

It's Time

NGTF INTERVENES IN IMMIGRATION HARASSMENT



WE ARE EVERYWHERE. NGTF women and men at the October 14 March on Washington. Top photo by JEB; bottom photo by C. F. Brydon. Additional photos on page four.

Governor Brown Endorses Petition

In mid-October NGTF's "Petition the President" campaign received the "wholehearted support" of Governor Edmond ("Jerry") Brown of California. The petition campaign, which was originally launched in connection with the March on Washington, calls on President Carter to issue an executive order barring discrimination against lesbians and gay men, and to endorse the current gay rights bill before Congress (HR 2074) which would extend the 1964 and 1968 Civil Rights Acts to include protection on the basis of sexual orientation. In a telegram to Co-Executive Directors Charles F. Brydon and Lucia Valeska, Governor Brown pointed out that the goals of the petition were consistent with the executive order he signed in California earlier this year.

On a more political note, Governor Brown stressed his commitment to the adoption of a plank to the 1980 Democratic National Platform that would urge passage of the congressional bill in addition to those pending in several state legislatures. Brown concluded by observing that "such unjust discrimination against any individual is unacceptable and contrary to the fundamental principles for which this nation stands. Efforts to end such discrimination against gay and lesbian Americans at all levels will always have my strong support."

Co-Executive Directors Brydon and Valeska observed that Governor Brown's continual and clear-cut support of gay rights is especially welcome, but that NGTF was not offering a political endorsement for the governor's presidential candidacy. "We would hope that all of the candidates, in both parties, would make a similar declaration," they pointed out.

NGTF Staff Changes

LARRY GUREL TO HEAD NEW CETA STUDY

A number of important staff changes have occurred this fall in the National Gay Task Force office. Media Director Ginny Vida has left her position although she plans to remain in the New York City area. Robert Herrick, former NGTF Administrator and Director of Resources, has become the co-executive director of the NGTF Fund for Human Dignity, Inc. The responsibilities of finance manager have been taken over by Scott Anderson, previously NGTF's Deputy Administrator.

As reported in the August-September issue of *It's Time*, NGTF has been awarded a federally-funded grant for a project to research and document job discrimination against lesbians and gay men in New York City. Heading this 18-month Project Open Employment is Larry Gurel, who was most recently involved in NGTF's first CETA project, Open Understanding, an educational endeavor to inform the general public of the positive contributions made by gay men and lesbians. The current project, funded by the federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act and under the auspices of the Congress of Neighborhood Women, seeks information on discrimination based on sexual orientation in both the hiring of new employees as well as in the attitudes of current employees who want to avoid discovery.

In his new position as project director, Mr. Gurel recently completed a trip to California to assess the work that has been done there in the documentation of employment discrimination. The methodology developed by some of the California organizations can

continued on page 3

INS Officers Told to Cease Intimidation

CANADIAN WOMEN STOPPED AT MICHIGAN BORDER

Canadian women en route to the Fourth Annual Michigan Women's Festival this past summer were totally unprepared for the outrageous treatment they received from U.S. Immigration border guards as they attempted to enter this country at Port Huron, Michigan. The women were greeted with questions such as: "When was the last time you slept with a woman? Which do you enjoy more, sleeping with a man or a woman? What do you do in bed? What are the sexual preferences of your friends? Who is the male and who is the female in your relationship? Why are you traveling with other women? Are you sure you are not meeting other women in the U.S.?"

The border guards, having heard that the festival was an event likely to attract a large number of lesbians (over 8000 women, many of them gay, attended this year), refused to allow dozens of women to enter the country on suspicion of homosexuality, subjected would be festival participants to a search of their possessions, confiscated "gay" literature (including brochures about the festival), revoked the visa of a British woman studying in the U.S. who was returning from a visit to Canada, and were generally rude and insulting.

The behavior of the border guards violated a recent "temporary directive" by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service specifying that persons suspected of being homosexual are no longer to be denied entry into the U.S., but are to be "paroled" into the country until a clear policy on the admission of homosexuals can be determined.

