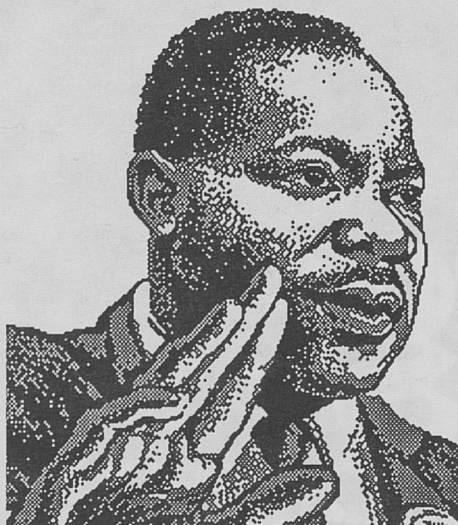


Senate Bill *from page 1*

can be found. The Burlington Free Press ran an editorial (12/3/87) supporting the proposed legislation and Governor Madeleine Kunin has also expressed her support. Groups around the state including Vermont Psychologists Association, Vermont Chapter of the National Organization of Women, and the Vermont Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers are supportive.

This bill extends to all Vermonters, regardless of their sexual orientation, the right to equal treatment in housing, employment, credit, and public accommodations. It will remedy a serious civil rights problem that faces Vermonters every day.



Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday is Jan 15

Senator Sally Conrad Speaks Out

by Eileen

On December 9, 1987, state Senator Sally Conrad spoke to a group of more than thirty people at the Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (UULGC) bi-weekly worship service. Senator Conrad is a co-sponsor of the anti-discrimination bill currently pending before the Senate. She declined, however, to discuss that bill in particular because of the presence in the audience of many more knowledgeable supporters. Instead, she attempted to explain her commitment to gay and lesbian rights.

As many of us have suspected for years, every legislator has a predisposition about every issue, according to Senator Conrad. Her predisposition in support of gays and lesbians stems in particular from one college sorority friend's coming out. The evening was particularly significant because the sorority was celebrating their disbarment from their national organization for accepting a Jewish member. After a long evening of intimate conversation, Conrad's friend confided in her, "I am a lesbian. Are you afraid of me?" Conrad was stunned - not because her friend was a lesbian, but because the friend worried that the revelation would change their relationship. For Conrad, a friendship did not change just because of an individual's sexuality. Nor could she comprehend why the knowledge might cause fear.

That event sparked Conrad's concern

for action. She realized that we all need not only to learn to appreciate each other's humanity, but also to speak and reach out in support. As a favorite quote of Conrad's quips: "there is no such thing as an innocent bystander; if you're a bystander, you aren't innocent". In the wake of this year's March on Washington and Civil Disobedience at the Supreme Court where thousands of lesbians and gays chanted "Silence is Death", Conrad's words not only echo a familiar theme but give hope that gays and straights can work together to end discrimination on the basis of sexuality.

After her talk, Conrad was persuaded to briefly discuss the pending legislation. Although cautioning that over-advocacy turns legislators away, she encouraged everyone to contact his or her local representatives and urge them to support the bills (in addition to the anti-discrimination bill, two bills pertaining to AIDS testing are pending in the Senate). In particular, she urged face-to-face dialogue.

After the service, Senator Conrad was available for questions and conversation. For those of you unfamiliar with Unitarian Universalism, the concept of a "worship service" involving a talk by a senator may seem unusual. It's not. The UULGC services combine music, meditation and camaraderie with thought-provoking speakers (and refreshments afterwards). Please join us some time (see Vermont Resources List). And thanks to Senator Conrad.

Lambda Defense Fund Comes of Age

New York Times

It took a ruling by New York's highest court before a group of homosexuals was permitted to incorporate as the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund Inc. in 1973. Even as recently as 1980, Lambda was, in the words of its executive director, "still a bit too fringe" to be taken seriously by many people outside the homosexual community.

But now Lambda, the nation's largest organization working for the civil rights of homosexual men and women, has achieved a degree of acceptance that Thomas B. Stoddard, the executive director, said was unthinkable before the AIDS epidemic.

How far Lambda has come was evident recently when three prominent law firms, a major corporation and a labor union sponsored a benefit for the organization on the first anniversary of the passage of New York's homosexual rights bill.

About 300 people attended the bene-

fit, which raised \$50,000 for Lambda, and also honored Frederick A. O. Schwarz Jr., who as the city's Corporation Counsel for five years drafted and lobbied for passage of the bill that on April 22, 1986, became local Law 2.

The bill, which was signed by Mayor Koch, prohibits discrimination against homosexuals in employment, housing and public accommodations.

A measure of Lambda's emergence came in the accolades it received. David N. Dinkins, the Manhattan Borough President, said, "I would be hardpressed to think of another organization that has done so much to advance the rights of lesbians and gay men."

Lambda's growth and its acceptance within legal, political and philanthropic circles has been attributed to a variety of factors, including what Norman Dorsen, a professor at the New York University Law School and president of the American Civil

Liberties Union, describes as "the general movement toward egalitarianism at the ground level of this society, and education."

That acceptance was reflected in the sponsorship of the benefit by three law firms: Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom; Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz; and Phillips, Nizer, Benjamin, Krim and Ballon; the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and the United Food & Commercial Workers Union.

More than anything else, Mr. Stoddard said, Lambda's growth must be attributed to AIDS and to the Supreme Court's ruling last summer in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, which affirmed the right of the State of Georgia to prosecute a man who was arrested in his bedroom while engaged in acts of sodomy.

"Our contributions shot up dramatically as a result of *Bowers v. Hardwick*,

(Continued on page 12)