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THE GAY WEEKLY OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL

U.N. boots Gay group

by Lou Chibbaro Jr.

A United Nations agency suspended the International Gay and Lesbian Association (ILGA) last week after the U.S. government told U.N. officials that at least one group that advocates "pedophilia" remains on ILGA's membership rolls.

The U.N. agency, the influential Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), suspended ILGA from its status as a consultative roster member on Friday, Sept. 16, at a special meeting requested by the U.S. mission to the U.N.

The suspension came less than four months after ILGA's annual world conference voted to expel the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) and two other pedophile groups from ILGA. Those expulsions followed threats by the U.S. to seek ILGA's removal from the U.N. unless ILGA severed all ties with pedophile

groups.

ILGA's suspension also came exactly two weeks before an Oct. 1 deadline set by Congress for President Clinton to certify whether any U.N. agency or group "promotes, condones, or seeks the legalization of pedophilia." The Congressional mandate, which Congress passed in January at the request of Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), calls for withholding \$118.8 million in U.S. funds earmarked for the U.N. each year if pedophile groups, or groups whose affiliates or subsidiary members advocate pedo-

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philia, are found to be members of U.N. agencies.

Victor Marrero, the U.S. representative to ECOSOC, told the Sept. 16 ECOSOC meeting that he sought ILGA's suspension because the U.S. discovered another pedophile group among ILGA's members — a group called VSG of Munich, Germany. He said that, after he confronted ILGA members about the German group earlier this month, ILGA officials conceded that they did not have the resources to investigate every ILGA member and could not give absolute assurances on whether or not other pedophile groups remain in ILGA.

In a statement to the ECOSOC meeting, Marrero urged ECOSOC to invite ILGA to apply for reinstatement when ILGA can "convincingly assure members of [ECOSOC] that neither its members or subsidiaries, nor ILGA itself, promotes, condones, or seeks the legalization of pedophilia."

"The responsibility lies with ILGA," Marrero said, "not with the United States or any other ECOSOC member."

The flap over ILGA's ties to pedophile groups surfaced last year when a fundamentalist religious group in the U.S. began publicizing NAMBLA's membership in ILGA. The publicity led to demands by members of Congress that the U.S. forced the U.N. to expel ILGA.

ILGA officials said they never supported NAMBLA's ideas and insisted ILGA was on record opposing pedophilia and any form of exploitation of children.

At the time it expelled NAMBLA and two other pedophile groups in New York City in June, ILGA's top officials said they were unaware of any other pedophile groups among ILGA's more than 150 member organizations. But a spokesperson for NAMBLA insisted there were "many" remaining ILGA member groups that either directly, or indirectly through subsidiary groups, espoused pro-pedophilia positions nearly identical to those of NAMBLA.

The anonymous fax

Julie Dorf, director of ILGA's operations in the U.S., said an official from the U.S. Mission to the U.N. told ILGA members two weeks ago that the U.S. was alerted to the possibility that other pedophile groups remained within ILGA by way of an anonymous letter faxed to the U.S. Mission. Dorf said the U.S. Mission staff told her the faxed letter carried a telephone fax number with a Boston area code. Dorf, noting that all of NAMBLA's press releases are faxed from NAMBLA's Boston office, said she and other ILGA members believe it was NAMBLA that set in motion the ILGA suspension out of "spite."

Bill Andriette, a NAMBLA spokesperson who works out of Boston, denied that NAMBLA sent the anonymous letter to the U.S. Mission. But Andriette did acknowledge that NAMBLA has sent the U.S. Mission, along with major U.S. news media outlets, press releases asserting that "many" current ILGA members support NAMBLA's positions on "intergenerational sex."

"These groups are there for anyone to



by Kristi K. Gasaway

"Had we known that VSG was a pedophile group," said Julie Dorf, "we would have expelled them in June."

see," he said. "All you have to do is look for them and you'll find them."

Dorf said ILGA considers the U.S. move to suspend ILGA "outrageous" because the U.S. Mission did not give ILGA sufficient time to take action to expel VSG or other pedophile groups. Now, Dorf said, ILGA's secretariat, or board of directors, is deliberating how to respond to the suspension.

NAMBLA's Andriette said he is urging ILGA to relinquish its role as the Gay community's representative to the U.N. to another international Gay group. Others familiar with ILGA, who otherwise disagree with NAMBLA, have said ILGA's apparent inability to control the positions of its member groups may mean that ILGA is not the best organization to serve in the U.N.

Some have suggested that the San Francisco-based International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, which is headed by Dorf, should replace ILGA at the Gay community's U.N. representative.

ILGA became the first Gay organization to be admitted as a U.N. non-governmental organization in July 1993. Gay activists hailed its status as a consultative member of ECOSOC, saying ILGA would be in a position to lobby the U.N. to oppose anti-Gay persecution throughout the world.

Although U.S. officials did not specifically mention the Helms measure at last week's ECOSOC meeting, ILGA officials said representatives of other nations told them the ECOSOC suspension was at least partially due to the threat of the loss of U.S. funds.

Frank blasts White House

The U.S. action calling for ILGA's suspension drew sharp criticism from openly Gay Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), who, in the past, criticized ILGA for not expelling NAMBLA much sooner.

Frank said the White House and State Department should have worked with ILGA and its supporters on Capitol Hill to allow ILGA to take steps to expel other

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