As reported in the August-September issue of *It's Time*, the directive was issued by the INS in response to a recent decision by the U.S. Public Health Service to stop identifying aliens as homosexual. The PHS, which has sole authority to conduct such examinations, decided that in view of its own policy on homosexuality adopted in 1978 at the urging of NGTF (specifying that homosexuality is not a mental disorder), there were no grounds for conducting examinations of persons suspected of being gay. The

continued next column

refusal of the PHS to conduct such examinations has created a legal impasse with the INS that has yet to be resolved.

NGTF Intervenes

NGTF Co-Executive Director Lucia Valeska, who attended the music festival along with several members of the NGTF Women's Caucus, took prompt action on the matter and together with Co-Executive Director Charles F. Brydon, sought remedial action from INS officials in Washington, D.C., with whom NGTF has been negotiating for several years about a change in policy.

At NGTF's request, Leonel Castillo, the outgoing Commissioner of the INS, ordered an immediate end to harassment by border officials of persons suspected of being homosexual, and also called for an investigation to determine why his earlier order specifying "parole" had been ignored. Some women who had originally been turned back at the border were subsequently allowed to enter the country, but there was no way to reach many of the women who had returned home.

"Many of the women who were subjected to questioning were so intimidated by the border guards that they just gave up," said Ms. Valeska. "It didn't occur to them that they had any rights." When Ms. Valeska was able to announce to the 8000 music festival participants that swift action had been taken to prohibit further harassment of lesbians by border guards, much appreciation was expressed for the role that NGTF had played.

Following the music festival, Valeska and Brydon, joined by Arlie Scott of the National Organization for Women, sent a letter of protest to the new U.S. Attorney General, Benjamin Civiletti, whose department oversees the INS. Brydon and Valeska subsequently met with Acting Associate Attorney General John Shenefield in late September to discuss the points raised in their letter, and reported that Mr. Shenefield was "receptive and understanding," and "shocked" at the nature of the questions to which the Canadian women had been subjected.

NGTF is continuing to press for an administrative decision that will require the INS to end all discrimination against lesbians and gay men in the area of immigration.



VALESKA AT COLORADO MEETING. NGTF Co-Executive Director Lucia Valeska (center) at Denver Lesbian Conference in September with Billie Lindsey (left) and Crystal Wright. Ms. Valeska was the keynote speaker at the Conference, whose goals were to identify Colorado lesbians, to create long-lasting communication links, and to affirm lesbian identities. Photo by C. Roth.

NATIONAL GAY TASK FORCE



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LUCIA VALESKA,
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Special thanks this issue to Ginny Vida.

Dear Members and Friends:

First, a reminder for members who have yet to complete and return the NGTF Membership Survey. Please put this 20-minute task at the top of your priority list. Your response is important. The more surveys completed and returned, the more dependable and useful the data will be to the Board of Directors and the staff.

Response to our August-September report on NGTF's financial plight has been positive and encouraging. Expressions of concern from members as well as editorial comment by a few gay newspapers indicate that a lot of people within and without the organization care a great deal about NGTF, its past successes and its hopes for the future. *We are not out of danger.* Our auditor tells us that we ended the 1979 fiscal year on September 30 with \$27,735.35 in unpaid bills. This is the highest such figure in NGTF's six-year history. We need your assistance to sign up at least three new members for each present member. Membership brochures were included with the Membership Survey mailing in October. More are available on request from the office. Please do your part.

This issue of the newsletter launches a new format for *It's Time*. It is one of several steps being taken to improve NGTF's news publications. Changes and additions to the format and content will be shaped in part by responses we receive from you to the Membership Survey, which included several questions about *It's Time*. Our thanks and appreciation to Andrew Rubinfeld who has volunteered to serve as temporary editor of *It's Time*. We are deeply grateful to Andrew and the many New York area women and men who volunteer their time and skills to keep NGTF moving ahead.

Before closing, a word about the wonderful and exhilarating experience shared by tens of thousands of gay men and lesbians who marched in Washington on Sunday, October 14, and the hundreds who lobbied their representatives and senators on the following Monday. To the many people who gave so much of themselves in the

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Gay Role Urged in Families Conference

NGTF SOLICITS GAY PARTICIPATION AT STATE AND REGIONAL LEVELS

Do gay relationships qualify as "families"? NGTF has spent a good deal of time and energy during the past months trying to persuade the planners of the White House Conference on Families that we do indeed form family units which should be officially recognized by the federal government.

