

OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

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1998**

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TIP: Old Hate, New Name

To many people in the Pro Choice struggle or the gay rights movement, Take It To The People may have an eerie familiarity. The group, of which only a handful of people are willing to identify themselves as members, claims to have a great deal of support. But the names of those who do step forward, are ones we may have heard before.

Thomas McCormick is the registering agent with the state for Take it To the People. In his previous incarnation he was a member of The Vermont Right To Life Committee. While on that committee, he was the lawyer for, among other people, a print shop that refused to print Pro Choice material, as well as the 13 people who stormed the Vermont Women's Health Center in 1989, in violation of a restraining order and for some terms of release for previous violations.

One of those arrested

was Dick Trudell of Grande Isle, who has also claimed membership in Take It To The People. Trudell was arrested for numerous infractions, including simple assault on a police officer, and impeding a police officer, violation of the conditions of release on a previous charge of unlawful trespass, as well as three accounts of trespass.

Thomas McCormick was the lawyer in this case, and Trudell's charges were dropped in what appears to have been a plea bargain. Peggy Luhrs, defended herself against a protester, and was charged with assault. According to her, McCormick not only defended the protesters, but was part of the prosecution in her case. Trudell had his charges dropped, Luhrs didn't.

According to one observer who spoke on condition of anonymity, "McCormick is smart and a good lawyer. He's not like Nancy Sheltra and these others."

Some observers note that it has been a national trend among the Operation Rescue and other right-wing extremists who fought against abortion and lost to sit back, lick their wounds and target the GLBT communities.

"They feel humiliated, and now they are looking for a fresh enemy to attack with the same level of fervor. Only this time they have everything they learned from fighting and losing the abortion fight."

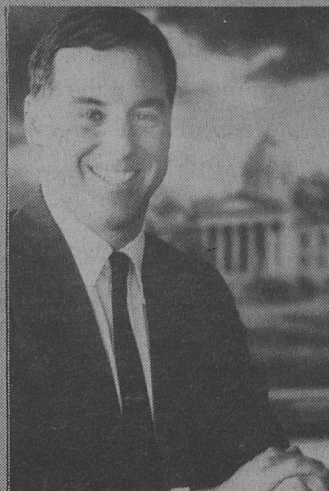
This is most evident from the 100,000 fliers that they distributed in newspapers statewide. The flier is well worded and contains the usual images of flag waving hands and hidden statements that they have found successful. The implications are very clear, that "Gay Rights advocacy groups are trying to force the legalization of 'same sex marriage' by doing an end run around Vermont's citizens."

The flier and the 100,000-plus copies that have been distributed around the state represent the beginning of a propaganda blitz similar to the one seen in Maine over the referendum that repealed that state's gay rights law, and in Hawaii since the beginning of its fight for marriage.

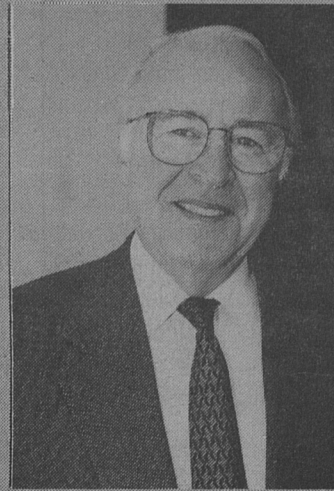
TIP has stated repeatedly that it receives no money from out of state, yet the \$8,000 or

THE GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES AND THE GAY VOTE

BY PAUL OLSEN



Governor Howard Dean - D



Candidate Bernard Rome - R

■ Dean Speaks Out: Part II

Although he has not yet formally announced his campaign for reelection, Vermont Governor Howard Dean, a Democrat, will seek a fourth term as Governor. Dean, 49, has served a Governor since 1991. Prior to succeeding Republican Governor Richard Snelling, who died while in office, Dean had served as Lieutenant Governor since 1987 and represented Burlington in the Vermont House of Representatives from 1983 to 1986. Dean recently made national headlines when he briefly considered, and then rejected, running for President in the year 2000. Dean, a physician, is married to Dr. Judith Steinberg and has two children.

While his record on most social issues is moderate to liberal, Dean characterizes himself as a fiscal conservative. Although he has declined to take a public position on the issue of same gender marriage, Dean has historically sided with the gay and lesbian community on most issues in Montpelier. He is credited with helping pass, and as Governor signed into law, legislation prohibiting discrimina-

DEAN, p11

■ Rome Launches Gubernatorial Bid

Sherburne resident Bernard Rome wants to be Vermont's next Governor. Launched into action primarily by his opposition to the Equal Education Opportunity Act of 1997 (Act 60), Rome is seeking the Republican nomination for Governor and hopes to defeat incumbent Democrat Howard Dean in November.

A native Vermonter, Bernard Rome attended public school in Rutland and received his Bachelor's degree from the University of Vermont in 1956. Rome's successful career in business has included entrepreneurial ventures in computer processing, electronics, and small business. A life-long Republican, Rome describes himself as a moderate and worked for Democrats Ed Koch and Mario Cuomo while living in New York. Rome has been married for 28 years and has two children.

In addition to his opposition to Act 60, Rome's campaign is based largely on traditional GOP themes. Calls for smaller government and increased local control are frequently cited. In his campaign announce-

ROME, p11

Queer Studies Remains a Progressive Thang

BY MICHAEL C. ALBERO

Shhhhh! Quiet. Can you hear it? Inside a college classroom, a group of students is actually discussing the history of homosexuality. And the professor is in the room! What would once have been unthinkable is now actually happening at several local institutions. A little late, but better than never. Indeed, queer history is finally making its way out of the bars and into the minds of eager students at Vermont's more "progressive" colleges.

Located in the southern part of the state, Marlboro College is relatively isolated behind Vermont wilderness, but the birth of Queer Studies has occurred with a recent course entitled "Sexualities and Identities: A Seminar." Facilitated by Vivian Blaxwell, a professor of Asian Studies, the course is taught regularly every two years, but the subject matter often evolves from student interests. "Much of the class looks at queerness and transgenderism because of the current political and cultural issues surrounding sexuality," states Blaxwell. A variety of texts are used in this study, including Kate Bornstein's Gender Outlaw and Sue Ellen Case's Domain Matrix. Yet, despite the success of this course, it is Blaxwell's belief "that classes and research about queer sexualities brings both faculty and students under suspicion. I am often the butt of slightly ribald jokes by my colleagues and students for my continuing interest in teaching and talking about sexuality."

Melissa Ragona, a Cultural Studies professor at Goddard College, can relate to Blaxwell's plight. "They (professors and students) think that you're obsessed with sex.... Sex with American society is still very taboo.... (Queer Studies) pushes our theory of difference beyond dichotomous thinking." Ragona has had a difficult time being taken seriously, especially last semester when she initiated a panel discussion concerning queer theory. Several heterosexual colleagues were genuinely too embarrassed to assist in the program. "Only after the discussion did the community finally realize that we had something important to say..."

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