUBA
Afternoon

I have been touring parts of Cuba for nearly two weeks with the Venceremos Brigade, staying in camps and working with 140 other U.S. citizens who are also on this solidarity trip. Being one of two openly gay men on the trip has been trying at times, and it has been difficult for my five lesbian sisters as well. Tonight, my friend Wendell, from San Francisco, and I have gone AWOL from the camp where we usually stay.

Wendell and I are staying in Havana tonight for one reason—to meet and talk to queer Cubans. We both have been talking about gay, lesbian and bisexual issues with everyone we can, from government leaders to the Cubans we worked along side of in the tobacco barns. We have asked questions about repression, discrimination, sexism, AIDS, homophobia and other things, but we have not yet been able to meet any gay or lesbian Cubans.

LA BODEGUITA DEL MEDIO—
OLD HAVANA
4:45 pm

Wendell and I are sitting on stools sipping overpriced *mohitos* in the bar Ernest Hemmingway made famous. We are waiting for Reynaldo. Yesterday, during a free

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PHOTO BY HOWARD DANA

May Day at Pinar del Rio