



# THE SUNDAY NIGHT MEETING

by Robin de Luis

Originally this was to be a newsy, straightforward summary of GLF Sunday Night Meeting activities. In view of recent heavy internal and external problems, the merit of such an approach is questionable.

GLFs in New York, San Francisco and L.A. have been the catalysts for other gay organizations across the country which look to us for advice and ideas. Along the grapevine it's known that all three organizations are having serious problems, and continue to exhibit sexism, racism and middle class political attitudes.

Up Front these organizations continue to attempt to present an image of being together and carrying out great things. One can only question the honesty and fairness of this, particularly in view of the more serious oppression faced by our brothers and sisters in less anonymous locales. Are we really in the position to be telling it like it is when we can't even begin to deal with ourselves?

The divisions present in New York GLF a year ago are still there, only more recognizable now. Perhaps it took the beauty and joy of Christopher Street Liberation Day to bring our problems into their true perspective.

Where did they all come from, and more meaningful, where did they go back to — the drag queens, bull dykes,

Or Come Out to What?

the blacks and browns, the straight looking ones — sans consciousness raising, lacking a year of struggling for the right attitudes, somehow able to march proud and Up Front, hand in hand, unafraid. Many of the same people from the Stonewall, who started it all and have seen it somehow become a white middle class thing.

Taken (ripped off?) and nurtured into a magical new thing that cuts across all lines and barriers, but somehow appeals only to a certain few. Promulgations come forth while people need love, shelter, food, companions — all the silly things that people have been duped into believing they need. A new society, a new alternative. Classless, roleless, loverless, maybe loveless. Somehow we have all the expendable goodies, except the ones we need — how to feel, how to care.

Familiar faces are no longer here. Are they alive and well, or does it matter? Men are beaten in the streets for holding hands, and we rap about it. Women are harassed and insulted, and we struggle for the correct way to deal with it. "Brothers" and "sisters", words used easily

when we make emotional appeals, but do they really mean anything to us. Has the sterile, unloving Amerikan way taken away everything from us? Many things we're falsely accused of, but it always seemed nice to be an outcast for being "sensitive"...

Our people are being busted in the streets, mugged in the parks, murdered in dark alleys and their homes. Many of them people who've come to us for help, making appeals which were real but perhaps not sophisticated enough, and we failed to respond. Be pretty, be together, and we'll offer our all.

Just keep in mind that while we're coming out, let's take a good look at where we're going. Is Gay Liberation just another quasi-radical, white middle class movement to go the way of all other such movements? Or can it somehow develop what appears to be the potential for the comradeship and sense of unity so needed to bring about the cultural revolution needed in this unloving land.

Or do we go back to the closets and the streets? Let's find out before we burn all our bridges back.

# AFRAID OF WHAT?

by E. Bedaz

Several weeks ago, the men of G.L.F.'s Aquarius cell — a fund raising and work unit of GLF — attempted to arbitrarily without consulting the GLF community, split our community center fund into two parts — one for men and one for women. That action and the ensuing discussion raised a very important issue which has great bearing on the direction in which GLF will move and whether we will all move together.

It was generally conceded that the Aquarius men acted out of fear — fear that the women were so strong and so together that they would make unreasonable demands on the men. These fears are perhaps shared to varying degrees by other men in GLF. However, they are not justified by the history of the organization.

When the GLF women first decided to hold all women's dances, many men voiced strong objections. There were fears that the organization was splitting and fears that the women would usurp GLF's allotted time at Alternate U. for themselves, without regard to men's needs. What actually did happen was that not only did women continue to relate to GLF with a heightened sense of consciousness, but many new women were introduced to GLF through the dances. The women did not, as anticipated by some men, demand most of the dance dates at A.U., nor even close to half the available time. In a 4 month period, 3 women's dances were held; 2 at A.U. and a third at the Church of the Holy Apostle. And when women were informed that the Church was available to us in the future, we relinquished our option to a dance date at A.U. for July so the men could use it.

In a similar manner, the women, deciding to create a separate treasury so we could relate autonomously to the needs of the lesbian community, did not demand most of the money nor even half of the money in the community treasury, but a very small sum (far less proportionally than our numbers in the organization) — enough to fund a first dance to get us started.

It seems clear that the women have tried to determine and meet their needs with fairness and careful regard for men's needs and the unity of GLF. The men's fears of unreasonable and excessive demands coming from women seem to have no basis in fact. This is not to deny that the fears exist, but simply to demonstrate that the fears have their origin in something other than the women's behavior. Once this is understood, GLF men can no longer, in good conscience, make GLF women the excuse for their inaction. Obviously these fears have a cause; but what is indicated is that they stem from sources quite unrelated to what has gone down at GLF and have been misdirected onto GLF women as the most readily available targets.

Such misdirected fears and the resulting tensions and hostilities they create have always kept people divided from each other in betrayal of their mutual interests. It is exactly this that makes the poor Southern white — who has nothing to gain from racism save false pride, and everything to lose because he is separated from his class interests — into an embittered racist. His fear and rage are skillfully manipulated so they are directed away from the oppressor and onto the oppressed with whom he has everything in common save the illusion of his relative privilege. In GLF this misdirected fear expresses itself through sexism which is just as destructive and divisive as racism. Sexism has the potential to keep homosexuals and lesbians divided and to direct gay men's energies away from an analysis that could reveal who the beneficiaries of homosexual sexism are and where our real struggle lies.

