North Appearance Draws Protests
Area Activist Groups Demonstrate

By JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Retired Lt. Col. Oliver North brought his financial appeal to middle Tennessee last week in an effort to shore up support for his upcoming legal battles only to find almost 100 Nashvillians protesting his appearance here.

Sponsored by the Nashville chapter of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), Central American Solidarity Association (LaCASA) and the Nashville Youth Network (NYN), the protest outside the Hyatt Regency<doublebreak>

Eleven men last Friday were given suspended sentences and placed on probation after pleading guilty to charges leveled after thousands of people were "ready to hail as a hero a man who went far beyond his duties as a public servant."

Thousands of people were killed because of the aid directed to the Contras in Nicaragua," TeSelle charged. "That money would have been better spent to deal with human rights abuses." Of misplaced priorities."

The 100 activists decrying North's involvement in the Iran-Contra scandal and his subsequent cross-country fund raising tour included a wide cross section of the city's population. From the AIDS activists of ACT UP to the youthful politics of NYN, the face of Nashville activism was a difficult one to describe.

Victoria Webb, who described herself as being "peripherally involved" with LaCASA, said she came primarily "as a private citizen." "Oliver North and what he has done represents everything that is bad in the U.S. government," Webb said. "I'm saddened anyone would support what he did."

Webb contended that the protestors represented the opinion of the majority of Americans with regard to the Iran-Contra scandal. "It is against the majority sentiment in this country to illegally invade and arm a small group of rebels who operate outside the politically popular government in Nicaragua," she said.

Webb said North represents "the worst of misplaced priorities."

Bush Visits Murfreesboro
Tennessee War Heats Up

By JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Tennessee's emergence as a key battleground in this fall's presidential sweepstakes was made even more apparent with the Monday afternoon appearance in Murfreesboro by Republican hopeful George Bush.

The Vice President's visit to the Middle Tennessee State University campus came just ten days after an appearance by the Democratic standard-bearer, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis, at the Wilson County Fair in nearby Lebanon.

Bush seized the opportunity of the MTSU visit to deride Dukakis' stands on defense, capital punishment, taxes and drugs.

Venturing into the Democratic heartland of middle Tennessee, Bush was greeted by a number of hecklers brandishing campaign buttons and signs."
...Bush in Tennessee

continued from page 1

signs for the Democratic ticket of Dukakis and Texas Senator Lloyd Bentsen.

One person carried a sign which read "Bush-Noriega in '88 A Crack Team," a reference to charges that Bush should have been aware that Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega was trafficking in illegal drugs.

"It is our administration that indicted Gen. Noriega and is trying to bring him to justice," Bush told the crowd.

The crowd, estimated at 2,500, consisted primarily of students at the state's third largest university. That group contrasted with the more than 5,000 people who gathered at the Wilson County fairgrounds to hear Dukakis.

"It was a huge success for MTSU. We got some wonderful coverage for the University," said Dorothy Harrison, MTSU director of public relations. "The Bush campaign people couldn't have been more pleased with the way things went."

The school's next foray into the political arena could be Sunday, Sept. 11, according to Harrison. Incumbent Democratic U.S. Senator Jim Sasser and his Republican opponent, Bill Anderson, have been invited to the Murfreesboro campus for a debate on issues in their race. At press time, Sasser had accepted the invitation and Anderson was attempting to work the debate into his campaign schedule.

Bush's first stop on the MTSU campus was the ROTC headquarters, where he reviewed the cadets performing calisthenics and rappelling down the side of the building.

From that photo opportunity, designed to present the Vice President in the most patriotic of venues, Bush travelled the short distance to the historic Kirksey Old Main Building for his speech.

Former Senator Howard Baker, in his introduction of Bush, called the Vice President "my friend," recalling that the two both entered Congress in 1966 when "it was a lonely time for Republicans in the South."

Bush, taking aim at the Democrats, said, "This is no time to retreat to the policies that failed this country so miserably in the past."

Alluding to President Jimmy Carter's past experience as governor of Georgia, Bush warned the MTSU crowd to beware of "moderate-talking liberal governors making vague promises."

