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A Gay Scare

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Repository Citation

The Maine Campus, "A Gay Scare" (1979). *Social Justice: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion*. 386.
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Editorial

A Gay Scare

The "Red Scare" of the fifties, when Communists were supposedly infiltrating every facet of life in the U.S., has been replaced by the "Gay Scare" of the seventies. And the ones who perpetuate the "Gay Scare" are as close-minded, misinformed and scared as the late Senator Joseph McCarthy was when he vigorously campaigned against the Communist ghosts.

On the eve of the sixth annual gay symposium in Portland, which is expected to attract about 300 people, state representative Stanley E. "Tuffy" Laffin (R-Westbrook) has introduced a bill to prohibit the use of state money for public advocacy of homosexual practices.

Laffin is especially concerned with the use of state facilities, such as UMO, for gay meeting places.

The bill he has introduced though is so broad in its scope that, if passed, it could be a crime to even discuss homosexuality. It would make criminals of people trying to disseminate information to an ignorant public about a subject which, sooner or later, will affect us all.

Laffin, when addressing the Maine House of Representatives on Wednesday, said he would refrain from using his usual

tough language when trying to drum up support for his bill. He then proceeded to call gay people "pitiful...the lowest form of life...and the scum of the earth." He was supported in his effort by the Rev. George Atkinson of Newcastle who said homosexuals were "everywhere, spreading their perversion to the youth of Maine."

Laffin and Atkinson confuse homosexual love with child molestation, rape, (two crimes which statistics show are perpetrated mostly by heterosexuals) and other sex crimes. They would have homosexuality remain a misunderstood phenomenon of nature about which information could only be found on bathroom walls and in dirty jokes.

They seem to think homosexuality is a spreading disease. In truth, there are probably no more homosexuals now than there has ever been; it only seems that way because there are more people willing to admit their sexual preference rather than live in fear of being discovered.

The legislature has the power to make homosexuality a crime but is completely powerless to put an end to homosexuality. It will not go away as easy as the bottle bill got rid of the trash on our highways.