

GAY NEWS

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with **GayGuide & Diary of Events**

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THE WORLD'S LARGEST CIRCULATION NEWSPAPER FOR HOMOSEXUALS

JULY 10 - 23 1980

FORTNIGHTLY



← **RITA MAE**

was in town
— catch up with her on page 16

Was *GayLife*

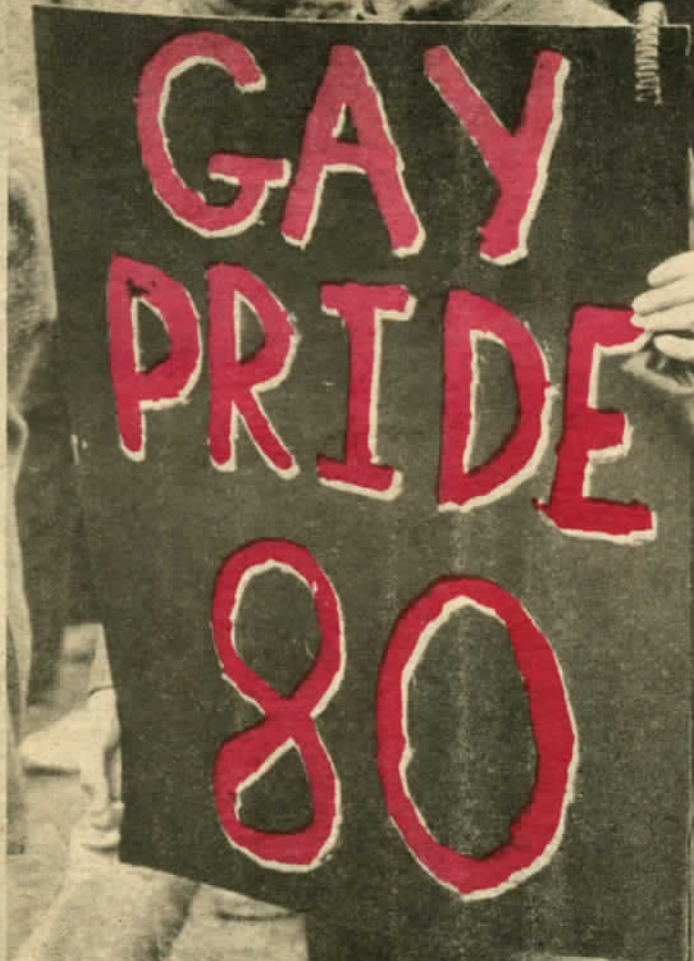
all switched on?
— see GN Special Report

IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY

... a unique New York phenomenon
— see Supplement



London's Gay Pride March 1980 featured wildly contrasting scenes as illustrated above and below. Full Gay Pride round-up on pages 3, 5 and centre pages



Photographer Bob Freeman (Gay News)