Bush's address was primarily a restatement of his acceptance speech at last month's Republican National Convention in New Orleans, including his reiteration of a promise not to raise taxes and the charge that the election of a Democratic administration would ensure higher taxes.

Immediately following the speech, Bush was whisked away to Nashville via a heavily-guarded motorcade for two fundraisers at the Belle Meade homes of David K. Wilson and Don Sundquist, Memphis Mayor Dick Hackett and Bush's Tennessee campaign chair Jon Thomas.

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...anti-North protests

continued from page 1

kind of warmonger," adding that "the only real heroes are peace makers."

Attorney Joe Prochaska said he was protest­
ing North's appearance "because I believe in the constitution."

"The United States is a nation of laws. We are governed by laws, rather than men," Prochaska said. "I'm here because I believe in the rules of the law."

A self-proclaimed political activist since childhood, Prochaska said he had talked earlier in the day with "a lot of friends who realize North broke the law, lied to Congress and subverted the constitution."

But while the anti-North protestors were the most vocal and most visible, a few North sup­porters stationed themselves outside the Hyatt Regency to watch the demonstration.

Two young men, who refused to give their names, referred to the demonstrators as "assholes who probably don't even work."

Joe Marohl
Staff Writer
Dare

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"We pay taxes so they can eat and have

clothes to wear," one said. "I bet they're all

Democrats."

The two young men claimed the "great

percentage of the people inside the hotel are

Republicans, including some of the wealthiest

people in Nashville - the ones who really run

this city."

Among those wealthy Nashvillians to which the young men referred was former U.S.

Ambassador to Denmark Guilford Dudley. A reception for North held at Dudley's Belle

Meade mansion attracted people willing to pay $400 for a chance to meet North and have their

pictures made with him.

Some 20 protestors demonstrated outside

the gates to the Dudley estate without incident.

"It went very well," TeSeile said. "We really

appreciate the broad support we've gotten

from people who are involved with so many

other concerns. There are a number of very

motivated individuals in this city." **
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Views

Adults, Children and Sex

The fallout from last winter's teen prostitution sting continues as eleven men are sentenced for their roles in the operation. Once again, headlines and newscasts grind away uncomfortably about the men who have tried to buy sex from minors - boys.

What does this mean to the community? First, it's important to state most emphatically that very few would be willing to advocate exploitative sexual relationships, and even fewer those between children and adults. And that is not our purpose here.

The intimacy of sexual relations should take place in the context of free personal choice, without coercion and without exploitation.

While we abhor the intrusion of the state into private, consensual adult relationships, we do not think that sex between children and adults is a good idea - even if the children willingly agree.

Why?

First, it's difficult to imagine how the lopsided power of the participants can be evened out when one of them is a child. We're not talking about a 17-year-old dating a 19-year-old. We're talking about a sexual relationship between adults and children, the kind of relationship in which one partner so much more less mature than the other or others as to preclude the kind of rational choice that is true consent.

Second, because there is such disparity of power between the participants, there is also invariably some kind of coercion, no matter how subtle. Whether it is as obvious as the use of force or the threat of harm to the child or its family, or as seemingly innocuous as the promise of gifts or only of affection and human warmth, the superior ability of the adult to persuade the child and to encourage its participation makes the granting of true consent almost impossible.

Of course, there are exceptions and borderline cases. Almost everyone has heard some story about child sirens seducing adults. But those are exceptions, and the existence of exceptions implies the concurrent existence of rules.

As to our community, the sting operation has had some bad effects. It has reinforced the age-old myth that homosexual people, especially men, prey upon the young and the innocent - that we "recruit" children into our ranks - and serves as fodder for the radical right's campaign to further toughen laws which criminalize our expressions of love.

More than that, it has damaged our view of ourselves, especially those of us who are not yet out of the closet.

And there are those among us who would say that these men arrested got what they deserved. Reputations shattered, jobs lost, family relationships destroyed.

Did they deserve this? No.

While we still do not condone the use of children for sex, entrapment is not an appropriate way for a government to enforce its laws.

And the use of a minor by the government in an illegal venture, even in order to attract potential lawbreakers, is more than just ill-advised. It is just plain wrong.

