Happy/New Year

MARK BILES

I was sitting in a well-known gay har, having a brandy before leaving for a GLF meeting, when I mot a very nice guy gay who started rapping about being in the publishing business. Since I have an extensive background in this field, and are presently barely getting by on a very small salary as a proofreading supervisor, I immediately asked hun if he had any openings.

I, named out that he was a manager for one of the largest publishing houses in New York City, and needed an assistant. It seemed like a great opportunity, but I was apprehensive about the office atmosphere. Would I have to dress "straight"? He asserted me that was no problem, i.e. of the girls were slages anyway, and he was pretty far-out-looking himself. Not only East, but his bors was july, too.

It seemed too good to be true, but I went for the interview the following day, walking thru plosh corridors which began to muke me uneasy. I didn't know why I'd worked in several "prestige" office jobs before. Then I remembered... The national television magazine in HOLLYWOOD I'd worked at for two-and-a-half years of my life (dressing smalght — but everyone knew anyway). I was seventeen years old thon, and the youngest editor to be as charge of two editions. The reason was simple: I waarked harder titan anyone else there. I had to, because they were constantly looking for reasons to fite me. I was a diagrace to the company because I was different, and very possibly, slept with girls!! (I think I should mention here that Pro a girl also.) Most of the people I worked with were future old maids from Indiana or Ohio who were termined or perhaps titiflated - by the pa bility that I might make a pass at them in the LADIES / ROOM. They would tatter & gossip hebind my back,



Wilne White growing ... went so far as to complain to the regional manager the way I dressed. I was constantly harassed, to the point that one day I finally walked out of TV GUIDE, the BIBLE of the SILENT MAJORITY, 440' NOW, LIVE, and in BLACK-AND WHITE (but mostly WHITE), from the people who brought you "DEATH VALLEY DAYS" and "THE PEOPLE'S BARK" in Berkeley ... RONALD REAGAN!! They're not silent; the commercials are just too loud.

For several years, I worked in the nightclub business, managing clubs, traveling, & spending lavisity on the girls I dated. I figured if had to prostitute myself, I might as well get something out of it. Of course, all I got was a lot of money that I spent as soon as I made it. And the girls I disted didn't really want me - they wanted a good time, & presents. Heft Los Angeles, & lived in New Orleans, then Hawaii, & finally San Francisco, where I began to turn on, to other possibilities styles. I was turned off by the nightclub business, phony people, phony girls, phony ma. I split from my \$800/month job & house on Telegraph Hill to come to So here we are in 1970. And times have changed. Or have they??

The interview was a bust. My friend's bost asked him if "too butch." He liked me, & felt I was very capable. But after all, it's one thing to have the office know you're gay, and another to LOOK it, right? My friend said he hadn't realized things were so uptight there, & he felt very sorry. Would I compromise, he wanted to know.

COMPROMISE??

Well, you know. . . . wear a dress. No one else does, why should 172 If I wanted to "compromise" that much, I'd sell out all the way & go back to the but business, where IMREALLY make wone bread.

I can't understand. He's all for BLACK POWER, He was very pleased when I hired a black woman WHAT ABOUT HIS OWN PEOPLES? DOESN'T HE CARE ABOUT UST? It seems to be very respectable to hite a "Negroe" these days = but it just fail't W" to here a "Queer," is [177

Well, look. I've been able to make it all this time. And I REALEY carry on a swishing & all — at the office Of course, I kind of for the line — I don't overstep the boundaries. . But I figure one

day, when I'M boss, in about 20 or 30 years, then NO ONE will be able to tell me what to do, & I'll be able to hire anybody I like.

That's GREAT, But that's TOO LATE for me. 17.1. BE 53 YEARS OLD THIRTY YEARS PROMINOW - I want to live my five & enjoy it NOW. I'm not

for that. Neither are the blacks - or ANY of the Otheress oil people.

ell, I'm doing what I can...

ARE you??

This is a NEW YEAR of your life. Stop apologicing for what you are. Come tugether COME ŎUT!!!

Jim Jordan

I wish I knew how it would feel to be free I wish I could break all the chains holding me I wish I could say all the things that I should say Say them loud, say them clear For the whole damn world to hear

I wish I could share all the love that's in my heart Remove all the walls that keep as apart I wish you could know what it means to be one Then you'd say and agree that everyone should be frec

I wish I could give all I'm longing to give I wish I could live like I'm longing to live.

