

A second unwanted question: "Senator, it's not just for the legislature. As Mayor you would have control of the police force. How will this affect the lives of New York's 800,000 homosexuals?" Tensions still high. Marchi answered: "I will enforce the laws and prevailing social mores of society." The staccato manner of his delivery seemed devoid of personal moral conscience, as if he were not talking about human beings at all.

"Do you consider homosexuals as oppressed minority?"

"No," he says, but the president of the club, sensing the general desperation, interrupts and suggests that something be discussed that is of general interest, implying that no Republican is queer.

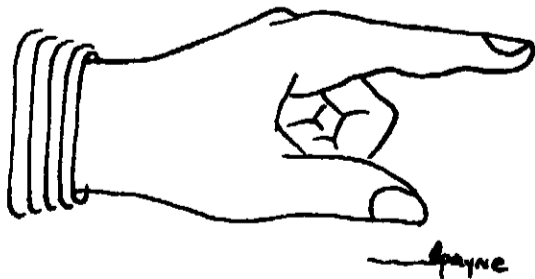
The pressing issue of service on the Lexington Avenue Subway was raised, to the relief and weighty interest of the YRs. The Senator, once again within the realm of his competence, replied that he too had suffered mental and physical anguish on the IRT, and furthermore, had discovered that it was necessary in some instances for decent people to climb as many as 65 steps! TSK, TSK.

The question of the use of mace by private citizens for self-protection is raised, and the Senator explains that on this and other matters he will rely on the judgment of the police department. In addition, in a moment of candor, he suggested the possibility of vigilante action: "We may have to fall back on vigilantes, but with a vigorous, no nonsense administration, I hope this will not be necessary." A few more mild questions and the meeting is adjourned.

A GLF member approaches the Senator for an interview, but is rebuffed by an aide. However, as the Senator exits he is confronted by a GLF member who says: "Evidently you feel no social suffering is involved in the issue (the status of the homosexual). You don't seem to feel obligated to address yourself to it."

"Well, yes," he muttered as he walked away.

Once again the world reaffirms its belief in the flatness of the earth, that all Jews crucified Christ, that there is a Santa Claus, but that there are no homosexuals.



## THE OCTOBER REBELLION

by the Gay Commandoes

"1776!" "Procaccino, you're on!" "What are you going to do about the homosexual community?" "Police harassment." "Brutality." "Job discrimination." "Archaic, repressive sex laws." "Why haven't you spoken to the homosexual community?" These were the questions and challenges that bombarded the candidates' platform at Temple Torah on October 1st. The League of Women Voters had gathered the three mayoral candidates for their community and the media to deal with questions and issues. The Gay Liberation Front was there to see that the Gay Community was dealt to also. Forty questions were submitted according to the stated procedure, with only a few of us still naive enough to think that perhaps someone would address himself to the issue. By the time Lindsay responded to questions dear to the hearts of the burghers of Queens, i.e., drugs, transportation, medical schools and those hoodlums on the street — we realized we had to escalate to be heard. 1776! was the signal and a disruption began that is to be to the Gay Community what the Boston Tea Party was to the American Colonists.

13 GLFers mingled singly or in couples with the 2000 young and old from the borough Queens. An immediate identification was established with the young just on the basis of long hair and casual, playful clothing. It became apparent though that the bond ran much deeper. Laughing, jeering boys and girls hooted the cardboard demands for greater respect for the elders and the schools. They applauded when the burning of City College was mentioned and when the cant turned to jailing the junkies. A cry to "Free the people" caused the first disruption and the first appearance of the cops. They showed a beautiful contempt for the expected courtesy to candidates and orderliness that would permit the charade to continue without a hitch.

When GLF rose to demand that the candidates respond to the 800,000 homosexual men and women in NYC, the kids were with us all the way. "Answer them." "Let them speak." But there was no space for answers. The audience erupted. Many elders were angry at the rowdiness and disrespect. Many, bewildered, said, "What's happening?" Small groups gathered around the original commandoes and some real communication began. The cops moved in toward Marty and Jim, who had signalled the barrage, but the women running the event lined up protectively in front of them. As soon as order was established, and the cops retired, the questions burst forth again. This time, Marty and Jim were escorted out gently under the watchful eyes of the women and the cameras of the media. Again the assembly settled down peacefully only to hear from the remaining gay commandoes, "Why don't you answer our questions?" "Speak to the community," rang out again and again during the now anarchistic proceedings.