Screens

Eddie Murphy's Coming to America: The Phobe Falls Flat

By HARRISON HICKS

Staff Writer

There's only one thin missing from Eddie Murphy's new film, Coming to America - the comedy.

In what has been touted as his first romantic leading role, Murphy, who has a history of gay-baiting and demeaning women in his comedy routines, plays an African prince who journeys to the United States to find a wife rather than follow through on a marriage arranged for him, in his country's tradition.

While in New York City, Murphy's choice of a likely place to find a new bride, Murphy, as Prince Akeem, poses as a poor immigrant who takes employment at a fast food restaurant. Once there, he falls in love with the daughter of the restaurant's owner and finds that he must compete for her affections with the heir to a hair-styling fortune.

What follows are situations which, in the old days of Hollywood, might have been called "madcap." Only in this film, to use such a term could only be done loosely at best, and probably wrongly.

The script, a loose variation of Mark Twain's The Prince and the Pauper, is extremely unfunny, presenting stale situations and tired jokes aimed at satirizing the American lifestyle.

The character Murphy plays, Prince Akeem, despite claims to the contrary, is not exactly an advance over other characters he has played in regard to attitudes toward women. For example, when Akeem meets the bride his father has chosen for him to marry, he demonstrates his distaste for the woman by commanding her to perform a series of demeaning actions such as standing on one foot andimitating a barking dog. She's merely seen as a "typical" fawning woman by Murphy.

Later, when Murphy goes to America to find his bride, the woman he picks as his betrothed is faced with a single option for the future, marriage to Murphy or to another man. The idea that this woman, who is seemingly intelligent and self-sufficient, could live just fine without a man's presence, is never even entertained.

Once again, Hollywood's version of happiness for a woman is to become married to a man who will take care of her and provide for her. If this is Murphy's idea of progress as far as his attitudes toward women are concerned, I think his newfound "respect" for women would be something most women could do without.

What's particularly disheartening is what Murphy, with all his complaints about black stereotypes, is guilty of the very thing he condemns by perpetuating stereotypes of women and gays. Despite his financial success, Murphy will never be the stereotype destroyer he claims he wants to be until he accepts the existence of other groups that are discriminated against. For all his comedic talents, which could be used to illuminate the human condition of all people, Murphy chooses to waste those talents and perpetuate the very conditions he protests.

Briefs

Soap Adds Gay Character

From STAFF REPORTS

Network television has, for the first time, introduced a continuing gay male character with "no immediate plans to make him tragic or diseased," according to USA Today.

The paper reported that CBS' daytime soap opera As the World Turns character Hank Elliot, a fashion designer played by Brian Starcher, came out of the closet last week.

The character, introduced to viewers in April, will be used to explore and influence public reaction to homosexual themes, according to As the World Turns head writer Doug Marland.

"People have built-in prejudices, and it was important for us to find the characters liking him and interacting with him, the Young set particularly took to him immediately, because he's fun and bright. Now we get to explore everyone's reactions," Marland said.

Marland said that the character will not be connected with AIDS, but will be a positive portrayal of a homosexual. "Many people in our audience are far removed from AIDS, and have preconceived, cliched ideas of what a gay man is. I'd like to break that myth."

This is not Marland's first attempt to present a gay character on television. He told USA Today that he had met resistance to introducing "gay overtones" to a stroll line on NBC's The Doctors several years ago.

The Hank character has a committed, long-distance relationship with a lover.

ABC's primetime Heartbeats has a lesbian character, nurse-practitioner Marilyn MacGrath, and ABC soap All My Children had a lesbian psychologist character several years ago.
Helmet of Flesh: Try It On.


By JOE MAROHL
Staff Writer

Scott Symons must be one of those rare birds, a gay writer who is politically aware but dares to be perceived as politically incorrect.

Symons' new novel Helmet of Flesh arrives with enthusiastic cover blurbs from Margaret Atwood and Northrop Frye and a cover illustration by Mel Odom that received a nice compliment from the check-out clerk in the bookstore in Atlanta where I purchased the book. Furthermore, the novel narrates the erotic adventures ('orgasmic odyssey' it's called in the book) of one York Mackenzie in Morocco in 1971.