Nevertheless, the National Advisory Committee of the White House Conference on Families has been reluctant to acknowledge our place in family life — specifically, in the series of three federally-sponsored regional conferences that will comprise the "national" White House Conference on Families. NGTF's bid to have an openly gay person appointed to the Advisory Committee was rejected, and although the Committee enunciated an affirmative-action policy to reflect a "diversity of families" in the composition of delegates to the state conferences, the Committee has carefully avoided defining what that phrase means.

However, we have made some notable progress. Through participation in a large coalition of organizations that has been formed to try to influence the conference planners, NGTF has been successful in pressuring the Advisory Committee to adopt a nondiscrimination guideline — including sexual orientation — for the selection of state delegates to the three federally-sponsored regional conferences. This gives the gay community an important "in." It is very important that gay groups and individuals around the country make the most of the opportunity to participate in the state conferences and elect gay delegates to the regional conferences.

continued on page 3

NGTF BOARD ACTIONS — SEPTEMBER

- Approved fiscal 1980 budget 20% below previous year
- Passed resolution to translate several NGTF publications into Spanish

HELP!!!

NGTF Co-Executive Director Lucia Valeska needs a one bedroom apartment in Manhattan as soon as possible. Reasonable. Safe environment. Call NGTF office at (212) 741-5800 with any leads.

past several months to make the event a success, thank you for caring so much and working so hard. The event was truly historic and certainly will be long remembered.

The great untold story of the March on Washington weekend may be the Third World Conference. Approximately 400 Third World women and men from all over the nation made history through their participation in this meeting. To A. Billy S. Jones, who had the vision to see the need and value of this unprecedented event, our congratulations.

C. F. Brydon
Lucia Valeska

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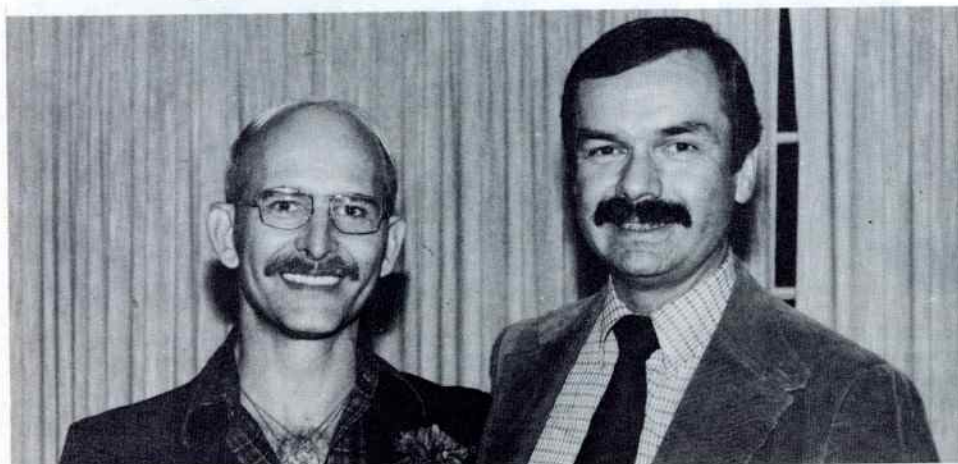
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NEED OF THE MONTH

- Two executive office swivel chairs



BRYDON SPEAKS AT MICHIGAN GATHERING. NGTF Co-Executive Director Charles F. Brydon (right) met in October with Daniel R. Sivil who heads the Association of Suburban People, a Detroit-area social and political organization for gay men and women.



TWO FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. NGTF Board members Franklin E. Kameny and Carolyn Handy at swearing in ceremony as new members of the Washington, D.C., Human Rights Commission, in August. Photo by John M. Yanson.

ACTIONREPORT

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION/REPORTS ON RESULTS

DAVID STEIN, EDITOR

Feel free to reprint any item in the "Action Report" but please credit the National Gay Task Force.

HOW GAY IS YOUR LIBRARY?