Small group discussions were now going on unabated as people wanted to understand why we were there and wanted to express their concern for us or their hostility. Jack was dealing with one uptight mother when

her daughter blurted out, "What if he likes guys, I groove on girls!" The stricken woman, dragging her daughter, fled the room.

The meeting dragged on. The Democrats promise a new medical school, the Republicans a new subway, the Conservatives more police. The audience is aware that much of what is being said is lip service. A crucial question: what about more bus shelters, extra garbage service, a new community pool. Answers: 15 bus shelters are being built and a promise of more. Garbage trucks will be diverted from Manhattan. The conservative says, "Of the \$2 million allocated for an additional swimming pool, 1½ million had been cut out and squandered on Bedford Stuyvesant and Tompkins Square."

When Marchi approached the speaker's podium, the president of the League of Women Voters asked him to respond to the homosexual questions. Marchi: "We have not yet provided room on our platform for them." He then turned to the women near the rostrum and said, after having read the demands which were handed to him by a GLFer, "They are sick, you know, it's a sickness." After Marchi had been confronted, GLFers started leaving the room, talking with the aroused and interested community as they left; Jerry and girl-Marty walked casually to the front of the assembly; Jerry handed the leaflet with the GLF demands to the press, while Marty deliberately handed the paper to each of the appalled people on the speaker's platform.

Apparently the people present could tell a real event from the bland mirage that politicians pass off as confrontation and debate. They began leaving, too, though the program wasn't over. Out on the street the rapping and interest continued. We had moved a long way from the first shock of our presence. Statements like "You have no right to protest unless you own property," "It's a conspiracy," gave way to concerned questioning. "Why didn't you confront Lindsay?" "Do you really think this system can do anything for you?" Finally the cops pushed into the group, saying "Move along," and someone said, "Maybe someday people will be able to stand on the street and talk to each other."

