

YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE HOPE

speech by Harvey Milk (June 24, 1977)

THANK COMMITTEE
Keep
Milk
Tea
some statement MUST be said
✓ they will be taught even if they
one Heavy ✓ they are!!!

I'm a ^{RUSH} man of few surprises so it will come as no surprise to most of you that what I'm about to say constitutes an announcement of my candidacy for Supervisor of District 5. For all I know, I may be the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back for I'm sure by now that the list of candidates is close to equaling the list of eligible voters. The true test of Democracy is when anybody can run for anything and in this case, almost everybody is. Well, they say Democracy is a participatory process so you can't say we weren't warned...

I've been running for so many things for so long in this city that I wear a pair of ^{SNEAKERS} ~~Adidas~~ to work...after all, you can never tell when another opportunity will present itself...

What I'm going to say from now on, I should warn you, isn't very humorous. Some of my friends have asked why I keep running, why I keep opening myself up for a bloody nose, why I keep running into debt and, frankly, jeopardizing the financial state of my own business. ^{FOR} We all know that it ~~doesn't~~ costs a great deal of money to run, and win - ~~it costs a great deal of money to run and lose.~~ Presumably I could retire to the position of gadfly--which costs nothing at all--and let them run the city.

Let's go back to the beginning. I am announcing my candidacy for Supervisor of a great City. Think about that for a moment. A city isn't a collection of buildings-- it isn't downtown with the B of A and the ² TransAmerica Tower, it isn't the parking lots or the freeways or the theatres or the massage parlors. A city is people. In this case, according to the ^{SOME} 1970 census, ~~175,000~~ ^{675,000} Some 60,000 of them live in District 5. They're Latinos and Blacks, whites and Chinese, young and old, straight--and gay.

Each of those people has his ^{or her} own hopes and aspirations, his own viewpoints and problems. Each of them contributes something unique to the life of the city. What they contribute, we call the "quality of life." ~~Buildings have very little to do with the quality of life. They usually go dark at six o'clock at night, concrete monuments~~

So

Friends talking across fences,
the baseball players in the playground on Sunday, old ladies tottering down the
street hand-in-hand, the smile from a passing stranger.

Buildings have very little to do with the quality of life. They usually go dark
at six o'clock at night, concrete hives for the warehousing of workers, monuments to
^{people's} ~~man's~~ greeds and needs. They remain desolate and empty until the people return in
the morning to flick the lights back on and fill the corridors with bustle and
activity.

There are exceptions, of course, and we happen to be gathered in one of them
tonight. It's one of those few buildings that contribute in a very unique way to the
hopes and aspirations of a particular group of people. It's not as architecturally
beautiful as the B of A or even the TransAmerica. But unlike those buildings, it
has a "heart and soul."

Now would you believe this? The city wants to tear it down. For a parking
garage. This building--330 Grove--is our Gay Community Center. Our Gay Community
Center. Because it has meaning to the Gay people of this city, because for ~~them~~ ^{us}
it has both "heart and soul," we've chosen to pass up the larger hotels, those palaces
of marble and ice, ^{↓ offending} and have our dinner here.

Consider this Center. Without it, a few nights ago where would those thousand
^{gay's who gather in the aftermath of Do de County gone?} spontaneous demonstrators have gone? Where would they have gathered? Where would the
^{multitude of} people go who attend the Gay community meetings here? Where would the people congregate
who want to take part in the fight to Save Our Human Rights, in Gay Action, in Lesbians
United, in the dozens of other groups who meet here?

In the urban wars, this building has already earned its purple heart. It's
played a major part in bringing together a divided people. Without 330 Grove, we
would never have been able to get it together, as the saying goes. And right now
I would like to give credit to Paul Hartman, without whose foresight and courage

this community center would not exist.

Because

And yet--our Supervisors want to tear this building down. For a parking garage.

For ~~months~~ *months,* this building has served as a focal point for the Gay Community.

It's where we meet. It's our own little section of the City's turf. Responsible Gay people have tried for God knows how long to establish a center to which young Gay people can go when they arrive here from the rest of an oppressive America. A place where they can find counseling, friends and most of all, hope. Oh, without this Center, there would still be places they could go. The Tenderloin. Market Street. The St. Francis. They'll find counseling, all right. And they'll find friends. At so much per friend. But they won't find much hope.

Do you blame me if I accuse the present Board of Supervisors of being unresponsive to the needs of the Gay community? Would you deny it if I said the situation is not unique, that the Board is unresponsive to the needs of other groups, both ethnic and social, as well? *thats of* What about the desire of the Board to move the pornography "Combat Zone" into Hunter's Point? Were the people of Hunter's Point consulted? When the Black community objected, they were told "it wasn't planned that way, it just happened!"