A pamphlet of tips on how to get gay materials into public and institutional libraries is now available from the Task Force on Gay Liberation of the American Library Association. The pamphlet—titled "Censored, Ignored, Overlooked, Too Expensive? How to Get Gay Materials into Libraries"—explains library selection procedures in a general way and then tells what an individual or group can do to get a library to buy more gay books and periodicals. There are also sections concerning what to do if a library refuses your request, why gay books are sometimes stored where patrons have to ask for them instead of in open stacks, and how to donate books to a library. The single-copy price is \$1 postpaid (make checks or money orders payable to Barbara Gittings/GTF); bookstore and bulk-order discounts are available. For more information, or to order, write or call Barbara Gittings, P.O. Box 2383, Philadelphia, PA 19103; (215) 382-3222.

JUDICIAL ENLIGHTENMENT

Once again, the California Supreme Court has struck a blow for sexual civil liberties. In the case of *Pryor v. L.A. Municipal Court*, decided this September, the state high court rejected seventy years of judicial interpretations of the California "sexual solicitation" statute as unconstitutionally vague. The law itself was not invalidated, but the court mandated that future application of it must adhere to much narrower and more specific standards. In particular, it appears that it will no longer be possible for persons to be prosecuted under the law for solicitation of a vice-squad officer, or of another private citizen if no observer likely to be offended by the behavior is present (such as in a "lover's lane"-type situation), or of another person in a quasi-public place (such as a gay or singles bar) where such behavior is considered ordinary. Moreover, the court ruled that the state cannot prohibit solicitation as such for legal sexual acts to be performed in private, but only solicitation in such a manner as to be offensive to someone likely to witness it.

The conviction of the appellant, Don Barry Pryor of San Francisco, was overturned, and the court specified that its interpretation of the statute was retroactive. Thus, the way is open for tens of thousands of persons—many of them gay men—previously convicted under the statute to apply for a reversal and cleansing of their records. The defense attorney in the case was Thomas F. Coleman, publisher of *SexualLaw Reporter*, and a friend-of-the-court brief was filed by the National Committee for Sexual Civil Liberties.

[information from GCN and B.A.R.]

MEDIA FEEDBACK

One of the most effective ways to help persuade broadcasters to upgrade the images they present of lesbians and gay men is to let them know how you feel about specific programs that you find either praiseworthy or offensive. Most local stations are listed in the telephone directory by their call letters, and letters should be addressed to the general manager. Following are the appropriate addresses for letters to the national networks:

Audience Information
ABC-TV
1330 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019

Audience Services
CBS Television Network
51 West 52nd Street
New York, NY 10019

Audience Services
NBC-TV
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10020

Viewer Mail
Public Broadcasting Service
4475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W.
Washington, DC 20024

EXPERT WITNESSES

Together with several gay publications, NGTF is engaged in suing the federal Bureau of Prisons to overturn its policy of forbidding gay-oriented materials to enter the institutions under its control. Witnesses are needed with professional expertise in the area of corrections and penology, particularly with knowledge of the conditions leading to prison violence (the express rationale of the bureau's policy is that possession of gay materials would provoke violence against the inmates having it and thus disrupt the institution). The witnesses need not be gay themselves or have any particular experience with gay prisoners, although the latter would be helpful; qualified "experts" may be psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, or researchers in this area as well as corrections professionals. If you or someone you know is qualified and willing to testify, please get in touch with Charles F. Brydon at NGTF or with NGTF's attorney, Ms. Margot Karle, 36 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036; (212) 869-1940.

TAX-EXEMPT FOUNDATIONS

Bob Herrick, co-executive director of the NGTF Fund for Human Dignity, would like to be in touch with the officers of other lesbian/gay-related educational foundations. Please send a copy of your exemption letter under section 501(c)(3), any promotional material you may have, and the name(s) and telephone number(s) of your contact person (people). Address to Bob Herrick, Fund for Human Dignity, 80 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

HATEMONGER CURBED

As a result of protests by gay organizations, two TV stations—WOR in New York City and WFAA in Dallas—have put curbs on broadcast evangelist James Robison's anti-gay campaign. The New York station "bleeped" the audio portion of Robison's August 12 program during his attack on churches that ordain homosexual clergy or are considering doing so, and WOR's general manager, Robert Fennimore, has warned Robison's production company that if he "continues attacking homosexuals along these lines, he's going to be taken off the air." Fennimore's action was taken in response to protests by a coalition of gay organizations in the New York area spearheaded by the Media Committee of the Gay Activists Alliance.