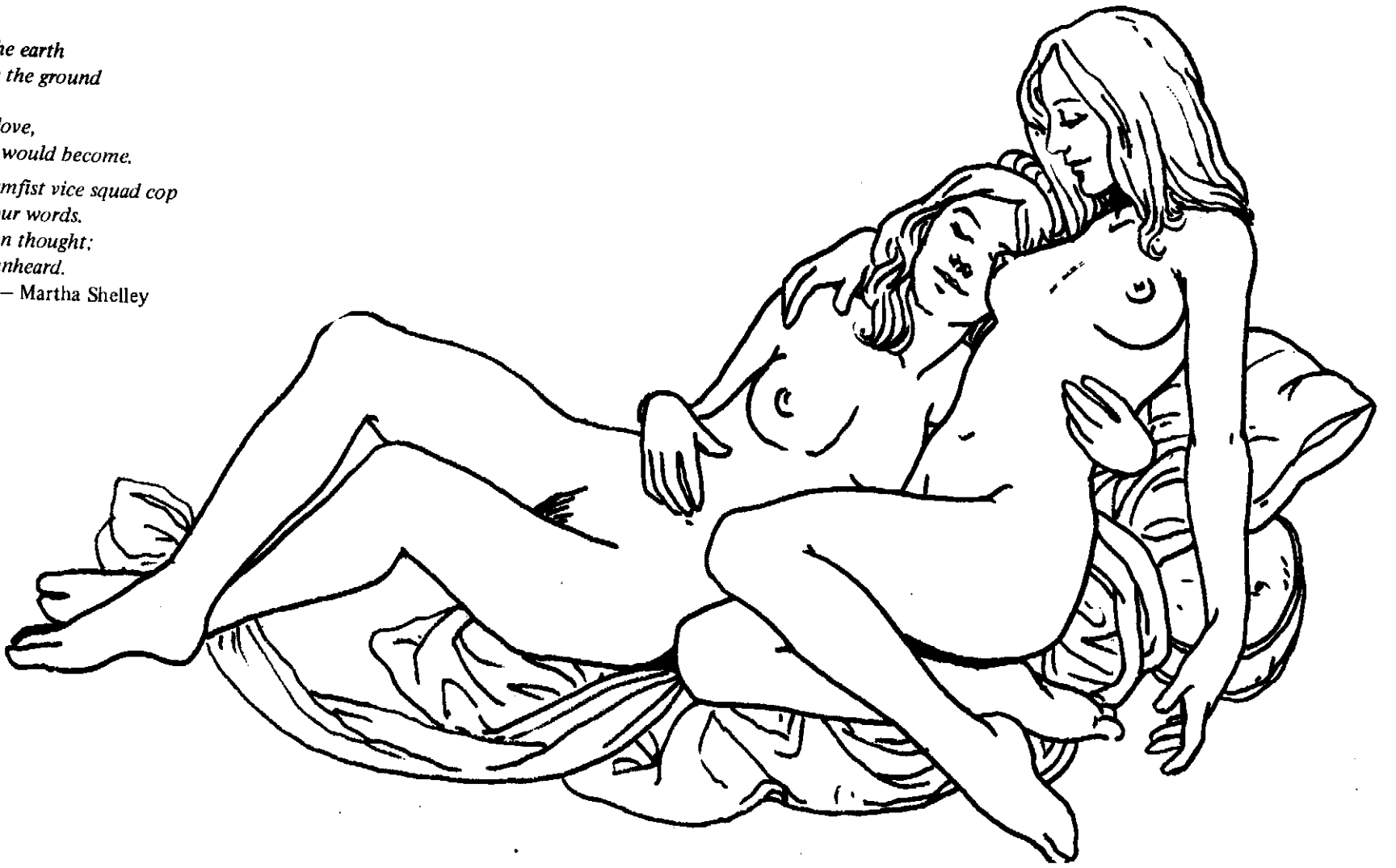
"Look, ma, a homosexual." We had come out. In this temple people talked to us, met us, and many were astounded. In America, there are a few, token, public, known homosexuals. No wonder people think we are weird. They never see us. That night they did. Twisted characterizations of what it meant to be homosexual gave way to the sight of real people, determined self-respecting homosexuals. Hello, world! Dig us. No apologies. We have come out. Now world, now we want our share, now we want to share.

ROOTS

We grow darker,  
turned back in the earth  
Forbidden to pierce the ground  
and see the sun;  
Denied the fruit of love,  
We are not what we would become.

Entrapment is no hamfist vice squad cop  
But rigid cages of your words.  
Philosophies imprison thought;  
Our voice has been unheard.

- Martha Shelley



VOICE FROM THE CLOSET

Oh Teabag  
In my Cup below,  
Are you Black  
Or Orange Pekoe?

- Ron Ballard

SOCIETY'S PRISONER

I glide along with the mainstream  
And ignore the Original Me.  
It is too hard to look and see  
What I am all about.

I pretend that it is unimportant  
And play at enjoying my life.  
I have friends, a home, a wife,  
But still I doubt.

I identify with the milling crowds  
And thus can never be totally free.  
I will never say the words, "This is Me!"  
With a Joyful Shout.

I am trapped in Society's Web of Rules  
And obey them all, in abject fear  
I am a Social Slave to a Degenerating Idea  
But follow it's route.

- Michael F. Boyle

A laugh cried in a room full of people  
must be heard,  
But love even shouted  
can be missed.

I am not a poet of lament  
nor a fool,  
But you would-be mistress at the door  
Let me in.

My love can fill you  
With a wildness, and oceans and autumn  
Help me!

Give to yourself the you that I can make,  
And give to me a self that I can take.

We two  
Standing at the edge of the marsh  
Must listen to the harsh sounds of crickets  
We have no choice.

But if we work together  
Perhaps we can hear the sound of sky  
standing still.  
Or the sounds of sins sung to God,  
Or our skincursing the hypocrisy of our souls.

"How far shall we go,  
Can people hold this close?"  
"Must we go this time  
If we are to go at all?"

Don't miss the shouting scratching at my breath,  
The letters that make love.  
"We."

- Daniel H. Smith

