

November 22, 1971

Volume 2, Number 64

Historic Hearings Held in N.Y.C.

New York, N.Y.—Historic hearings took place here (October 18, 1971) before the City Council with spokesmen for/against the passage of Intro 475, a bill which would outlaw discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations on account of sexual orientation.

The hearings were called to order by City Councilman Saul Sharison who asked each speaker to limit himself/herself to ten minutes.

A list of those supporting the bill was widely circulated, and included some of New York's best known citizens:

Hon. Bella Abzug, M.C., 19th C.D.
Rabbi Charles Agin, Free Synagogue of Flushing
Hon. Herman Badillo, M.C.
Mr. Clive Barnes, Drama Critic, N.Y. Times
Miss Jane Benedict, Director, Met. Council on Housing
Mr. Algernon Black, Leader, Ethical Culture Society
Hon. Albert Blumenthal, Assemblyman, 67th A.D.
Rabbi Balfour Brickner, Director, Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Hon. Carter Burden, Councilman
Hon. Shirley Chisholm, M.C., 12th C.D.
Hon. Eldon Clingan, Minority Leader, City Council
Mr. Dan Collins, Director, New Democratic Coalition
Miss Karen DeCrow, Director, Eastern Region, Nat'l Organization of Women
Mr. John DeLaury, President, Sanitation Workers of America
Miss Brenda Fastow, Women's Nat'l Political Caucus



Photo by Richard C. Wandel

City Councilmen hear testimony on gay rights



The Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton

Dr. Fritz Fluckiger, Psychologist, Adjunct Ass't Professor, Hunter College
Hon. Eleanor Clark French, Commissioner, N.Y. Commission on Human Rights
Hon. Robert Garcia, State Senator
Hon. Sanford Garelick, President, City Council
Mr. Ira Glasser, Director, N.Y. Civil Liberties Union
The Rev. William Glenesk, Spencer Memorial Church
Hon. Roy Goodman, N.Y. State Senator
Mr. Victor Gottbaum, President, Municipal Workers Union
Mr. Richard N. Gottfried, Assemblyman, 65th A.D.
Mr. Stanley Hill, President, Social Service Employees Union
Father Robert Kennedy, Social Action Committee, B'klyn Arch-Diocese, Roman Catholic Church
Hon. Ed Koch, M.C., 17th C.D.
Hon. Jerome Kretschmer, Commissioner of Environmental Protection Administration
Mr. John Lassoe, Episcopal Diocese, New York
Hon. Franz Leichter, N.Y. State Assembly

Hon. John V. Lindsay, Mayor, City of New York
Hon. Bess Meyerson Grant, Commissioner, Department of Consumer Affairs
The Rev. Lewis Maddocks, Executive Director, Council for Christian Social Action, United Church of Christ
Miss Kate Millett, author, Sexual Politics
The Rev. Howard Moody, Judson Memorial Church
Bishop Paul Moore, Bishop Co-adjutor, Episcopal Church, N.Y. City
Mr. Stewart Mott, Philanthropist
The Rev. Richard Neuhaus
Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Chairwoman, N.Y. City Commission of Human Rights
Mr. Paul O'Dwyer
Hon. Fred Othenstein, N.Y. State Senator, 25th S.D.
Hon. Antonio Olivieri, N.Y. State Assemblyman, 66th A.D.
Hon. William Passanante, N.Y. State Assemblyman, 63rd A.D.
Rabbi Nathan Perlman, Temple Emanu-El

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 1

Dr. Wardell Pomeroy
Dr. Heindrick Rutenbeck
Father Herbert Rogers, S.J., Fordham University
Dr. Irwin Rosenfeld, Psychiatrist
Hon. John Scanlon, Economic Development Ass'n
Hon. Leonard Scholnick, Councilman
Dr. Ann Scott, Legislative Vice-President, Nat'l Organization of Women
Hon. Percy Sutton, Borough President of Manhattan
Miss Gloria Steinem, writer, N.Y. Magazine
Dr. George Weinberg, Psychiatrist
Hon. Theodore Weiss, Councilman

The first speaker was Victor Gottbaum, President of the Municipal Workers Union, District Council 37. Mr. Gottbaum informed the assemblymen that he'd consulted with his council and had found overwhelming support for Intro 475. He claimed he believed prejudice was due to ignorance and if not fought would become more acute. Under questioning, Gottbaum stressed that the city should take the initiative to show that "inversion" was not "perversion."

