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Ad policy. No sexually exploitative advertising will be accepted. Compensation for errors in, or cancellation of, advertising will be made with credit toward future advertising.

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steppin' out



PHOTO BY LINDA KLEVER

Young queers enjoying the Portland Gay Men's Chorus at the closing of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Questioning Youth Conference held in Portland on April 25 and 26.

editorial

Who is served?

Two good cops, both from marginalized communities, are under scrutiny: maybe that's what we should be talking about

Renée LaChance

Portland Police Bureau Capt. Mike Garvey was finally allowed to return to duty April 28. He was reinstated as the new head of the Family Services Division, which oversees WomenStrength, the Sunshine Division, the Domestic Violence Reduction Unit and the Crisis Intervention Team.

Garvey spent the past 11 months with his life under a microscope as bureau detectives investigated allegations that he had cavorted with male prostitutes. A grand jury voted not to file charges against him last August, and Police Chief Charles Moose has yet to resolve the issue of whether there will be further disciplinary action against Garvey. Reportedly, whatever the disciplinary action is, it will not involve Garvey's dismissal.

From the beginning of Garvey's paid administrative leave there have been rumblings and allegations that Garvey was discriminated against because he's gay. Garvey and his attorney will probably file a lawsuit against the bureau claiming that is the case. Garvey is fortunate to live in one of the few cities in Oregon that bans discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, otherwise he would not be able to file such a lawsuit. We hope that House Bill 3719 will change that. (See our story beginning on page 16.)

Garvey's boss, Chief Moose, recently released his own personnel file to the public. The file contained reports of several incidents where Moose lost his cool in the face of perceived racism. All of the incidents took place while Moose was off duty. In one report it was alleged that Moose said to a sales clerk, "All you honkies stick together." According to bureau spokesman Lt. Cliff Madison, Moose denies ever having used the word "honky" and claims that it is not in his vocabulary.

Just Out reader David Gray was disturbed by the media reports and responded with an e-mail to us, stating:

"A white police chief [if he'd made such comments] would probably be condemned as a racist hater by the local

news media. *Just Out* reporter Inga Sorensen would probably write one of her craftily worded essays decrying his racist past and demanding his resignation. He'd most likely be asked to resign in disgrace by [Portland] Mayor [Vera] Katz. He'd probably even be asked to whimper his apologies in public. What will happen to Chief Moose because of his racist past? Absolutely nothing—he's not a white male."

Chief Moose is not a racist, David.

Racism is defined as prejudice plus power. It is not simply the personal prejudice that any person of any race may have toward another. It is the routine, institutionalized mistreatment of a person based on his or her membership in a group on the downside of power. Since white people in the United States are in power, it is impossible for a person of color to be racist toward them.

Prejudiced, yes, racist, no.

Moose's actions are unfortunate, and he has apologized publicly for them (he did not whimper).

Moose has done a number of good things for our community since taking over as chief. He led the Sexual Minority Roundtable to create a partnership agreement between the Portland Police Bureau and the lesbian and gay community pledging cooperation between both camps. He implemented a crisis response team for the sexual minority community. He marched in Portland Lesbian and Gay Pride parades even before he was made chief. He implemented a program that provides bicycles to inner-city youth. He moved his family into a house in a gang-troubled area and has remained there as a role model for the neighborhood.

Though Moose may have made a few bad calls during his tenure, there is nothing that indicates he is unfit to serve our community as chief of the Police Bureau.

What we should be talking about is the fact that two good cops—one gay, one African American—who both hold prominent positions in the bureau, are sitting under clouds of negativity. We should question why they have been pitted against one another. We should question who this best serves.

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