Harvey Milk

November 26, 2008 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

Tomorrow marks the 30th anniversary of the assassinations of Harvey Milk, a San Francisco supervisor, and George Moscone, the San Francisco mayor. Both men were killed by Dan White, also a San Francisco supervisor. Milk was the first openly gay man elected to public office in the United States.

Today marks the release nationwide of Milk, a Hollywood movie commemorating his life. The movie stars Sean Penn as Milk and was directed by Gus Van Sant. Emile Hirsch plays Cleve Jones, who was a consultant for the movie having worked for Milk as a student intern.

Much has improved societally for LGBTs since 1978, but progress for LGBT civil rights remains slow (although I would argue that it's slow and steady). I believe that we're currently in the middle of a new groundswell of LGBT activism, which I hope will result in major legislative victories in the next few years.

I saw a preview of Milk last night and I left the theater recommitted to doing what I can to help us advance our civil rights. I hope that this movie provides LGBTs everywhere with the same inspiration.

"I know that you can't live on hope alone, but without it, life is not worth living ... you have got to give them hope." - Harvey Milk

Watch the movie trailer:

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