A few years ago, they closed the Sears store in the Mission district. The store was originally the doorway to the Mission and our city's Latin community. It provided employment, it drew people from other neighborhoods into the Mission so that the economic outlook of the entire area benefited.

Today, paradoxically enough, it's *being turned into an* unemployment office. I don't need to tell you what kind of depressing trade-off that is.

And those are only *a few* ~~two~~ examples.

A long time ago, there was an ancient Christian sect called the Manicheans. Unlike the majority of Christians of the period, they claimed that the sins of omission were greater than the sins of commission. For their beliefs they were, as you might have guessed, exterminated. But they left us a legacy. The opposite of

AND why is it in the shape it is in almost there but hesitated to be finished

love is not hate.

It's indifference.

There is probably no minority in this city that hasn't been ignored--on the human level--by the present Board of Supervisors. It's no longer the Seniors, the unemployed, the Asian community, the Gay, the Blacks, the Latins and so forth. They're all US. It's US against THEM. If you add up all the USes, you'll find we vastly outnumber the THEMS. And yet the THEMS control.

It's the THEMS who benefit when the Gays and the Blacks and the Latins fight amongst themselves. It's the THEMS who want to tear down the homes and community centers of the USes for their special pet projects. It's the THEMS who divide--and conquer. It's the THEMS who are the real outside agitators in our communities. And they've been here for years.

Who are the THEMS? They're the ones who say they pay the taxes and run the corporations and have large investments in the city.

But who buys the soap, the food, the towels, the shoes, the cigarettes, the beer and the cars that make the profits for the corporations? Who buys the insurance which provides the profits for the THEMS? Who puts their money into the banks so the THEMS can invest in their pet projects? Who convinced us all that somehow people removal was the same as urban renewal?

One of the biggest myths spread by the THEMS is that since it's "their" money to begin with, they should say how the taxes are spent. But it's your money. Oh, there's a crumb here and there that's tossed to the different communities. They fund a program, anoint a few "leaders" to run it who then go into the community and shout: "Look what they've we done for you!"

The THEMS get most of the pie, the anointed leaders get a few crumbs--and therefore sing the praises of their masters--and the community gets a few invisible specks. The anointed leaders are the Uncle Toms--and yes, the Gay community has its

fair share. Look at who sings the praises of the government in power and you'll see--for the most part--people who have been granted position or power or income.

Now let's get personal. Okay, Harvey, you say, enough of the rhetoric--what are you going to do? As a supervisor, I ^{will} ~~can~~ raise questions in public and demand answers. On how the money is raised. And how the money is spent. I ^{will} ~~can~~ force the other supervisors to stand up and be counted when it comes to the spending priorities of the city. As ^{relatively small but important} one immediate example: Why money for the ~~Chinese New Year's~~ ^{every other} parade and none for the Gay Day parade, the second largest in the City? ^{maybe ten larger.} And I ^{will} ~~can~~ question the lack of priority for other groups and communities. It's true that I've run...and run...and run. I didn't win, but I sure acquired a long list of questions that need answering. That demand to be answered.

What kind of supervisor will I be? Well, the first thing to consider is that while a supervisor represents his district, he also represents the city at large. So let's for the moment ignore where you live. Also, ignore where you stand on any one issue--there's ^{no} way I can be in agreement with every one of you on every issue. Frankly, there's no way I would want to--nor do I think you would want me to. ^(MIROR)

First, the District. Currently, there are 16 candidates running for Supervisor of District 5. Of those 16, only one spoke out in public on the problems of Upper Market Street. Should it be a six-lane artery, or should it be a ^{manover} ~~smaller~~ street with the neighborhood in mind--a people-way instead of a highway. A limited number of lanes ^{some} ~~with~~ bicycle paths, trees and benches? When it came to public testimony, only one of the 16 candidates got up in public and stated the case.

His name was Harvey Milk.

I lobbied the Mayor on this issue, I walked the street with the Mayor and when I found out that the opposition planned on walking with Supervisor Kopp, I walked with them, too. Interestingly enough, several of the other candidates were at the first public hearing and when they heard the testimony of the Market Street merchants, they

got up & quietly

walked out.

important district

Another major issue was the zoning problem on 24th Street. The neighborhood wanted to restrict second-floor shops, to prevent the street from becoming another Union street. Aside from one other candidate who owns a 24th Street shop, I was the only other one who spoke out on that issue.