In Dallas, Robison's program was removed for some time from the air by WFAA because his "scathing remarks about homosexuals," in the words of station manager Dave Lane, prompted a request for equal time by the Dallas Gay Political Caucus. When the program was reinstated, Lane advised Robison to "tone down his remarks" about lesbians and gay men.

[information from GCN]

HONOR ROLL

In order to update NGTF's list of academic institutions that have committed themselves to nondiscrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, we would appreciate any information about schools—from junior colleges to graduate and professional schools—that have issued statements in this area. Please write to Judy Burns at the NGTF office in New York.

THE SENATE'S TURN

The Senate of the United States will soon, for the first time in history, have a chance to consider a bill prohibiting employment discrimination against lesbians and gay men. In September Sen. Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.) sent a "Dear Colleague" letter to all other members of the Senate announcing his intention to introduce such a bill and requesting co-sponsors. Several have already indicated their willingness to enlist as co-sponsors, but Sen. Tsongas does not wish to release their names at this time. NGTF members and friends are urged to write to their own senators asking them to support the proposed bill, which will be known as the Senate Fair Employment Bill (it will not be assigned a number until it is formally introduced). Senators may be addressed c/o the Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510.

Support for the Tsongas bill has already come from the Americans for Democratic Action, one of the nation's largest liberally oriented political lobbying groups. ADA President Patsy Mink has sent a letter to all members of the Senate stating that her organization "strongly supports Senator Tsongas' efforts in this area" and urging "co-sponsorship of the proposed fair employment legislation."

Much of the groundwork for Sen. Tsongas' action was accomplished by the Gay Rights National Lobby. GRNL will continue to work for passage of the broader House gay rights bill (HR 2074), which covers discrimination in housing, public accommodations, and federal assistance as well as employment. The "Action Report" will advise readers on the progress of both bills, but for the most up-to-date information, write or call GRNL at 1606 17th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009; (202) 462-4255.

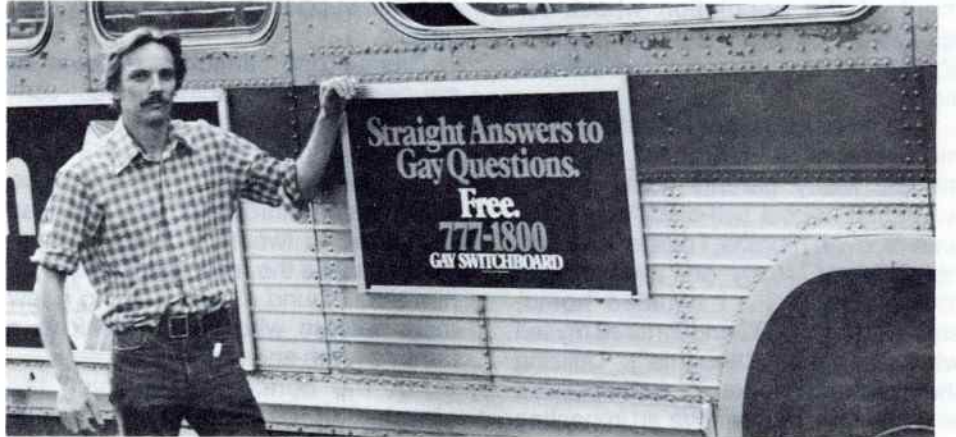
ANOTHER CALIFORNIA FIRST

Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. has appointed an openly gay man, Stephen M. Lachs, as a judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court. According to the National Committee for Sexual Civil Liberties, "This appears to be the first time that an openly gay person has been appointed to a judgeship anywhere in the country." Lachs is on the boards of directors of the L.A. Gay Community Services Center and the Municipal Elections Committee of Los Angeles, a gay political group. Though Lachs' appointment has received widespread media attention, he commented to *Gay Community News* that "The big day will be when someone like me is appointed and it won't even be a news story."

ADVERTISE IN IT'S TIME
IT PAYS



BAND PLAYS ON. Robert Wolff, General Manager, and Nancy Corporan, Music Director, of the New York Gay Community Marching Band, are encouraging area women and men to take their old band instruments out of the closet and into the rehearsal hall. Photo by Roberta F. Raeburn.