The above song was written by Billy Taylor fiazz pinnist). As performed by Nina Simone (RCA LSP3837) in becomes a prubing plea of the nuxed feelings of puis. frux ration, and nope voiced by the oppressed blacks for freedom - freedom to live

Ninx Simono has energed as one of the atrongest voices in music demanding this freedom, to say nothing of the enomious talent she possesses, and the ability to communicate, to electrifying proportions, the full range of emitions which can only come through the ex-perience of "living." I am not talking about the pre-meditated, "acted", planned-out emotions of a Barbia Streisand - Tom Jones kind of emertainment, which arouses the conditioned, Madison Ave. hyped, assured responses from audiences being "entertained." Nine confronts her audience to make them hear and feel themselves, earb other and life on the most starkly honest terms, which, I might add, is not always "entertaining, Sometimes her mond will hit upon the anger, pain, frustration, buttomess and rage of the oppressed; understandable feelings and reactions to a situation created and controlled by the oppressors. But, if you happen to be there when her mood is an affirmation of love and/or life, you may find yourself weeping or shousing with joy at being alive at that moment.

I have seen Nine perform over a hundred times over a period of several years and I have watched her grow into a woman of fierce pride, and a creative, possionate artist. For me, she has no peer.

Having hopefully paid, in small part, a debt of gratitude to Nina Simone for being, I will lay to carry further the idea I am trying to articulate here. Again, please read the opening lyric, but this time try to relate to it both

this type of freedom to live would mean to you. At no point does this song address itself to the idea of black freedom only. There is a newly recorded version of this song by a San Francisco based group called "Cold Blood" (San Francisco SD200), which is quite moving due largely to the straightforward singing of the group's lead singer, Lydia Penz who is white, I can remember singing this song (and still do) many traws, at times or myself, at times for others, but never without experi-enting an amotional upheaval as a teault of the lync and the beauting the time. I suppose it the particular mood I've been in at the time. I suppose it may be easy to speak of freedom, but quite another matter to "feel" il, particularly when our daily lives are filled with so many time-consuming activities conflicting with such freedom. However, I personally feel that each of us must fuld within ourselves a sense of "personal freedom" to enable us to experience that we are "living" in the most "complete" meaning of the word, even under the most adverse, conflicting and oppressive con-

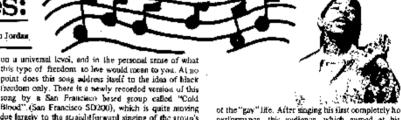
Another living example of one who is finding his own personal freedom to live is Don Burton, who has become known by those who appreciate and respect him as San Francisco's Gay Folk amper. At this time, I will not go into Don's background; Don accomplished that task himself with a beautifully written first-person article which appeared in the San Francisco Free Press. I will mention that Don started out much like most young singers, singing with a group while attending High School in Torrance, Calif., a small town about 30 miles south of L.A. However, feeling out of place singing pop show tunes. Don turned to folk music as a means of musical self expression. Joan Booz was his carliest, and strongon influence because of her integrity and honesty in choosing and singing songs which reflected her personal feelings about life. Don turned to songs of protest, particularly against the war, but though he would sing of peace, he felt no peace within himself, living in fear. frustration, and copression because of being a homo-

He began to find an outlet for his feelings by writing songs which reflected his experiences. He decided one evening, 5 adoutes before a concert he was giving at an Elks Club, that he could no longer continue to live his life as a lie. Taking the stage, he quictly announced that he was a homosaxual and would like to surp some songs of the "gay" life. After singing his first completely honest performance, this audience, which gasped at his announcement, gave him a standing ovation. At the urging of his lover, Leo Laurence (who started the Homosexual Liberation Movement in San Francisco), Don started singing his own songs to straight audiences as well as gay audiences. It is through their love for each other that Don has found growing within himself conviction about what he is duing. To express this in Don's own words, Leo has made me feel the only way to freedom is