The book is unabashedly erotic. The pre-AIDS setting gives its characters a perfect right to be as sexually irresponsible as they please. Not to say, however, that the book is simply a masturbator's handbook. Its eroticism is intelligent, and by and large its theme is comradely compulsion by Mel Odom that received a nice appreciation by Mel Odom that received a nice answer from the check-out clerk in the bookstore in Atlanta where I purchased the book. Furthermore, the novel narrates the erotic adventures ('orgasmic odyssey' it's called in the book) of one York Mackenzie in Morocco in 1971.

The book is unabashedly erotic. The pre-AIDS setting gives its characters a perfect right to be as sexually irresponsible as they please. Not to say, however, that the book is simply a masturbator's handbook. Its eroticism is intelligent, and by and large its theme is comradely compulsion.

Symons does leave himself open for criticism on at least two counts. I can see that some readers would accuse the book of misogyny and internalized homophobia. I, however, do not.

True, the protagonist is not overly fond of the "new woman" and seems to put the blame on feminism that hasn't followed through to its logical conclusions.

True, the protagonist holds gay men in contempt, who he views as only superficially interested in their sexuality and as downrightly relinquishing their masculinity in order to be amusing at dinner parties. Their mothers' revenges, he calls them.

True, the protagonist's point of view in these areas seems to mirror the author's own. But, an important "but," I think.

But Symons' criticism of women is less than it initially seems. It is a criticism of unrealized potential in a movement. It is a criticism of early feminists who misidentified the enemy, thinking that all men and all things masculine were necessarily hegemonic.

His criticism of gay culture is targeted to its blindness to the spiritual and even mystical qualities of maleness, whose icon is the cock. It is a criticism of the failure of "gay" to mean something more than just a sexual preference. It is an embrace of magic and sadomasochism as components of the homosexual mind. Above all, it embraces a concept of the masculine mystique.

I do find flaws in the book's ideology. Symons' attitude toward sadomasochism is ambivalent. It is presented as a weakness, something deprived and yet it is also the core of the novel's most erotic passages.

By setting most of the book in Morocco, Symons presents us with a newly womanless society, which he then, unfortunately, portrays as utopian. (Did Atwood really read this book?)

Mackenzie's reminiscences of pastoral Newfoundland partly remediate the skewed utopia, though, as he presents male couples' acceptance and incorporation by the family-oriented heterosexual villagers.

The book's story and argument are both compelling. Symons tackles some difficult issues in the novel, including bisexuality, sadomasochism, pedophilia and monogamy, expressing opinions on each that readers are certain to find at least partly offensive. A good thing.

The literary style is sometimes a little precious for my tastes - sort of Robertson Davies doing Jean Genet, if you can imagine that - most successful when the result suggests Anne Rice. (It's uncharacteristic of me to read further when a writer uses the phrase "clatterdick-clack-and-booohooman" on page one...twice. Pooh bear comes to mind, for some reason.) Fortunately, the story and characters are engaging, and Symons's stylistic tricks do not hinder them in the long run. I recommend you read - and discuss! - this novel. •

Max and Mona

Max: You never called. So I thought I'd drop by.

Mona: This is Jasper Dunlap. I met him at the Safe Sex Video I did makeup for.

"Oh! Pancake for a safe sex video?"

"No, it was more of a technical position."

"Oh yeah? What might that be?"

"Key grip."

continued from page 1
been paid by adult men for performing sexual acts, Metro detective harry Harris testified in May.

Juvenile court officials and members of the city's victim intervention program discussed their response to the case and, when the teenager and his mother agreed to their request for his participation, the Metro police operation got under way.

The corner of Fatherland and 10th Streets, near the fashionable Edgefield section of east Nashville, was placed under surveillance by police to confirm St. Clair's claims about teen prostitution which allegedly flourished in the area.

Detective Ricky Roll testified that Tony St. Clair "admitted he had been involved in this sort of thing for a long time."

Criminal Court Judge Thomas Shriver refused in May to rule on motions to drop charges against any of the men, continuing the hearing until St. Clair's successful completion of an alcohol abuse program at Vanderbilt's Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Unit.

Caroline St. Clair said last week that her son was ready to testify in the 31 cases remaining on the court docket. •
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