GETTING ON THE BUS. Bill Gronwald of New York's Gay Switchboard points out a straightforward solution to a gay problem: information and communication. The transit authority ran the ad for September on 25 percent of the city's buses. Photo by Peter A. Melillo.

Families Conference

Getting Involved

NGTF is urging members and groups to contact the NGTF Conference Coordinator in their state (see list this page) and:

- participate in the preplanning process of the state conferences
- become delegates to the state conferences
- make sure that gays are represented as delegates to the regional conferences (these will be elected at the state conferences)
- ensure that gay issues are raised at all workshops (and not relegated to one "gay" workshop)

You may also inquire about testifying at upcoming regional hearings to be held in Nashville, Denver, Washington, Seattle, Detroit, Hartford, Kansas City, and Lindsborg, Kan.

Gay and lesbian participation in the conference series, particularly on the local level, is critically important to the gay community. The public needs to understand that we are not a threat to the family, that we are part of the American family. We establish family units of our own, and we are present in one of five nuclear families. Recommendations for government action will be produced at these conferences, and it is important to have gay concerns included. But even more important is the opportunity to use the conferences to call public attention to the strengths and needs of gay families, and end the "antifamily" myth.

Co-Executive Director Lucia Valeska, who represents NGTF in the "Families" project, will testify at an upcoming hearing in Washington, D.C. "We learned how important it is to form operative national networks when the NGTF Women's Caucus worked so effectively in 1977 to generate participation in the International Women's Year conference series," Ms. Valeska observed. "Grass roots organizing on the state level culminated in the passage of the lesbian rights resolution at the National Women's Conference in Houston, accompanied by a good share of media coverage."

For further information regarding participation in the Families Conference series, contact the Conference Coordinator for your state. Broad conference themes, as defined by the Advisory Committee, include family strengths and supports, diversity of families, the changing realities of family life, the impact of public and private institutional policies on families, and the impact of discrimination and families with special needs.

NGTF Staff Changes

serve as a model for investigations done in other parts of the country. Project Director Gurel met with Michael G. Shively, associate director of CHEER, the San Francisco-based Center for Homosexual Education, Evaluation and Research that has been surveying Californians for the past 5 years. One of CHEER's current funded projects is a study of the relationship between civil liberties and sexual orientation. The organization plans to investigate and document cases of discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or social sex-role stereotypes in public and private institutions that render services to the public. At present, CHEER is also planning a 6-month survey of New Yorkers. In addition, Mr. Gurel met with Lloyd Cowan, gay liaison for the San Francisco Human Rights Commission; Mark Hetts, Director of Job Power, an employment program in the city that tries to get jobs for gays in addition to sensitizing employers to gay issues; and Bill Henry, director of the Human Rights Foundation, a group which has a grant to speak in public schools and develop public school curricula on the gay issue. According to Mr. Gurel, these are all areas that NGTF should investigate for the current New York City project.

On his way back to New York, Mr. Gurel stopped in Denver to talk with representatives of Datacall, a local group that has been studying discrimination and acts of abuse against gay men and lesbians caused by the police and private citizens. The ad hoc group is composed of NGTF board member Gerald Gerash and two other people working with him; they have office space at the Gay Community Center of Colorado in Denver.

According to Director Gurel, the importance of this new NGTF project is that "it is the first systematic study solely of employment discrimination, something that has not been done before." Previous studies have covered broader aspects of the problem. "We hope that we will develop a comprehensive model for other gay organizations to use in future investigations," Mr. Gurel added.

Insofar as the CETA grant is federal money administered by New York City, Project Open Employment must focus on discrimination in employment in New York. One important benefit of the study will be a detailed exposition of the need for legislative remedies to eliminate the discrimination problem. More specifically, the project will be an invaluable aid for the campaign to pass New York City's gay rights bill.

Book Review

NOW THAT YOU KNOW:

What Every Parent Should Know About Homosexuality, by Betty Fairchild and Nancy Hayward. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979, \$8.95.

