

# Letters <sup>TO US.</sup>

Dear COME OUT Staff,

Blessings to you for your well-written, proof-read, cleanly laid out (easy to read - not true of most underground or radical papers) - but blessings most of all for your gentle, yet radical tone. You see with clear eyes and head. Beautiful.

I hope you avoid - (I'm confident you will) all sexual commercialization and exploitation. Hundreds of papers and magazines are doing that now - hopefully they satisfy their readers' fantasies. But, your paper begins a new era in gay journalism, one based on a genuine love for all our brothers and sisters, and a positive-negative critique of the repressive capitalist (it's really corporate-elitist) conformist, heterosexual society in which we live. You are and will help to sketch the already emerging "new" sexuality, without labels of bi-, hetero-, and/or homo- - a polymorphous sexuality and new family and communal forms.

I'll cut this overly heavy shit - and wish you all well. And I'll try to contribute something - maybe a piece on homosexuality in the movies, both Hollywood and Underground. I won't make a definite promise, but I will make some notes during the next few weeks.

Right On  
in love and peace

-and all power to the people (literally.)

your brother in love,  
Jim Wenger

-and my lover Peter

Dear Come Out:

None of the papers (above or underground) saw fit to carry news of the January 11th demonstration. Perhaps the ankle-length green sequined gown I wore was too much for them. Anyway, the *Free Press* (LA) may run an article I submitted to them next week - better late than never and all that - and perhaps some San Fran papers as well.

Enclosed is an article similar to the one I submitted to the *Free Press* that I hope finds its way into your pages.

Let the New York Gays know there ARE at least 300 of us in Los Angeles that will get out into the streets.

LA is a real mess and it is a minor miracle that the march came off at all. But, it was beautiful, and this girl almost cried out of joy as we strolled along Hollywood boulevard.

GLFLA is getting itself together and about 150 people have attended the four meetings altogether. I am in the process of liberation and my activities with GLF are most helpful.

Spread the news around.

Love and peace

Douglas Key

Gay Power to Gay People

Lift the chains of Orion

## L.A. Sweep

An estimated 300 male and female homosexuals marched in a candlelight procession through the streets of Hollywood on the evening of January 11th. Day-long rain decimated the projected 500-1000 people expected to show, but the rain stopped shortly before the march began and resumed a few minutes before it ended.

Reverend Troy Perry of the Metropolitan Community Church (a Gay church in Los Angeles), Bishop Michael Itkin and Father John of the Evangelical Catholic Communion of San Francisco, and other men wearing religious costume led the march. Signs, flags and banners were carried by the marchers with statements such as "Rafferty, Reagan, Nixon - Myra's Gonna Get You All," "Gay is Excellent," "Law Reform Now" and others. The marchers sang freedom songs and chanted slogans. Many Gays joined the march as it passed along Hollywood boulevard, although some fled in terror.

A large number of police in vehicles monitored the march but no violence occurred and no arrests were made.

Rumors of violence on the part of GLFLA people who participated in the march proved false and were attempts by some individuals to destroy the unity that has recently come into being between radical and conservative elements of the Gay movement in Los Angeles.

Other groups participating in the march were the Society of Anubis, HIM, H.E.L.P. and the Homosexual Information Center.

The march was organized by the Committee for Homosexual Law Reform to protest the laws in California that make homosexual acts a felony.

The march was not covered by any of the LA papers or media although an NBC TV crew was seen setting up equipment as the march formed but, the TV crew left before the march began.

Dear Sirs:

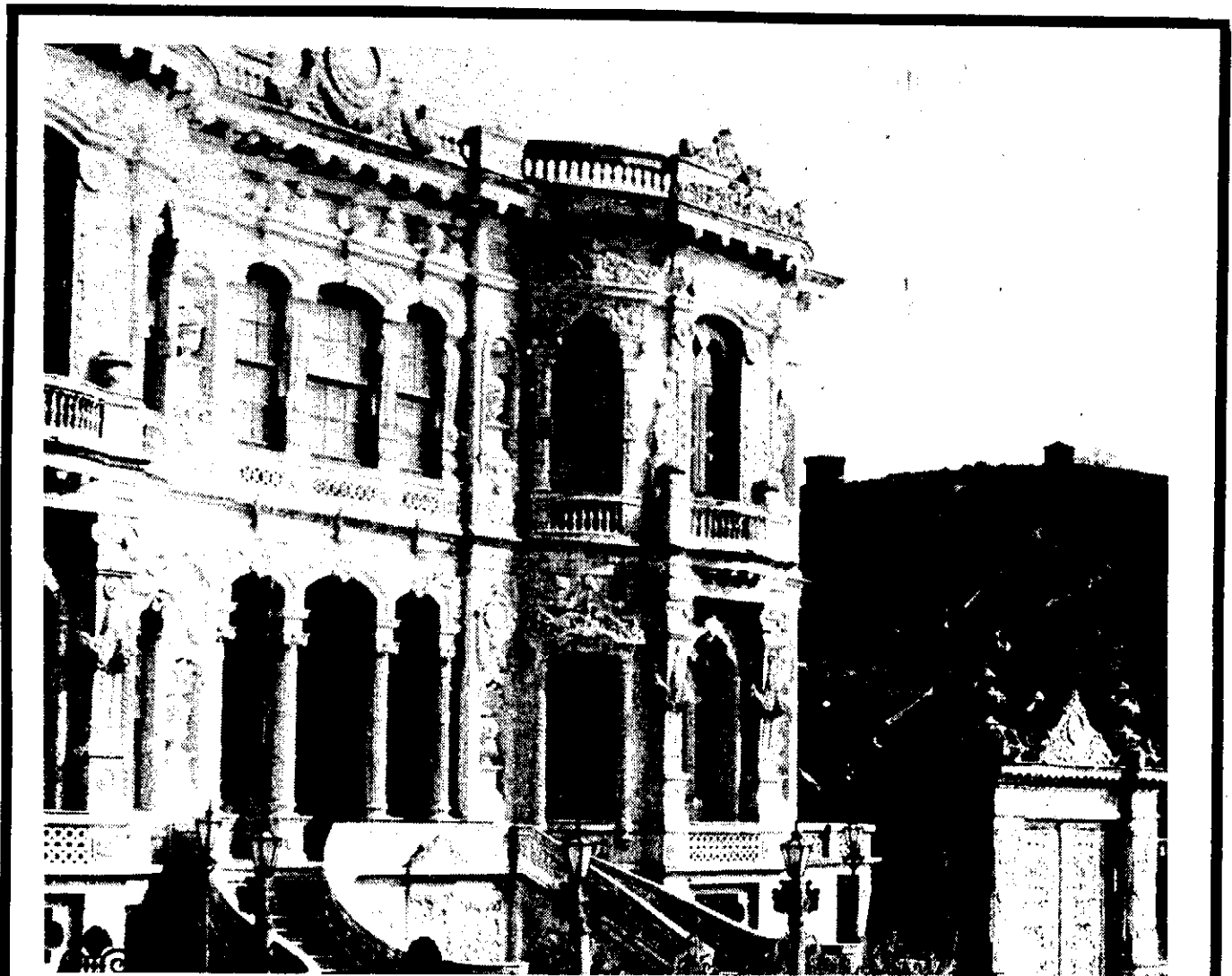
May I extend my congratulations to you on your successful publication of a gay newspaper. Its importance cannot be overestimated, for through it and similar publications we of the gay community will be able to present a united front and let America know we are a real and viable force.

But I would like to interject a word of caution, especially regarding militancy. If I thought it would help, this very moment I'd turn into a gay militant, but heeding historical examples, I feel the gay movement will have a greater and more far reaching effect if we, as a united group, follow the peaceful philosophies of Gandhi and Martin Luther King. The black militants in this country have done more to harm the Negro cause than any KKK. The real Negro successes have resulted from a system of peaceful protest.

Just as there were and still are, Negroes outraged by injustice, I too am outraged by the injustice that I as a homosexual have had to endure. I am outraged, but feel it would be wiser to be more patient. Centuries of hatred and condemnation will not be swept away overnight. We have to educate ourselves as well as society into realizing we are good people, responsible citizens, and productive members of society. We can't condemn present society for a condition that has existed for hundreds of years, nor can we hope to eradicate all prejudice. Our goals must be realistic, not idealistic, even though I myself am an idealist at heart. We must concentrate on education and law reform, and hope that in time tolerance and acceptance will follow.

Sincerely yours,  
Arthur Schircliffe,  
President,

Personal Rights Organization  
of Toledo



## COMMUNITY CENTER

The Gay Liberation Front is in dire need of a Community Center. In five short months we have accomplished more than we dreamed possible. We have confronted the Mayoral Candidates, participated under our banner in the Moratorium, funded a Newspaper, published periodic Newsletters, successfully picketed The Village Voice, fed and clothed needy people, formed Encounter groups and given the militant Homosexual a voice in the Community.

We have no dues and no membership fees. Our only source of income is a monthly Dance. We do not even have a regular meeting place. Our dream is a Community Center to serve the needs of the Homosexual. Our reality could be a basement, a loft, a studio, any place we could set up an office, telephones, hold dances, and conduct meetings. Can anyone help us? The life you FIND may be your own!

