

## World News

# NAMBLA hints at fight over ousting proposal

by Lou Chibbaro Jr.

The North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) issued a defiant statement this week condemning leaders of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) for their proposal to expel NAMBLA from ILGA's membership rolls.

The NAMBLA statement, issued Nov. 15, gives no formal answer to a separate request by ILGA's six-member secretariat that NAMBLA withdraw its membership voluntarily. But the statement hints that NAMBLA will fight efforts to expel the controversial pedophile group at ILGA's Annual World Conference, scheduled to be held in New York City in June.

Bill Andriette, a NAMBLA spokesperson, said a decision on ILGA's request for NAMBLA to withdraw its membership could come on Dec. 11, when NAMBLA's steering committee convenes in a telephone conference.

"My sense is that because of the way ILGA has handled this, it would be impossible for us to resign," Andriette said in a telephone interview.

NAMBLA's action this week appears to dash hopes by ILGA leaders that NAMBLA would spare the international Gay group a messy fight at its June conference. NAMBLA's action also raises the possibility that the United Nations might revoke ILGA's recently obtained status as a consultative member of the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

An official with the U.S. Mission to the U.N. told the U.N.'s General Assembly last month that the U.S. government would push for ILGA's ouster from ECOSOC if ILGA did not take immediate steps to remove NAMBLA and other pedophile groups from its membership rolls.

ILGA's acceptance into ECOSOC under the category of a non-governmental organization (NGO) has been hailed by Gay leaders as a major breakthrough for Gay civil rights.

ILGA was founded in 1978 as an international federation of Gay civil rights organizations. According to ILGA officials, ILGA currently consists of 350 organizations from 50 countries in virtually every continent.

NAMBLA's membership in ILGA surfaced as a public controversy in September when the anti-Gay newsletter, *The Lambda Report*, published an article disclosing that the United Nations — with the approval of the U.S. government — had approved ILGA's consultative status in ECOSOC. *The Lambda Report* noted that NAMBLA was a member of ILGA and asserted that the U.S. and the U.N., by supporting ILGA, had unwittingly backed a group with "pedophile ties."

Hans Hjerpekjøn, ILGA's co-secretary general, told the ILGA secretariat meeting in New York that many of ILGA's member organizations had urged ILGA to expel NAMBLA and the Dutch pedophile group Vereniging Martijn long before the current controversy erupted last month. Hjerpekjøn predicted ILGA's world con-

ference, despite the requirement, set by ILGA's constitution, that 80 percent of the voting members attending the conference must approve the expulsions.

In a statement released last week, after the New York meeting, the ILGA secretariat said ILGA "condemns pedophilia" and that ILGA "objects to the political aims of NAMBLA."

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## A vote to urge inclusion of transgenders

The International Lesbian and Gay Association's (ILGA) secretariat voted unanimously at its Nov. 13 meeting in New York City to urge ILGA's Annual World Conference to add the category of equal rights for "transgender persons" to the platform of the 1994 Stonewall 25 March on the United Nations.

The ILGA secretariat's decision to seek the inclusion of equal rights for transgender people in the march platform came at the request of Jeffrey Pendleton, who heads the D.C. group Drags Reunited. Pendleton, a member of the Mid Atlantic organizing committee for the Stonewall 25 march, told ILGA officials that the Mid Atlantic committee and "many" other Gay activists from the U.S. and abroad support the inclusion of transgender persons in the platform.

In a statement he read before the meeting, Pendleton said 13 drag queens and "other effeminent Gay men" were among those who rebelled against a New York City police raid on the Stonewall bar in June 1969. Thus it was "transgender people," Pendleton said, who played a leading role in the historic event 25 years ago in June.

ILGA officials characterized the action by the secretariat to support Pendleton's proposal as a "recommendation." They said ILGA's world conference, scheduled to convene one week after the Stonewall 25 March, is the only body authorized under ILGA's constitution to formally adopt the proposal.

The current Stonewall 25 platform was adopted by ILGA's 1993 world conference, held last summer in Barcelona, Spain. Stonewall 25 organizer Steve Ault, who attended the ILGA secretariat meeting two weeks ago, said some of ILGA's member groups in Europe and Latin American have expressed opposition to adding a transgender "plank" to the march platform because it would create confusion between the concept of sexual orientation and gender role identity.

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In its Nov. 15 statement, NAMBLA called ILGA's action "a craven and dishonest attempt to satisfy demands by the U.S. Mission to the U.N."

According to NAMBLA, ILGA's current position on NAMBLA contradicts the positions ILGA adopted on pedophilia over the past decade. Citing resolutions adopted by ILGA's world conferences in 1985, 1986, and 1988, the NAMBLA statement asserts that ILGA is on record supporting many of the goals and objectives of NAMBLA. For example, the NAMBLA statement quotes ILGA's 1985 resolution as saying ILGA supports the repeal of age of consent laws if there is "adequate protection for youth from being sexually abused without the age of consent law."

The anti-Gay *Lambda Report* cited these same resolutions as reasons why the U.S. government should push for ILGA's ouster from the U.N., regardless of whether ILGA expels NAMBLA.

But ILGA Co-Secretary General Hjerpekjøn has said the ILGA resolutions cited by NAMBLA were adopted before a large number of new organizations joined ILGA. Most of the newer organ-

izations oppose NAMBLA and its political views. Hjerpekjøn also noted that a 1990 resolution adopted by ILGA's world conference — which addresses children's rights and exploitation of children — takes precedent over all other resolutions on the subject.

The 1990 resolution condemns "power imbalances" created in sexual relationships between adults and minors. The resolution asserts that "every child has the right to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography."

"We share the anger of all those damaged by such exploitation and offer our support," the resolution states.

More than two dozen Gay organizations in the U.S., Europe, and Latin American have since issued statements urging ILGA to expel NAMBLA and Vereniging Martijn, according to ILGA officials.

NAMBLA's statement this week called ILGA's secretariat "one small project of ILGA." The NAMBLA statement quoted a Gay organization in Germany, Bundesverband Homosexualität, as predicting the effort by ILGA's secretariat to oust NAMBLA will fail. ▼