

JULY 1983

ALICE REPORTS

Official Publication of the Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club

FROM THE PRESIDENT

ANTI-GAY PIECE STIRS WRATH

BY RANDY STALLINGS

I feel that it is vital to clarify a few misconceptions arising out of the scandalously homophobic article about AIDS in the July issue of California Magazine. If you have not read it, you should, because ALICE is accused of some terrible things. But try to borrow a copy already in circulation. It seems a shame to pay for such garbage.

Basically, the article claims that the gay community is "denying" this terrible disease. It claims that virtually all gay leadership (except the Harvey Milk Club) has been part of a huge conspiracy to suppress information about AIDS because we are fearful of a backlash and the decline of gay business. Pat Norman and I were specifically mentioned as major culprits. Catherine Cusic vicious-

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ALICE'S LOSS IS CRANSTON'S GAIN

BY SAL ROSSELLI

ALICE REPORTS congratulates Vice President Jo Kuney who began working as Senator Alan Cranston's Northern California Field Representative on July 1. Jo, who has been a member of ALICE's Executive Board for almost four years will be the highest ranking openly lesbian staff person in the U.S. Senate.

It should be noted that Jo was not hired as a liaison to the lesbian/gay community. Her credentials and qualifications gained her a position responsible for the needs of all Northern California residents.

Senator Cranston's gain is ALICE's loss however; Jo had to resign as ALICE'S Vice President. At the June meeting two members of ALICE'S Executive

Board were nominated to complete Jo's term. The ALICE membership is fortunate to have two very qualified, dedicated candidates to choose from - Diane Christensen and Margaret Frost.

Statements from the two ALICE leaders appear on page two. Nominations for the post remain open. The vote will be taken at the July 11 meeting.

GENERAL MEETING

JULY 11 - 7:30 p.m.

- VOTE FOR ALICE VICE PRESIDENT
- PANEL DISCUSSION:
SEXISM IN THE GAY COMMUNITY
- DEBATE AND VOTE ON BYLAWS CHANGES

SWEDISH-AMERICAN HALL, 2174 MARKET

AIDS PIECE

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ly attacked us using such words as "homicidal" and "criminally negligent." Randy Shilts, another Milk lieutenant, made the claim that I had attempted to get him to suppress the medical study by Andrew Moss and Michael Gorman in his capacity as a Chronicle reporter. He claims that I was more worried about Castro businesses than the epidemic. He is lying.

Actually Moss and Gorman did not release the story to the press because they wanted to publish it in Lancet, a British medical journal so it could receive the scientific scrutiny it deserved. When I called Shilts after the study was leaked to him, I urged him to be careful not to leave the impression with his readers that because the study indicated a high increase of AIDS in the Castro, it was dangerous to even enter the neighborhood. I was worried and currently am very alarmed about the level of anti-gay hysteria surrounding this crisis. I never told him to suppress anything. As a result of Shilts' eagerness to get a scoop and "uncover" a scandal, as well as to embarrass ALICE, the study was never published and never discussed by the medical community. So just who is suppressing information?

Of course, punishing ALICE (probably because of our opposition to the Mayor's recall) was only one motivation behind the article. The three Milk operatives, Bill Kraus, Catherine Cusic and Randy Shilts, as well as the authors of the piece also lashed out at the Mayor (of course), the AIDS/KS foundation (because they let ALICE help them secure some City money) and Pat Norman (because they want to destroy this Black lesbian who is running for supervisor the same time as their leader, Harry Britt).

The article also characterized people who have AIDS as sexually reckless and irresponsible. It implies that, in the words of Harry Britt, we are still "humping like bunnies" and we simply must use some self-control. Once again, we are being told it is O.K. to be gay, just do not be sexual. Unfortunately, this time some gay people are joining in the chorus. Never mind that people with AIDS are being maligned at a most vulnerable time in their lives. Never mind that the very people concerned about the crisis, the AIDS/KS Foundation and the Department of Public Health, are discredited. And never mind the terrible homophobic backlash that this article has already begun to provoke.

The never-ending attempts of the Milk Club to achieve total hegemony and the re-election of their leader, Harry Britt, are their only considerations. It is a disgusting display of partisan politics that exploits the greatest tragedy in our community. The people responsible should be very ashamed.

ALICE will continue to support accurate and informative materials on AIDS being distributed throughout the community. ALICE will continue to battle against the dangerous hysteria around this health crisis that puts us all in jeopardy, especially our brothers who have AIDS. ALICE will continue to oppose the closure of bathhouses, bars, and other gay businesses.

Most importantly, ALICE will never succumb to internal homophobia, self-guilt, anti-sexuality or the suppression of freedom of choice between consenting people.