Gay Liberation Front

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS % BOB KOHLER 35 CHARLES ST N.Y.C. 10014

The Staff,  
COME OUT,  
P.O. Box 92, Village Station,  
New York, N.Y. 10014

Dear Come Out Staff:

We are writing to protest against *COME OUT's* attempt to link the homophile movement to communist revolution and support of totalitarian, anti-homosexual political systems.

Though you claim not to be politically biased the first seven of the nine articles in *COME OUT* fulminate against free political and economic institutions and support those (such as the Black Panthers) who advocate authoritarian collectivism at the expense of the legitimate goals of the homophile movement.

*COME OUT's* support of the Castro dictatorship in Cuba (complete with photographs of so-called 'liberated' women lugging heavy wheelbarrows, toting rifles and lining up in stores with empty shelves) is particularly anachronistic and offensive. Women in Cuba today, far from being liberated, are conscripted for forced labour under threat of execution (see the text of Castro's 1969 'Christmas Message') and their children subjected to the total physical and intellectual control of the state. And acceptance of homosexuality is not one of the things they are taught!

After Castro's revolution, the pre-

viously large homosexual community in Cuba was systematically rounded up and imprisoned. Now, no homosexual social life or organizations are allowed, and homosexuality is officially non-existent - considered a product of the decadent, bourgeois-capitalist system which has been superceded.

If you doubt the truth of this, you have only to read the newspapers; if you don't believe them, read Dr. Castro's speeches.

It is also a fact that the Black Panther terrorists of whom *COME OUT* is so fond are notoriously anti-homosexual, as a reading of their spokesman, Eldridge Cleaver's book, *SOUL ON ICE*, will make very clear.

One of your writers, Jim Fouratt, recognizes this about Abbie Hoffman as well as Cleaver, but doesn't connect their sexual attitudes to their destructive violence and political totalitarianism. Hannah Arendt, in her extensive study of the nature of totalitarian political systems, points out that even though some groups of "revolutionaries" may see homosexuality as part of their protest against society, they are always among those who suffer most under communist and national socialist regimes.

"Red Butterfly", in its rather incoherent article, claims that homosexuals will not know "freedom, justice, and happiness" until "the root evil of

our society has been destroyed - Capitalism." Most of your other contributors seem to share this view and the consequent advocacy of a communist state. They would do well to consider a few facts; it is the free market that has enabled state restrictions (and even the results of individual prejudice) against minority groups - Jews, homosexuals and others - to be as small as they are. Furthermore, "there is an economic incentive in a free market to separate economic efficiency from other characteristics of the individual." (Professor Milton Friedman in *CAPITALISM AND FREEDOM*, p. 109.)

By contrast, in communist states, by definition, the government, has a monopoly on all spheres of human activity - not only on employment, but on such things as health, leisure and travel as well. In such a system, any individual who voices his disagreement with the government can very easily be silenced.

Remember that homosexuality is illegal in almost all communist countries, is suppressed in all of them, and is not even officially considered to exist or to be a proper topic of discussion on any level. When Allen Ginsberg visited Cuba and Czechoslovakia he was thrown out of both countries for talking about and practising homosexuality. In the United States, even though most states have anti-homosexual laws, Ginsberg and

others, including the writers of *COME OUT* are free to say what they think, in public as well as in private, to challenge the unjust laws and work to change them. (In Canada, homosexual relations are legal for consenting adults.)

Illogical and unwarrantable linking of the homophile movement with political systems that are not only oppressive generally but oppressive toward homosexuality in particular can only harm the homophile movement and alienate all potential supporters who believe in human freedom.

In short, stop digging your own graves!

Sincerely,

Ian Young  
Charles C' Hill  
Rene Rivard  
Wayne Bryant  
Richard Swanton  
Paul Briste  
Dennis Corrigan  
G.A. Speed  
Marianne Kobus  
Janet Corrigan  
Bill McRae

Members of the University of Toronto

Homophile Association.

# DIALOGUE

Dear sisters and brothers,

We have seriously considered your letter of January 13 since we recognize that you have written out of your own deep concern and this we profoundly respect. In part your points were relevant & justified, tho you also include distortion and error which you try to pass off as fact. For some of us, your letter served as a nucleus around which to crystallize our thoughts about homosexual liberation.

