

Congressional Closeup by Kathleen Klenetsky

Helms AIDS amendment kindles 'gay' outrage

Senate adoption of an amendment that would prevent government funds from being used to promote homosexual behavior has sent the "gay" lobby into a frenzy.

The amendment, to an FY 1988 appropriations bill for health, human services, labor, and education, was introduced by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), and adopted almost unanimously Oct. 14. The only no votes came from Sen. Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.) and that conservative Democrat, New York's Daniel Patrick Moynihan. On Oct. 20, the House, acting on a motion introduced by Rep. William Dannemeyer (R-Calif.), instructed House conferees on the appropriations bill to agree to the Helms amendment.

The measure is quite modest: It simply prohibits the use of federal money from funding AIDS educational programs and materials that "promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual activities."

What specifically prompted Helms to introduce the amendment was the fact that the federal government had doled out \$674,679 in 1986 and 1987 to the Gay Men's Health Crisis organization to finance so-called "safe sex" materials that were pornographic in the extreme.

GMHC motivated one grant proposal on the grounds that, for many homosexuals, "safe sex has been equated with boring, unsatisfactory sex," and it was therefore necessary to inform them about "meaningful alternatives to high-risk practices." Options listed included, "healthy S&M," "waterplay, urination . . . to release sexual tension," and the use of erotic photos as a "sexual achievement tool."

During House debate on the pro-

posal, Rep. Bob Dornan (R-Calif.) reported that a friend of his, as an experiment, recently contacted the GMHC to request literature instructing teenagers how not to get AIDS. He received a comic book featuring "Ed the Jock" and "Julio the Pump Boy" engaged in a variety of perverted sexual acts.

"I will not sit on the House floor and have respected members get up and say this pornographic comic is the only way we can reach intelligent homosexuals and drug users," said Dornan, after Rep. Bill Green (R-N.Y.), had gotten up to defend the GMHC.

The Senate and House actions set the "gay" lobby on its ear. The pro-"gay" Human Rights Campaign Fund took out full-page newspaper ads denouncing the measure. "Sexually active people—singles, teenagers, and divorcés, married people who are not monogamous—gay and heterosexual—need frank, scientific information" about AIDS prevention, said the ad. "We cannot tolerate right-wing morality lectures in place of lifesaving medical instruction."

Soon after, New York's bachelor mayor, Ed Koch, weighed in with a commentary in the *New York Times*, berating Helms and defending the GMHC's "brilliant reputation in caring for and counseling those with AIDS and in educating others on how to prevent the spread of AIDS. . . . Those the [GMHC] materials reach," he added, "aren't innocents who'll be shocked by such literature. They already practice sex; they want to know how to practice it more safely. The organization tells them and thereby helps save lives."

What makes the uproar so ironic is the fact that, as Democratic presidential candidate LaRouche recently pointed out, citing statements by Bra-

zilian public health official Dr. Ricardo Veronesi, no laboratory proof exists that AIDS is sexually transmitted.

'American Scientists' want congressmen in Moscow

The Federation of American Scientists, which specializes in lobbying against U.S. defense programs, wants more members of Congress to visit the Soviet Union. "Only half of the U.S. Senate and one-third of the House of Representatives" have so far "cared enough to make the effort to travel to the Soviet Union," says the FAS in its booklet, "Congressional Travel to the Soviet Union: Raising the Rate of Exchange." It includes detailed instructions, complete with a form letter, on how constituents can persuade their congressmen and senators that a trip to Mother Russia is just what they need to make their legislative experience complete.

An introduction by FAS director Jeremy Stone states, "American hawks who visit tend to look for signs of strength and danger to America. They see, instead, relative backwardness and an unmistakable fear of war. They come home fearing the Soviets less." The booklet describes a "real life" scenario: A pro-defense senator visits Russia, and is so struck by the myriad World War II memorials, that "his opinions about the Soviet Union as a nation prepared to fight a major war are shaken. He returns . . . having decided that the Soviets may not be seeking confrontation on a massive scale."

The FAS contains one useful bit of information: a list of current members of Congress who have made the trip, among them: Senate Armed Services Chairman Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), his House counterpart, Les Aspin (D-