

## National News

## Clinton sends 'warm greetings'

The White House last week sent a message from President Clinton to Gay pride day celebrations throughout the country expressing the president's support for Gay civil rights.

"Warm greetings to all those participating in the 1997 Gay and Lesbian Pride Celebration," Clinton said in his message.

"Throughout American history, we have overcome tremendous challenges by drawing strength from our great diversity," he said. "We must never believe that our diversity is a weakness."

The president reiterated his support for Gay civil rights legislation pending in Congress and said his administration is waging an "all-out campaign against hate crimes in America — crimes that are



Bill Clinton: "We must never believe that our diversity is a weakness."

by Clint Steib

often viciously directed at Gay men and Lesbians." He said he is also committed to appointing openly Gay people to his administration.

"America's continued success will depend on our ability to understand, appreciate, and care for one another," he said. "We're not there yet, and that is why our efforts to end discrimination against Lesbians and Gay men are so important. Like each of you, I remain dedicated to ending discrimination and preserving the civil rights of every citizen in our society."

Richard Socarides, special assistant to the president and the White House liaison to the Gay community, said the White House mailed or faxed Clinton's message to a list of Gay pride committees. Socarides said the White House also sent copies of the message to Gay newspapers throughout the country.

Socarides said that since 1995, the White House has sent similar messages to individual Gay pride celebrations in response to requests from organizers. He said this year's message marks the first time the president has sent a message to pride celebrations throughout the country.

— Lou Chibbaro Jr.

## Clinton official queried on 'job to recruit homosexuals'

Gay staffer Bob Hattoy called before Whitewater team

by Lou Chibbaro Jr.

Bob Hattoy, an openly Gay Clinton administration official, confirmed this week that he was questioned in April by assistants to Whitewater special prosecutor Kenneth Starr and that they asked him about his "job to recruit homosexuals" for the White House staff.

Hattoy told the *Washington Blade* that two assistant Whitewater prosecutors and an FBI agent summoned him to an interview after learning he had helped find an Interior Department job for the wife of Webster Hubbell. Webster Hubbell, a longtime friend of President Clinton and the former law partner of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, has been a key target in the ongoing Whitewater probe.

Supporters of the president, including former presidential adviser George Stephanopoulos, said the special prosecutor's decision to question Hattoy about the hiring of Gay people in the Clinton administration is an example of how the special prosecutor's office appears to be "out of control" in its probe of Whitewater matters. Stephanopoulos mentioned the Hattoy questioning last Sunday on the ABC News program *This Week*.

News about the questioning of Hattoy surfaced in the press less than a week after reports surfaced that Whitewater prosecutors had also questioned Arkansas State troopers about Clinton's personal life and allegations that he had extramarital affairs.

According to Hattoy, the investigators who questioned him in April suddenly changed the subject from the Hubbells to Hattoy's role, early in Clinton's first term, as an assistant in the White House personnel office.

"They said, 'We understand it was part of your job to recruit homosexuals at the White House and in the government,'" recalled Hattoy. "They wanted to know if I was hiring Gays."

Hattoy said he was stunned at the line of questioning, saying it struck him as reminiscent of the 1950s, when the FBI and other government agencies "hunted down" Gay people in the government. Hattoy said he teased the questioners, including the FBI agent, that "we hired Gays everywhere, including at the FBI. I



by Clint Steib

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told them I thought I saw a few right here in this building."

Deborah Gershman, press spokesperson for Starr's office in Little Rock, Ark., known officially as the Whitewater Independent Counsel's office, said the office never comments about interviews with witnesses.

"It's a matter of privacy rights for those witnesses," she said.

Spokespersons for the FBI and the Justice Department also declined comment. The White House press office did not return a call by *Blade* deadline.

Hattoy, one of the Clinton administration's most outspoken advocates for Gay civil rights and the government's fight against AIDS, has served since 1994 as

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## Clinton aide queried on 'recruiting homosexuals'

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the Interior Department's liaison to the White House. He told the *Blade* that he became friends with Webster Hubbell's wife, Suzanna Hubbell, in 1992 when the two worked together on the Clinton presidential campaign.

Hattoy said he played a role in helping Suzanna Hubble find a job as a special assistant to the Interior Department's Office of External Affairs after her husband lost his own job as assistant U.S. Attorney General.

Webster Hubbell resigned from his Justice Department post in April 1994 when reports surfaced that he was entangled in a financial dispute associated

with the Little Rock-based Rose Law Firm, where he worked as a partner with Hillary Clinton up until 1992. Less than a year after his resignation from the Justice Department, Hubbell pleaded guilty to fraud and tax evasion charges in connection with allegations that he bilked the Rose Law Firm and several of his former law clients out of nearly \$500,000.

In an interview with the *Blade* in May, Hattoy said he decided to help Suzanna Hubbell find a job because he considers her a friend who was in need at a time when her husband faced imprisonment and huge legal expenses. Hattoy said that Whitewater prosecutors wanted to know

if his efforts to find Suzanna Hubbell a job was part of an effort by the Clintons and their friends to provide financial benefits to Webster Hubbell and his family in order to discourage Webster Hubbell from disclosing information that could link the president to Whitewater related wrongdoing.

According to press reports, Starr is looking into whether Webster Hubbell has been withholding information that could link the Clintons to the Arkansas land scandal that has come to be known as Whitewater through his dealings with Hillary Clinton and the Rose Law Firm.

Earlier this year, news surfaced that during the eight-month period between

the time Webster Hubbell resigned from the Justice Department and pleaded guilty to fraud and tax evasion, a group of financial backers of the Clinton presidential campaign paid Hubbell large fees for consulting work. Starr's office reportedly is questioning whether these fees, which came to nearly \$550,000, were for services rendered or were a form of "hush money."

*The Los Angeles Times* reported that, in May 1994, shortly after Hubbell left the Justice Department, then presidential assistant Mickey Kantor arranged to hire Hubbell's son, W. Walter Hubbell, for a job at the U.S. trade representative's office. ▼