Three years ago, I spoke out against the Franklin Hospital expansion, which ^{substantial} would have evicted people from their homes. ~~Expansion into neighborhood homes.~~

This past year, I've spoken out again at all 4 public hearings. Only one other candidate spoke out, and that was in defense of the particular street on which he lives. ^{small} ^{only one +}

Where were the other candidates on these ^{other} District issues? Forget the words that they'll now rush into print. Where were they, when their words ^{were needed +} counted?

On a larger scale, where were the candidates when the problem of airport expansion came up? Again, I was the only candidate to appear before the airport commission. And the question of parking garages, and again, the city's attempts to tear down this community center.

Where were the other candidates?

Where were the ^{self acclaimed} fighters, anxious to represent their communities?

Where were our would-be leaders?

ON Issues after issues - why were they silent?

There's the touchy subject of the Porno hearings. I attended three different hearings, not arguing the case for ^{on argument} ~~illicit~~ pornography but pointing out that the resolution was ^{badly} poorly worded, that it didn't consider not only what community standards are today but what they might be tomorrow, arguing against the imposing of a pornography "combat zone" on the black community by fiat. What I and other protesters had to say must have been right: the ordinance has always been sent back for revision after the hearings.

on issue oriented candidate

And so goes the life of a serious candidate. ^{HIGH} I've been there. From arguing the police budget to protesting taxi cab fares.

Actions speak louder than campaign literature.

Where were the others?

Is my message clear? Do you understand what I'm saying?

And now, for this particular group, the nitty-gritty. The issue that ~~cannot~~

Do we need a Supreme who plays it "safe"?

must not

be ducked. One of the reasons why I have fought so hard for public office--and run and run and run. ^{As Ron Ross says} The Harvey Milk doll: You wind him up and he runs for public office.

Why?

Because I think there is a tremendous and vital difference between a "friend of the Gay community" and an avowed Gay in public office. Gays have now been slandered nationwide. We have been tarred with the brush of pornography, we have been libelously accused in the Dade County Affair. It is ^{is long} not enough to have a "friend" represent us, no matter how good a friend he may be. The Black community made up its mind to that long ago when they realized that the myths about Blacks could only be dispelled by electing black leaders, so that the Black community could be judged by those leaders and not by black criminals ^{myths.}

The Spanish community should not be judged by Latin criminals ^{myths.}

The Asian community should not be judged by Asian criminals ^{myths.}

The Italian community should not be judged by the Mafia ^{myths.}

Neither should the Gay community be judged by its minutely few ~~Gay pornographers~~

~~Gay criminals~~ ^{myths.} Like every other group, we should be judged by our leaders.

By those who are themselves Gay. By those who are visible. ^{For} Invisible, we remain in limbo. A shadowy myth, a person who has no parents, no brothers, no sisters, no friends who are straight, no important positions of employment. A tenth of the nation composed solely of ^{stereotypes} ~~hairdressers and interior decorators~~ and would-be seducers of small children--and no offense intended to the ^{stereotypes.} first two groups.

50 pages

Well, the Black community is not judged by its "friends" but by its black legislators and leaders. We must give people outside our community the chance to judge us by our Gay legislators and leaders. A gay person in office can set ^a the tone,

CAN COMMAND RESPECT * NOT ONLY FROM THAT LARGER COMMUNITY BUT FROM THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR OWN COMMUNITY WHO NEED BOTH EXAMPLES AND HOPE

can command respect not only from that larger community but from young people in our own community who need both examples and...hope.

The first Gay person we elect must be strong, a fighter, one who is not content to sit in the back of the bus. He must be above wheeling and dealing. If I had been a wheeler and dealer, I would be on the Board of Permit Appeals today. If I had been content with the back of bus, I wouldn't have broken party ranks to work *for me*

Issue ~~for~~ Milton Marks. The first Gay person to be elected must ~~also~~, for the good of all of us, be independent. **UNBOSSIED + UNBROUGHT!**

And now we come to the past two weeks.

the got started Where have the other ^{District 5} candidates been? Feelings were running high, there was danger of a riot ~~in the Castro area~~. Where were the other ^{District 5} candidates, particularly the Gay ones? ^{From this District} We had our street marches, and they were nationwide. Six thousand here, six thousand in Chicago, ~~fifteen~~ ⁹ thousand in Houston, ^{9 mi. h.A.} and who knows how many in New York and elsewhere. A nation of Gay people ^{sadly} knew that this was our Watts, our Selma, Alabama.

