

Gay Legal Rights

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to overturn sodomy cases solely on the basis of the “vagueness” of sodomy laws.

The decision came at the same time that the court refused to overturn two convictions under a Florida sodomy law even though the Florida Supreme Court later ruled the law “unconstitutionally vague”.

The court ruled that the “underlying principle” of the law was clearly understood, and that there was nothing vague about the law’s reference to “the abominable and detestible crime against nature”.

ANN ARBOR, MICH. — In July 1972, an ordinance, passed in Ann Arbor, ended any legal discrimination in housing, employment and public accomodation on the basis of marital status, educational status (i.e. student — non-student) or sexual preference. At the time this was the first and broadest such ordinance in the nation.

The University of Michigan, however, claims exemption from city ordinances as it is a state university. The Gay Advocates, a campus group who were instrumental in the passing of the city ordinance are now busy on campus. Asking an end to discrimination against the homosexual population of the campus seems to be a bit more difficult. It is rumored that the Regents of the University regard the proposal to change the by-laws more of a threat than the black student strike of 1970, which shut down the campus!

SAN FRANCISCO — U.S. District Court Judge Alphonso Zirpoli has set somewhat of a legal prece-

dent as far as gay rights are concerned. On Oct. 31 he ruled legal a class suit by a gay person for equal employment by the Federal Government. This was the first time homosexuals had been recognized as a class with the right to equal employment opportunities. A gay Agriculture Department employee and San Francisco’s Society for Individual Rights (SIR) sued for a ruling that the government could not fire its employees on the basis of their sexuality. The judge upheld their right to sue as a class.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Washington, D.C. city council on Nov. 6 gave final approval to a bill which will prohibit discrimination because of “sexual orientation” by private employers and the District government in jobs, housing and public accomodations. The Federal Government is not affected by this and continues its anti-gay policies nation-wide.

CHICAGO — A mail campaign to protect gays from job and housing discrimination and from arrest for cross-dressing has been launched here by Illinois Gays for Legislative Action.

Letters are being directed to Chicago city councilmen who are considering ordinances that would repeal the law against dressing in drag and also make it illegal to discriminate against lesbians and gay men.

A meeting on the proposed ordinances drew 23 gay professional persons who have been fired or denied housing, and members of the clergy who urged passage of the ordinances.