

GAE APPEARS BEFORE
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

On March 28 representatives from the Gay Alliance for Equality appeared before the N.S. Human Rights Commission to discuss the brief presented to the Legislature on March 5. The Commission has decided at this time not to recommend the minister in charge of the Human Rights Act that the Act be amended to include "sexual orientation" as one of the grounds on which discrimination is prohibited. Several reasons were given. First, the Commission intends to give priority to Blacks and Indians, since, in the Commission's opinion, their problems are greater than gays. Secondly, the Commission is understaffed at present and so it could not handle the increase in cases which would result from the protection of gays' civil rights. Thirdly, there as yet has not been enough pressure exerted on the MLAs to make them responsive; only when they see the possibility of losing votes by not acting positively will they do so. Fourthly, and most importantly, the Commission is not aware of enough cases of discrimination against gays to take any action at this time. It is therefore up to the GAE in particular and the gay community in general to provide them with bona fide cases of discrimination. Gays who wish to see the law changed, but do not have any cases of discrimination to report, can do their part by writing to the Human Rights Act, Dr. William Gillis, and urging



GAE INFORMATION SERVICES

Volume 1 No. 2

April 1975

him to introduce legislation to protect gays from discrimination.

-by Bill Clauson

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A LETTER TO THE GAY COMMUNITY

Dear Fellow Gays:

Now that the GAE has appeared before the N.S. Human Rights Commission, the course we must follow is clear: we will have to document as many cases of discrimination against gays as possible before next fall, when another meeting with the Commission is scheduled. The gay community of Nova Scotia can assist immeasurably by submitting to the GAE instances of discrimination they have personally encountered or know to have happened to others. NO NAMES ARE REQUIRED, so it is not even necessary for the GAE to know who has forwarded a specific case.

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The areas which will carry the most weight with the Commission are housing (including apartments), employment, and public accommodation (including hotels and restaurants).

Send all statements to: Chairman, Legal Reform Committee
Gay Alliance for Equality
#207 - 1585 Barrington Street
Halifax

The GAE has had more success with its brief than any other gay group in Canada; with your help our lead can be maintained.

Respectfully yours,

Bills Claussen, Chairman
Legal Reform Committee

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UNITY AND PRIDE

Again we of the newsletter staff attempt to raise the consciousness of the gay community by offering opinions on the motivation and character of the gay lifestyle. Pride is our aim. Pride through respect. In order to raise the level of self-pride in gay people we must each present our lifestyle as one of inner satisfaction and stability. Respect must emanate from each of us towards all, and each of us must provide reason for reciprocation of this respect. Pride's essence lies in this respect.

If gays offer to the world the image they have of their own lifestyle the stereotype of gays will not persist, and then, and only then, shall we succeed in our aim of equality and self-pride. This is the only way to achieve our goal, no other will work. Societal acceptance is something that has to be earned, not forced. You cannot pressure anyone into acceptance. The gay marches are a typical example of what I am referring to. We will have to show John Q. Straight that we are no different than he is, that we are just as intelligent, that we dress no differently nor is our outlook on life any different than his. We must show him that we have feelings and sexual desires the same as he has, and that we are a genuine friendly and sincere group of individuals -- then, and only then, will acceptance start to become realization.

We must help ourselves by being proud and uniform in our aims and desires. Derision in the community must not be allowed to flourish, and only you as individuals can accomplish this by friendliness and acceptance of each other as people worthy of true mutual respect.

-by John L. Barr

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During the past year, inter-action between the gay male and female has begun. At this point, we can go to one of two extremes. We can have a happy, close knit community, or we can play in separate playgrounds as we did in elementary school. If we cannot socialize with people regardless of their sexual orientation, we are as bigoted as those who have cried "queer" the loudest. (Perhaps I may even go so far as to say that those who associate solely for sexual purposes deny humans of all faculties save sex, and can probably relate with people on a sexual basis only). Bigotry amongst ourselves is stupid, and will be the main weapon by which any of our hopes for social acceptance will be bludgeoned to death. So do your good deed for the gay, and talk to someone - anyone - no matter what their sexual orientation. Talk to them as a person.

-by Anne R.

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CURRENT EVENTS

1. Recently, several GAE representatives were invited to attend a class at St. Mary's University. This was the result of a previous taped interview by five members of the class. A question period followed presentation of a paper on homosexuality to the whole class. About half of the twenty students participated and asked various questions, mostly of the type to be expected from an audience unfamiliar with the topic: social and psychological problems of being gay, areas in which discrimination occurs, the problem of closet homosexuals, the dangers of admitting publicly to one's homosexuality, etc. There was interest enough that a second such meeting was arranged for the following week.
2. On March 7 there was a meeting of the Victoria General Hospital Out Patient Staff with various helping agencies in the city. GAE was invited, and four members from our phone line attended. Those from Helpline and Birthright were sincerely interested in our line, and in the GAE itself. Although the outcome of the meeting as a whole was less than successful, awareness of the GAE and its functions was impressed upon those present.
3. On Monday, March 19, four GAE representatives were guests at a Sociology seminar at Dalhousie University. The reps answered questions and participated in a discussion of the sociology of Gay Liberation. Many of the questions asked were similar to those asked at the S.U. class. A major part of the seminar dealt with the relationship of Gay Lib to other liberation movements, and how the aims of Gay Lib can be achieved within the existing social structure.
4. Over the past few weeks, three GAE phone line volunteers have

participated in a helpline training program. The knowledge gained from these sessions will in turn be passed on to the other GAA line volunteers.

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The Gay Alliance for Equality is still your organization. It is trying to represent you and make your life more worth living through their efforts for the aim of equality and freedom for the gay.

We have a long, difficult road ahead of us and quite frankly we need every bit of encouragement, assistance and support you can offer. Your dutiful support will help make attainment possible.

Please offer some support by attending our meetings, and getting involved, even in a quiet way or giving donations so that we can continue to run our phone line and advertise in the gay interest. Donations may be left in our donations box in 'Thee Klub' or given to the GAA either at the office or at our general meetings.

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NOTICE BOARD

- * GAA PHONE LINE: Information and counselling for male and female gays and other interested persons. Hours: Thurs-Sun, 7-10pm
Telephone: 4237657
- * GAA GENERAL MEETINGS: Every second Wed at Universalist Unitarian Church, 5500 Inglis St. Everyone is welcome.
Next meetings: April 11, April 25, and May 9, at 8pm.
- * ELECTIONS: A reminder that GAA general elections for executive are coming up in June. To be eligible to vote you must have attended at least two meetings of the GAA over the past year prior to election night.

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Anyone is welcome to submit articles or items of interest to the Editorial Committee of this newsletter. We would like to hear from all. Final date for submission to the next newsletter is April 30, 1973.

All submissions may be sent to or left at this address:

Newsletter Staff

Suite 207 - 1535 Barrington St.

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The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the GAA, but express the opinions of the individual authors.