The next speaker was Mr. Katz, City Clerk of the Marriage License Bureau. Mr. Katz expressed concern that Intro 475 might lead to renewed pressure by homosexuals for marriage licenses.

Following Katz the Honorable Antonio Olivieri, New York State Assemblyman, noted that one of his colleagues, an assemblyman from a conservative district in Brooklyn, had found 75% of his constituents in favor of the bill's passage. "Homosexuals are born with rights," stated Olivieri, "and the rights to rights. They don't have them."

The next speaker registered negative opinions. He was Robert Goth, of the Queens Catholic War Veterans, a former naval officer. "My opinions have been formed some time ago," he said. "Fun City doesn't have to be 'sin' city. The security problem of these people has been shown in the elimination of people like Jenkins. The deluge of filth publications is an indication of the trend, a mistake. I believe these people are sick. They should be treated. I deplore this attempt to foist immorality through legislation."

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Chairwoman of the New York City Commission of Human Rights, spoke next: "We cannot wait for the State to take action," she said, "We must have this bill now. The homosexuals, like the blacks, must have legal guarantees to work toward security as their right."

Roy Anderson of the Anti-Homosexual League submitted a thick brochure.

The next speaker was Kate Millett, author of *Sexual Politics*. Ms. Millett urged the Council to pass the bill so that homosexually-inclined people would not have to live lives of dishonesty, merely to survive.

A Roman Catholic priest, Father Herbert Rogers, S.J. of Fordham University, asked the Council to pass the bill, stating that the homosexual person has a right to work.

Dr. Ann Scott of NOW, Legislative Vice-President of the National Organization of Women, spoke, declaring that NOW recognized the lesbian as the doubly oppressed woman and that lesbianism is a feminist issue.

Marc Rubin, GAA activist, spoke as a

high school teacher, explaining that he was both a homosexual and a teacher. He went over his 17-year career as a teacher, explaining that he could not have entered his profession had it been known that he was homosexually-inclined. He stated that he knew of no instances in which homosexual teachers molested their pupils.

Jerome Kretschmer, Commissioner of the Environmental Protection Association, spoke in favor of the bill.

Barbara Love spoke as a lesbian and told how she had been forced to leave her job of 10 years with a Madison Avenue Public Relations Firm in order to live openly as a lesbian. She detailed harassment she had been subjected to in the area of housing, stating that in one instance she and her lover had been evicted only shortly before Christmas, in the bitter cold. Her lover had died only a month later in an automobile accident.

Fred Cherry, longtime anti-homosexual activist and post-card "inuendo crusader," stated that homosexuals were attempting to gain their rights so as to have freedom to molest children. He accused the *New York Times* of being party to the homosexual "conspiracy." The board warned him of libel.

GAA President Jim Owles was called. He was not present, and his speech urging acceptance of the bill was read by Breck Ardrey.

Brenda Fastow of the Women's National Political Caucus spoke of the militant women behind gay rights. "I do not believe in threats," she said, "but this bill, if it fails, will arouse the ire of 53% of the women."

Gay militant Clarence Morgan spoke, testifying as the effects of "exposure" of homosexuals in the Army. One of his friends, he said, had hanged himself, while the other ran into enemy fire in order to kill himself.

Sylvia Spray, a mother, testified as a mother. She said that she was the only parent present, that parenthood was the greatest joy in life, and that it was the parent's duty to lead a child to parenthood. She said that homosexuals would lead children astray. She drew a picture of social disaster if homosexuals were given their rights.

Mr. Timothy Mitchell, head of the Coordinating Council on Education, spoke of his fears that the bill would give full license to sadists and other perverts.

Hal Weiner, lawyer for GAA, spoke as "a lawyer, a citizen and a parent." He called Intro 475 "a small step for homosexuals, a giant step for Homo Sapiens."

Finally, Sidney Abbot spoke. She stressed that while male homosexuals might be more harassed by the penal code and its effects, women were more concerned with social acceptance in such fields as housing and jobs so that the legislation now being considered was most important to them.

At 8 p.m. Mr. Saul Sharison stated that thirty more witnesses were still to be heard and that another hearing date must be scheduled. He stated that the Police and Fire Department Commissioners would be asked to give testimony. During the hearings a great deal of controversy had involved these two departments and the feasibility of hiring homosexuals in their midst.