They were angry, ~~and~~ ^F frustrated, ~~and~~ ^T they wanted the world to know it. So they took to the streets. I was there every night. And I was proud to be there. I felt it was important to understand and to know the tone of the people in the street. I felt that I ^{might} ^{some} could be of help.

of it The first Friday night, it almost ^{got} got out of hand. It got ugly. I ⁺ talked to the crowd and said what I ~~thought~~ had to be said. But where were our elected leaders? Where were the other candidates? ^{where} ~~What~~ were our Gay candidates and ^{in public} elected officials? An ^{public} ~~elected~~ official has the aura of public office. God knows it would have been easier for ^{a public official} him than it was for ^{me} ~~me~~ ^{and the few others + myself}.

I think, perhaps, that too many of our elected ⁺ leaders forget that their first duty is to lead. And the only way to lead is by example. I disapprove of almost everything that Joe Alioto stood for but I would never deny that he was a leader,

that he understood the power of public office and how to use it to lead.

George Moscone has been a great legislator and understood the power of that position. But that is leadership among legislators, it is not leadership among the people. Your mayor and your supervisors, the ~~men~~ ^{people} elected or appointed to local public office, are the ones who ~~man~~ ^{front} the barricades. And for whatever reason, Moscone has failed to use ~~his~~ ^{we understand} present power of office.

Our appointed Gay leaders, ~~did not lead~~ ^{they} that Friday. It took a group of concerned Gay people to put out a statement warning of outsiders starting trouble in the Gay community. It was a heavy statement--but ^{if you were then you know it was} a necessary one. No other Gay candidate ~~for office~~ signed it. I took a strong position about the tone of the parade this coming Sunday. I made enemies. But I felt it had to be said and since ~~no one~~ ^{our gay appointed} else would say it, I did. ^{So in reality} ~~AND WITHOUT THE POWER OF OFFICE BEHIND ME~~ ^{Leadership was called for & who was the one candidate?} ~~AND NOW IT'S TIME~~ ^{Other than have.}

Well, no announcement for candidacy for public office can avoid overuse of the word "I" and ~~I guess~~ I'm as guilty as anybody. ~~I guess I ought to tell you why~~ I've run so persistently for public office.

I'll never forget what it was like coming out.

I'll never forget the looks on the faces of those who have lost hope, whether it be young Gays or seniors or Blacks looking for that almost-impossible-to-find job or Latins trying to explain their problems and aspirations in a tongue that's foreign to them.

I'll never forget that ~~buildings~~ ^{people} are more important than ~~people~~ ^{buildings} and neighborhoods more important than freeways.

I've deliberately scheduled this announcement for Gay Pride Week. I've watched a million people close their closet doors behind them and I know they ~~can't~~ ^{can't} go back.

I use the word "I" because I'm proud of myself.

I stand here before you tonight because I'm proud of you.

I'll be ~~marching~~ ^{walking} in the ~~parade~~ ^{march} on Sunday because I'm proud of my ~~brothers~~ ^{sisters} and ^{brothers}.

+ solid

That gesture must be central - owned over

planned for some time to

planned for some time to

And I'm running for public office because I think it's time we've had a legislator who was gay and ~~is~~ proud of that fact and one who will not walk away from the responsibilities that face such a legislator. I walked among the angry ~~men~~ ^{misfit off-alyce} after Dade country....I walked among the angry ¹⁵⁰⁰ gay sisters and brothers last night ~~both~~ at City Hall and late last night as they lit candles and stood in silence on Castro street reaching out ~~to~~ for some symbolic thing that would give them hope...

and frustrated

These were strong people...people whose faces I knew from the shops, the streets, ~~the~~ meetings, ⁺ people whom I never saw before, ~~but~~ They were strong and even they needed hope..and those young gays in ~~the~~ Des Mosis', San Antonio's who are "coming out" and hear the Aniata Brynat story — to them the only thing that they have to look forward to is hope.....And YOU have to give them hope.
 Hope for a better world.
 Hope for a better tomorrow.
 Hope for a place to go to if the pressures at home are ~~to~~ to great.

whom but KNEW.

Hope that all will be alright.
 Without hope not only the gays but the blacks, the seniors, the poor, the handicape ~~will~~ give up....
 if you help me get elected that election will mean ~~that~~ ^{that} a greenlight is lit...a green light that says to all who feel lost and disenfranchised that you can ~~now~~ go forward - it means hope and we ^{NO} you and you and you yes ~~if~~ you ^{get to} give them hope.

the USes

no it is not my section it is yours - it