Reviewed by Kathleen U. Boyle

In the last 10-15 years, there has been a growing market of books on lesbianism/homosexuality — some of them good, a great number of them bad. *Now That You Know*, a book written by two founding members of Parents of Gays, is new and one of the good. By parents and for parents, it directly addresses the concerns of a large segment of the population whose response to us is so significant in the shaping of our personal and political lives.

The authors caught my interest immediately with their own personal stories. Many parents could identify with such honest self-disclosure ("For weeks, even months, I carried this Terrible Secret . . . my son was one of 'those people' . . . I equated homosexuality with SEX, and tortured myself with unpleasant thoughts"). Utilizing the firsthand stories of both parents and children, they weave an impacting tale of struggle with an underlying theme of integrity. The gay women and men who contributed their stories to this book stand out as caring, growing, ethical — people to meet.

The general information on gayness is covered in a comfortable, comprehensive style and ranges from a look at causation theories to interviews with lesbians, gay men, gay couples, and gay workers. There is an overall view of the status of gays in various professions and of the legal protections (or lack of same) in various cities and states, as well as an excellent chapter on religious approaches to this issue. Throughout, the theme addresses the parent's concern that her/his gay child is doomed to a life of misery. The authors warn " . . . this book will challenge you. We will argue . . . against 'old beliefs' and 'rules' . . . you'll learn
continued next column

what unique problems gay people do face (and that most of them can be attributed to a homophobic society rather than to their sexual orientation) and you'll discover what forces for change are currently at work."

Like every other book on this subject this one must be recommended with caution. The section on legal status ends with the results of the antigay battles in St. Paul, Wichita, and Eugene. With a 1979 copyright, I would have liked to see at least a footnote added to included the late '78 victories in Seattle and California. After all, in an attempt to show the "change . . . currently at work," it seems significant that these elections showed large-scale popular support for the rights of gay people.

This second caution is affected by my personal perspective. I must confess that I read this book with my father (my surviving parent) in mind. Thus, I was disappointed to find only one father quoted throughout the book, as compared to twenty mothers. As eloquent as was the message of those 21 parents, I found myself wanting a few more fathers who could speak to a father's fears and reactions.

For the concerned feminist, the chapter of description ("What is Gay?") will be disappointing. Several well-intentioned sentences (such as "Feminine beauty is a lesbian woman's ideal" and "Not every tomboy turns out to be a lesbian, nor is every sissy boy growing up gay; we all know mannish women and effeminate men who are 100% heterosexual") indicate the lack of a feminist analysis.

Despite these difficulties, *Now That You Know* is written by those who share the experience and language of our parents and, as such, it can speak to them in a way that we, their children, cannot. It is the laudable effort of friends who champion our cause and is well worth reading and sending home with an introductory letter.

(Kathleen U. Boyle, a board member of the Lesbian Resource Center, Seattle, Wash., is former co-director of that organization.)

Women's Caucus Report by Barbara Love

Houston in the fall of 1977. It has no funding, so its ability to implement resolutions — one of which pertains to gay rights — is severely hampered. But Frances is keeping the lesbian issue alive there. As a delegate to the Lesbian Caucus, she sits on the all-important steering committee called the Communication Network.

Frances also traveled to San Francisco and Denver where she met with women to plan upcoming conferences and strategies for a lesbian presence in the upcoming presidential election process. In September she attended the State Department Conference on the Decade of Women, where she brought up the lesbian issue. There is an important mid-decade conference coming up in Copenhagen where we would hope, but are not likely, to have the lesbian issue introduced.

Lesbian Ambassador

Charlotte Bunch, our lesbian ambassador to many countries, traveled to Bangkok for a conference sponsored by the Asian Center for Women in Development. Fifteen carefully selected women from around the world active in Women in Development or feminist activities attended the conference and contributed to a paper promoting the idea that the Decade Conference should be about feminism as well as women in development. Though Charlotte was not able to discuss lesbianism in the paper, she was able to talk to those other very influential women about lesbianism, and why and how it is considered a critical issue in the United States. The group may get funding to reconvene for a television roundtable discussion, at which Charlotte intends to bring up the topic of lesbianism. Charlotte and Frances agreed that an official place for
continued next column

The NGTF Women's Caucus has been influential in fighting lesbian wars on a number of fronts. We know our work is not getting wide publicity in the consumer press in spite of its historical significance, so we thought we would provide you with inside information directly.

