

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: STATEMENT BY DAVID WOJNAROWICZ

On wednesday, november 15, 1989 at 10:00 a.m. I was present at a meeting at Artists Space involving approximately 35 people representing a spectrum of arts organizations and artists in New York. N.E.A. Chairman John Frohnmayer was present. The following is a distillation of what I said to him personally:

"What is going on here is not just an issue that concerns the 'art world'; it is not just about a bunch of words or images in the 'art world' context - it is about the legalized and systemic murder of homosexuals and their legislated silence; it is about the legislated invisibility and silencing of people with AIDS and a denial of the information necessary for those and other people to make informed decisions concerning safety within their sexual activities.

I must tell you I resent your cynical words to the media; and I quote you from the New York Times: 'The word political, I'm coming to see, means something different in Portland, Ore., than it does in Washington D.C.,' and '...I described that with the P word, and it was taken by the arts community as a suggestion that I had been influenced by political pressure...'

I will not personally allow you to step back from your original reason for rescinding the grant, which was that my essay and the show had political rather than artistic tone. You are now attempting to jump from one position to another in terms of reasons for rescinding the grant hoping to come up with one that sticks. It is obvious you are in bed with Helms and Dannemeyer, and that your ignorance or agenda, both of which I find appalling, are clearly revealed by your actions.

I wonder if you have considered the R word; R as in resignation. If not, I urge you to do so and I urge you to resign immediately."

Towards the end of the meeting I confronted him with the question: "Tell me something - what do you think of men who love men and women who love women? What do you think of men who have sex with men and women who have sex with women?"

He replied: "I refuse to answer that; that is private."

Here is a man who rubs elbows with some of the biggest and sleaziest bigots in Washington wearing politician drag; a man who is in the position of affecting the 'moral' climate of this country; a man who refuses to confront those homophobic senators and congressmen who make it their priority to legislate that which Frohnmayer can only deem 'private', and this is the extent to which he can reveal his thoughts.

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Cardinal O'Connor has been whining in the press the last couple of days his hallucinagenic views that if anyone, despite their persuasion, should ignore the 'teachings' of the church and contracts AIDS, they only have themselves to blame. This is obviously prehistoric. Most people in this country are not stuck in the year, 23 A.D. He stated

