

two such groups named, both of which, the release says, have labeled what it calls "pro-family" organizations as extremist and bigoted.

USA Today, the Dallas Morning News and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram refused to print the ad, prompting the right-wing coalition to make a statement accusing the national press of longstanding bias in favor of the "homosexual activist movement" and calling the refusal an "outright suppression of dissent."

University is chided for anti-gay conference

Members of the Human Rights Campaign and other activists are concerned about the anti-gay views they say are promoted by the American Public Philosophy Institute, a group of conservative scholars who advocate the so-called natural law theory, which is holding a three-day conference on "Homosexuality and American Public Life" on the Georgetown University campus.

Literature for the conference, quoted in the Washington Post, claims that the forum will present a "comprehensive analysis of the question of homosexuality and an appropriate stance for our society to take." That question, it seems, has already been answered by the institute's self-styled experts, who also reportedly state that "homosexuality is a tragic affliction, with harmful consequences" and who advocate "prevention and treatment" for young people at risk.

Dean Porterfield, associate vice president for communications at the Jesuit university, said Georgetown did not book and does not endorse the conference, which will be held at a facility owned by the school and located on school property but managed by Marriott Corp. A Marriott



spokesman downplayed the conference's stated goals, and said his company "books groups of all kinds all the time."

Porterfield told the Post that "in general, universities find the best response to offensive speech is more speech."

But HRC communications director and senior strategist David M. Smith told the newspaper a university should not be associated with the kind of prejudice he believes the institute represents: "If this was a conference to promote racial hatred or to undermine religious freedom, there is no question that Georgetown University would not allow such an event to take place on their campus," he said. "This conference promotes anti-gay prejudice and should be held to the same standard."

Activists feel jilted, say United broke its promise

At a May 24 protest outside United Airlines' offices in San Francisco, queer activists burned frequent flyer cards, chanted "liar, liar, pants on fire" and called for a boycott of the carrier. The Associated Press reports that the demonstrators were angered by the airline's refusal to comply with the city's domestic partner benefits ordinance and what they believed was a promise to provide the benefits.

The Air Transportation Association, a coalition representing United and 24 other airlines, has filed a lawsuit challenging San Francisco's domestic partner benefits ordinance on the grounds that it violates federal jurisdiction over interstate commerce and transportation.

A statement issued by the Chicago-based airline said it is still considering internally whether

to offer domestic partner benefits, regardless of the outcome of that case. United maintains that it did not promise to grant such benefits, but only told activists it would review the city ordinance.

Members of the Harvey Milk Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Democratic Club, however, claim airline officials privately told leaders of the sexual minor-



ity community that they would offer the benefits. A representative of the group said that more protests are planned and that United should not expect support from the gay and lesbian community if it does not offer the benefits.

He said the club was not targeting other airlines that court queer consumers, such as American Airlines, because those companies did not pledge to provide domestic partner benefits.

Actors' union will pay for drug 'cocktail'

The Screen Actors Guild has begun to provide protease inhibitor and antiviral-combination therapy free of charge for members lacking health insurance. A written diagnosis, a current prescription for the drugs from a licensed physician and a minimum of five years' membership in the guild are required to receive the free treatment. The Los Angeles Daily News reports that SAG is the first union or corporation to offer such a program for HIV-positive people.

It is estimated that half the HIV-positive population in the country is taking protease inhibitors. Four of these drugs have been approved for use in the United States since December 1995.

A spokesman for AIDS Project Los Angeles told United Press International the cost of such treatment can be as high as \$16,000 per year per patient.

Queers leery of Christian Coalition outreach

About 150 people gathered in Baltimore on May 14 to respond to the Christian Coalition's recently begun program of outreach into the nation's African American churches. Sexual minority activists are concerned that the coalition's anti-gay rhetoric will disturb the "live and let live" attitude they say is prevalent in the black religious community, reports the Washington Blade.

The rally was organized by the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum and the Free State Justice Campaign to counter the Christian Coalition's "Congress on Racial Justice and Reconciliation," held in the city four days earlier.

According to the Blade, the coalition's Web page describes its Samaritan Project, launched in January of this year, as a campaign to promote racial justice and the "essential building blocks of the family."

"There is nothing wrong with overcoming poverty and engaging in race reconciliation work," said Val Tavai, co-chair of the Free State Justice Campaign, "[but] this strategy is also tied into the coalition's teachings of intolerance."

Mandy Carter, field director for the Leadership Forum, which has been tracking the religious right's activity in the black community, said there was no substantial mention of homosexuality during the coalition's May 10 event, but that traditional families and pro-family values were stressed. However, Carter is critical of what she calls the coalition's "history of indifference to blacks, the poor and the inner cities," saying she sees its racial justice projects as an effort to bring its anti-gay message into black churches that so far have remained neutral on the "gay issue."

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