I have had the pleasurable and meaningful experience of talking to both Don and Leo (though I don't look forward to recieving this month's phone bill) and have learned of Don's oppression by the "media" agents who believe he is "too controversiat", and by the nite clubs who believe he is "Too political". Surprising but true. Don has experienced the indifference and apathy of homosexuals in gay bata such as the "Opera Club", who perhaps do not wish to discover the truth about themselves and their lives. This is apathly of much the same type that Nina Simone has expenenced from a portion. the black audience (to say nothing of massive while apathry), who are not able to respond to their uwn op-pression and needs to liberate themselves. Don told me. that, for the most part, the straight audiences do listen, and listen attentively, responding enthusiastically.'I wish I had been there to be able to relate to all of this experience personally. To my knowledge there is no pric on the East Coust doing this type thing. (If there is, please let your voices be heard.) In the mountains, Don's contain of the direction in which he must continue despite current or future fundships and oppression. He will continue to sing of "our lives, our oppression, and mostly about love, to affirm" as he states "that love, all love, is beautiful and that all people must be free to

This writer hopes most sincerely that he will meet and hear Don personally, but for now, I am happy we are "brothers" united with our "slaters" to liberate "all people", with the hope that one day no one will say, "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free".

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Appendix of the properties of the problems as continued at the problems, as continued at the problems are the problems and the problems are the problems. The problems are the problems Kingdom and the help of progressive Premier Trailege,

HISTORY: 1959 Was the Year of The New Потгозекка During that year, new groups, projecting a militual, activiti, and determined viewpoint began to spring up arroad the country. Committee for Homosexual Free dam, San Pransisco; Goy Liberation Pront, New York; Gay Liberation Front, Berkeley; Gay Liberation Front, Minneapolls, new unes every week, current country twerty-tive. During December 1969, Gay Liberation Front, Los Angeles, was founded.

COMMUNITY OF INTEREST: We are in total opposition to America's white makin, to poverty, hunger the systematic destruction of our patrimony; we oppose the systematic described on an intrinsical, we oppose the rach getting richer, the poor getting poorer, and are in total opposition to were of aggression and imperials m, whoerer pursues then. We support the demands of Black, Chinano, Orientals, Women, Youth, Senor Ultizens, and others demanding their full rights as human beings. We join in their struggle, and shall actively suck qualities to pusse these goals.

GENERAL METHODOLOGY: Gay Liberation Pront, Los Angeles, will be a one-human, une-vote, non-exclusionary organization, welcoming all concerned non-exclusionary organization, welconding all conserned homosexuels, and sexual liberationasts into its association. Personn making process is by consensus, there is no formal membership, participants are called "Associate." Meetings are weekly, on Sunday at 4:00 P.M. Unit: further notice we are meeting in the offices of the Homosexual Information Center, as their guests. A future project will be to establish a working center. PHILOSOPHY: We say that homosomality is a perfectly natural atate, a fact, a way of life, and that we enjoy our sexuality, without feelings of inferiority or guid. We sextanty, winds technique of accountry to gother we seek, and find, love, and approach love as a testing of laving mutuality. We referse to engage in discussion of sausation, "Stekness" (A. LIE), degrees of sexonlity, or any other such Establishment Hang-Ups. We accept our selves with total self-respect, and respect our associates as they are, and what some social enliter says they should be.

SELF-LIBERATION: One of our foremost goals is to bring all sexual beings, into total acceptance of their sexuality. We believe that homosexists can best serve sexuality we believe that nonlosexuality for bord server themselves by accepting total naturalness, their home sexuality. We believe that as quickly as possible that homesexuals should find ways to inform their friends, families, employers, and associates of their hughers excuality, that through that confrontation might come froedom from gossip, blackmail, guile feelings, and self-destruction

EDUCATION: We shall as quickly as possible inform one another of our knowledge of life, and then to take that knowledge out into the community to aducate the es who have for so long made life in America a petrified, joyless Puritagiau.

STATEMENT GLE ANIGHE

ACTION: We shall go immediately and mulitorially, to the defeater of one another, and any homosestial deprived of definite of one another, and any homososmal deprived of his right to a joyful, useful, and personal life. Street actious are now being organized, more will rome; we shall not waste our energies, however, on irrelevant assure. Our goal is TOTAL LIBERATION LIFE IS FOR THE LIVING -- WE ARE ALIVE -- WE WANT ALL TO BE ALIVE. SEX IS A SURE CURB OF BOREDOM AND IS AN ANTIDOTE TO THE VIOLENCE THAT IS SO AMERICAN - (POWER TO THE PEOPLE).

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