From your letter it seems you believe that human freedom and capitalism are compatible. You laud the capitalist as the protector of the homosexual minority; you praise the free market system for separating efficiency from "other human characteristics". We ask that you step outside of a society defined by capitalism to examine what it has done to your humanity. From such a perspective we think you will see that capitalism creates minority groups. In a competitive class structure some group must be on the bottom. Hence we are all insecure about losing our position of relative privilege; out of this insecurity comes fear and blind prejudice and the creation of scapegoat groups. That is why this society is so hung up on its minorities;-It needs them! Our vantage point outside of capitalist conceived society further reveals that it is precisely the schism between efficiency and "other human characteristics" that has rendered us dehumanized efficiency machines. To be human is to function in all our manifold richness. A system which gives primary value to efficiency, fragments and dessicates our lives. It shocks us that you embrace a system which cuts you off from realizing your full humanity. Our ideal society is one in which sexuality and love are not divorced from our work functions but are an interwoven, complex, mutually enriching totality. We feel that we can only realize this ideal within a coop-

erative rather than competitive framework.

Concerning Cuba, you are right in your criticism of the *Come Out* essay to the extent that you say we must not take an uncritical position and ignore the crimes and stupidities directed at us. However, in spite of some important failings that especially concern us, we feel that the Cuban revolution is a source of hope to all oppressed people. To appreciate what it has accomplished one only has to compare conditions in Cuba 10 years after the revolution with conditions in the other Latin American countries where disease, illiteracy, high mortality rates and malnutrition are rampant, everyday facts of life; where people live without hope. This does not change the fact that Cuba has denied basic rights to homosexuals, including the right to dignity and self fulfillment.

We hope eventually out of our own dialogues, actions, and readings to work out an analysis of how we in Gay Liberation Front can relate to Cuba through both criticism and emulation.

On the other hand, you overstep the bounds of truth, justice and honesty by presenting material on the draft of Cuban workers for cutting sugar cane. You discuss it as if there were an official order for women workers that presents a choice between work and execution. This is completely untrue. Yes, there are criticisms to be made concerning the role and the position of women in Cuba. A very immediate thorough and compelling analysis of women's liberation in Cuba is in order and this we hope to accomplish also - not to deny that the revolution was a success, only to indicate where the struggle must still be waged. As you must know, 20 out of every 100 workers in plants, factories, and other enterprises are drafted to cut sugar cane along with government employees, soldiers, students and even Premier Fidel Castro. Women, who now

share to a great extent in Cuba's decisive effort, are included in all these categories. The hope of the country is a 10,000,000 ton sugar crop this year (2 million tons have already been harvested). There are also many foreign volunteers cutting cane, including several hundred American women and men of all ages in the Venceremos Brigade. Among them are some American homosexuals.

To point up some of the contradictions in Cuba we want to mention the Cuban writer Jose Lezama Lima who holds an important position in the Cuban Ministry of Education (he is about 45 years old), is the author of the very well-known novel on a homosexual theme *Paradiso* (1969), and who himself is known as a homosexual. (Have there been any top level govt. administrators in the U.S. who were known homosexuals?) It would seem that the relation between the homosexual and the Cuban revolution has not yet been thought through and is currently dictated by a reaction against the pre-revolution homosexual scene in Cuba (prostitution & exploitation), prejudice, provincial morality, and the social blindness of machismo.

As you certainly must realize, conditions vary greatly from one socialist country to another. In the Soviet Union and other "communist" countries (in 1970 they are all still really socialist) the laws on homosexuality are truly harsh. However, this does not destroy, though it immeasurably harms the positive aspects of those developing societies. Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, however, have no anti-homosexual laws. In these two countries, homosexual acts between consenting adults are considered a private affair. And Poland as of January 1 of this year, has removed all legislation on homosexuals from their legal code, on the strange basis that they have no

nomosexual problem in their country.

We are also painfully aware of the anti-homosexual allusions in Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*, concepts we know to be found among some Black Panthers. Here again we say that what leads us to support them and work with them is the understanding of the justice of the cause for which they are fighting. For a homosexual group (which has probably been fighting the use of crippling descriptive adjectives "deviate," "pervert," etc. applied to homosexuals) to thoughtlessly apply the word "terrorist" to the Panthers as you did, indicates you know little of their work in the black communities. Moreover, it demonstrates an inability to generalize, from the fact that the slanderous journalistic techniques of the establishment media are not focused on one, but on all oppressed groups with a radical voice (homosexual, black, brown, women, students). It may interest you to know that we have found individual Black Panthers to embrace us and our cause after we worked, demonstrated & picketed with them. And it is in just this way, through working together with others on common causes that we can bring our cause to a realization of the wider support it must have to be successful.

We have been deeply committed to the struggle for liberation of the homosexual male and female in America within the context of the liberation of all oppressed people...Collectively we have come to the consciousness that only a social change that involves the liberation of all, can also guarantee our own freedom. Of course in this fight, we try not to overlook the many mistakes made both at home and abroad in the revolutionary movement and in the American homophile movement. But this does not invalidate the movement. Change must come but it will not come of itself; it will come only if we work, an work all of us together for the change.

Ellen Bedoz  
Bernard Lewis  
Allan Warshawsky