All our work is, of course, on a limited budget. Sometimes, however, when we are lucky, work is funded by groups inviting us to participate. Here's a rundown of what we have been up to since June.

A great deal of time is spent working with national conferences in the women's movement where the gay movement finds its strongest support. But more and more, we are beginning to influence mainline groups of women in government and services not at all associated with the women's movement. And increasingly we are making international connections with lesbian feminists, feminists, and women of influence.

International Women's Year

Frances Doughty, Chair of the NGTF Women's Caucus, attended the International Women's Year Continuation Committee in Madison, Wisconsin, where she introduced a new approach to the lesbian issue that attracted great attention. She held a workshop on "The Use of Homophobia by the New Right and How to Counter It." The workshop made clear in new ways how our issue is crucial to all women. As many of you know, the IWY Continuation Committee consists of 435 women and is charged with carrying out the Plan of Action agreed upon at the National Women's Conference in
continued next column

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Marion R. Frazier



MARCH ON WASHINGTON. Political efforts during the October demonstration included NGTF's Petition the President campaign held among the over 100,000 gay men and lesbians at the Washington Monument and lobbying efforts on the Monday following the march by individuals such as Kerry Woodward and Rashid bin Ahmad who worked with Gay Rights National Lobby. Photos by C. F. Brydon.

lesbians at the mid-decade conference looks dim, but it is important to keep the pressure on. If there is some kind of alternate conference, you can be sure that lesbians, including Women's Caucus members, will be heard.

Bobbi Weinstock represented the Women's Caucus at the recent convention of the National Women's Political Caucus. Bobbi, a member of NWPC, organized a hospitality suite and talked with the NWPC Women's Caucus about the importance of electing open lesbians as delegates to the Democratic and Republican national conventions in 1980.

Music Festival

Several of us went to the Michigan's Women's Music Festival this past summer, considered the largest lesbian gathering in history. Nearly 8000 lesbians were there. Kerry Woodward and I were official Women's Caucus representatives. Bobbi Weinstock and Betsy Hess were also present; they were active at our table educating lesbians about NGTF and they also participated in a workshop. Kerry and I did two workshops. One, in particular, on lesbian feminist politics in the 1980s was such a big hit that it was large enough to be divided into four sections. Kerry and Betsy held another workshop for rural women among whose special concerns was their very little contact with other lesbians.

Lucia Valeska also attended this conference as NGTF co-executive director and made a tremendous impact at the conference by helping women coming from Canada who had immigration problems (see lead article). Many were harassed at the border by U.S. customs officials, asked questions about their sexuality, and some were even turned back. Because of NGTF's involvement in challenging INS policies over the past several years, Lucia was in a perfect position to contact the right people in Washington quickly.
continued next column

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Summer Camp

Kay Whitlock and Frances had some interesting experiences at what they would call "summer camp," that is, a 17-day conference for women's organization leaders at Sarah Lawrence College in New York. Forty-five women were selected for this intensive program in women's history arranged through the Women's Action Alliance. The conference was planned to bring a sense of history into those women's groups' organizational work. Participants were mostly from mainline women's groups — such as the Girls Clubs of America, the League of Women Voters, and the Girl Scouts. Most organizations had only one representative, but we had two. While there was a little resistance by the educators to the "assertive" introduction of lesbian issues and history into the program, Kay and Frances report that practically all the women attending were wearing NGTF women's buttons as a show of support by the time the conference was over.

NOW Convention

In early October, Lucia, Charlotte, Kay, Ginny Vida, Joan Nixon, and I were in Los Angeles for the National Organization for Women convention, where the lesbian issue again played an important role. Ginny, assisted by Linda Liebman, organized and staffed an NGTF photo exhibit and distributed great quantities of NGTF materials. The conference delegates voted to add \$25,000 to the NOW Action Budget to promote lesbian rights. The resolution includes employing a full-time staff person in Washington, D.C., to work on the issue. In a related development, Arlie Scott, an open lesbian who has served as full-time vice-president for Action, and working on the full range of NOW issues, lost her bid to retain that position. There are presently no open lesbian officers in national NOW in staff positions.