We call ourselves a liberation front and acknowledge that liberation begins with ourselves. But a frightened man is not a liberated man. MEN WILL HAVE TO CONFRONT THEIR FEARS, TEST THEM AGAINST REALITY, ANALYZE THEM, DISCOVER THEIR SOURCE, AND PLACE THAT DISCOVERY WITHIN A POLITICAL FRAME OF REFERENCE. This can be

accomplished through consciousness raising. Only then will a clear direction for men's energies emerge. These fears, misdirected, misunderstood, and with no political analysis create an atmosphere of mistrust and tension in GLF which is tragically wasteful of men's energies and extremely oppressive to women. Clearly, they carry the seeds for the destruction of our very fragile unity.

Once this is understood, we can perhaps begin to deal honestly with our problems and conflicts. Once men begin to discover the politics of their misplaced fears they will stop anticipating excessive demands from women and thereby stop reacting to women's statements with hostility. This in turn would enable the women to drop a defensive posture which has become their armor against this unwarranted hostility. Women must feel free to unequivocally make their needs known. And men must be free to pursue their ends unhampered by unrealistic fears and with a clear understanding of the political implications of their feelings. Only then can an atmosphere of real trust develop so we can honestly relate to each other as sisters and brothers.

An organization made up of groups with differing needs is going to have to cope with conflicts of interest. Without mutual trust, differing needs can be divisive — with trust they can be resolved. Sometimes compromise will be indicated as a way of reducing conflict. But it is important to bear in mind that our sexist conditioning has been always, to give precedence to men's needs over women's. We must constantly be on our guard against this — it is the epitome of women's oppression and the antithesis of our vision of human liberation.

dear brothers dear brothers dear brothers,

Any of you having difficulty with your Draft Board write to JEREMIAH c/o "COME-OUT", and I'll try my best to help you with your draft problems.

# SODOMY IN THE COURTS

## BUCHANAN OUT OF JAIL

Bo Siewert, Editor, MCC News

Alvin L. Buchanan was released on bond from the Dallas Jail Monday afternoon. The bond of \$5,000 was put up by his attorney, Henry J. McCluskey, from funds that have been, in part, contributed from people of the Los Angeles Homophile Community.

In a telephone interview with Buchanan's attorney, I learned that Buchanan had been threatened with great bodily harm as he also faced the possibility of being put in the "hole" by E. L. Holman, Chief Jailer at the Dallas Jail.

In the case of Buchanan vs. Wade, decided on January 21, 1970, by a Federal District Court in Dallas, the sodomy law of Texas was declared unconstitutional. Alvin L. Buchanan had been arrested and charged under that law. His attorney, Henry L. McCluskey, Jr., of Dallas, at once challenged the constitutionality of the statute. Learning of this, a married couple, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Gibson, then entered the case on behalf of married persons "who feared prosecution for possible future acts." Following this, Travis Strickland, a homosexual not charged with any offense, joined the case in order to assert the rights of unmarried persons.

This remarkable series of actions marks the first time in American legal history that the constitutionality of a sodomy law, one similar to those in effect in 48 of the

States, has ever actually reached the courts. By filing an appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court, Dallas County District Attorney Henry Wade set in motion legal steps which guarantee that the Supreme Court must hear the case. It might be at least 10 years before another such case would likely reach the court. This means that the Homophile Community now has offered to it an opportunity to participate in an action never before brought to the Supreme Court and probably not apt to come up again soon.

Attorney McCluskey has now filed a cross appeal to the Supreme Court on behalf of Buchanan and Strickland. He is handling this action without fee. In support of this appeal, the American Civil Liberties Union is filing an amicus curiae (Friend of the Court) brief. It is now up to the Homophile Community to demonstrate its own support to the Supreme Court and show nation-wide backing for the appeal. He offers to act without fee in filing another amicus curiae on behalf of Homophile Organizations and individuals.

The brief mentioned above costs \$6.00 a page to be printed and, because of the many pages needed, this is an enormous expense.

Funds are also desperately needed to support Mr. Buchanan, as the publicity given this case has ruined his chances for gainful employment. He is living in a Dallas hotel where a room costs \$4.00 per day. He also needs money for food and personal expenses.

I am appealing to every person who reads this article to send a contribution immediately to help this brave man. Make checks payable to Henry J. McCluskey, Jr. and mail them to:

Bo Siewert, Editor, MCC News  
P.O. Box 38098  
Hollywood, California 90038

Tuesday morning during a telephone interview with Alvin Buchanan, I also learned that his health has been greatly impaired during his confinement. He has been in jail, off and on, for nearly a year. E. L. Holman, Chief Jailer at the Dallas Jail, forced Buchanan to write Reverend Troy Perry and tell him he could no longer receive the Metropolitan Community Church publications. Alvin alleges he was also told he could no longer write to the good Reverend and that MCC was verbally abused by Holman, he added. The heterosexual prisoners were allowed to enter the tank where Buchanan (and other members of our Community) were held at various times. Alvin further states that at these times they were sadistically used, both for the other prisoners' sexual gratification as well as the pleasure they derived from beating them severely.

During his stay in the Dallas Jail, Buchanan reported that he lost three teeth, had his eyes blackened on numerous occasions and is now suffering with a stomach ailment probably caused from a combination of beatings and poor food.

He also stated that had he been put in the "hole", as Holman threatened, he would have been there for 30 days on bread and water, under unspeakable conditions.

Alvin wishes me to thank all of the people who have aided him. He said that never before has he realized the true meaning of the words compassion and friendship.

I repeat my plea to help this cause; it will benefit each and every one of us.