Marchers take their protest to the top — 10 Downing Street



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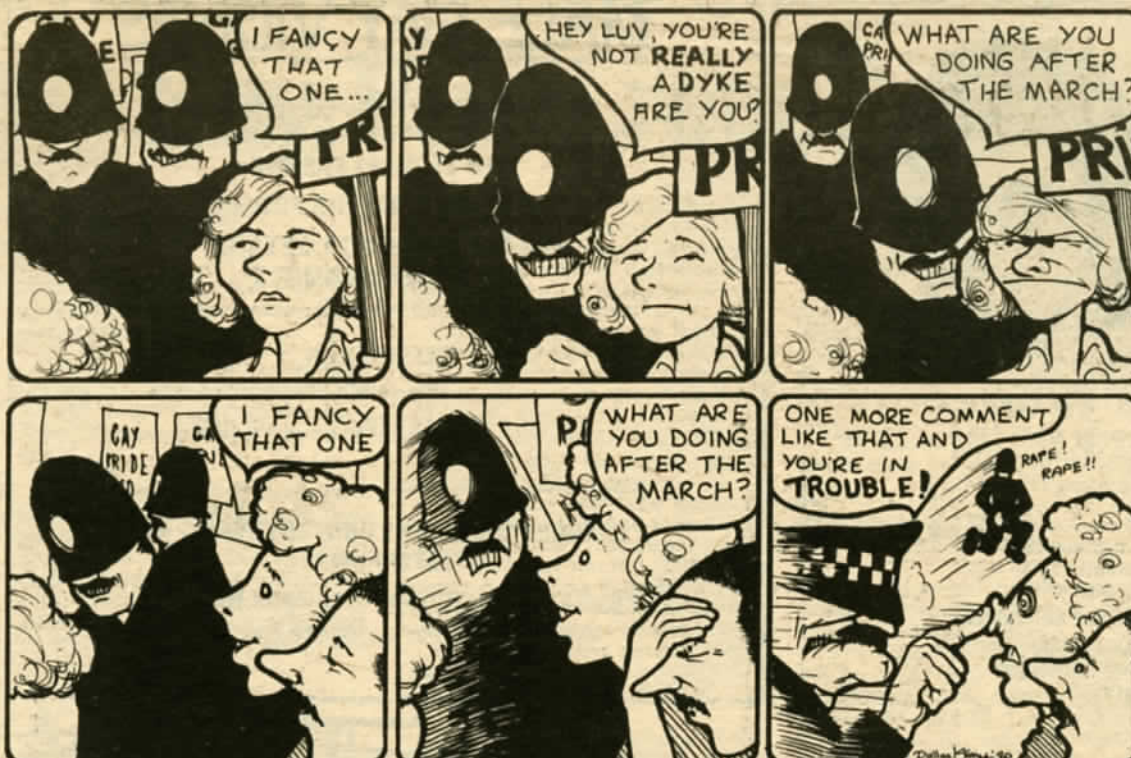
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Carnival of anger

AT THE very moment when a 14,000-signature petition protesting against anti-gay discrimination was being ceremonially handed in at 10 Downing Street, a clash between police and gays on parade was nearing flashpoint in nearby Parliament Square.

It was a clash that was to lead to some of the most astonishing scenes ever witnessed on a Gay Pride Parade in London.

Most of the 3,000-strong parade continued unaware that at the rear end of the march, Frank Egan - a member of the Brixton gay community - had been arrested for wearing a kitchen vegetable cutter in his hat as part of his drag costume.

When marchers behind Frank protested against his arrest and halted, others were arrested. Marchers who stopped either in protest or confusion were roughly handled by police - one middle-aged gay woman told Gay News she had suffered extensive bruises. Confusion reigned as coachloads of police appeared and marchers found themselves cut off from the main body of the parade.

Three other members of the Brixton community were arrested and taken to Bow Street police station.

Meanwhile the main body of the march continued up Whitehall as John Saunders, Sheila Macaskill, Jeff Dudgeon and Geoffrey Brighton handed in the gay rights petition at Downing Street.

Rumours filtered to the march, but not even stewards were able to find out what had happened until the festive parade reached Malet Street, where the carnival organized by the CHE London groups was due to take place.

It was at Malet Street that the most dramatic scenes of the day took place. Announcements of the arrests were made over portable loudhailers as the marchers began to filter into the University of London Union.

As the gays began to grow angry at the news, the police cordoned off both ends of the street and resisted demands that gays be allowed to continue the march to Bow Street to de-

mand the release of the arrested men.

The confrontation became intense as Anna Duhig and Tony Konrath urged the marchers on by loudhailer from a first-floor window. A group of gay men and women linked arms and some burst through the police cordon, which was strengthened to five deep as more demonstrators tried to press their way through. Now another five men were arrested.

The emotional temperature in Malet Street, crammed with at least 2,000 gays, soared - then, just as a riot seemed inevitable, the police announced they would allow the march to go on to the police station, and the tension built over half an hour eased.



Frank Egan and 'That Hat'

A deputation from Gay Legal Advice (GLAD) had already departed for Bow Street to negotiate on behalf of the arrested men. And Derek Ogg and David Jago of SHRG, with Robert Palmer of CHE, had persuaded Commander David Mitchell to allow the unscheduled march and to arrange a speeding of the bailing procedure in order to avoid a street battle.

Between 1,000 and 1,500 gays were on the second march. The only incidents were when three people were arrested near Kingsway - and the crowd sat down until assured they would be released: two were brought back to the march a few minutes later.

The march halted in Long Acre,

about 200 yards from Bow Street, and a deputation was sent in to negotiate along with the battery of gay lawyers already there. Derek Ogg and Terry Munyard helped to speed the release up by standing surety to the tune of £300 for two of the men.

The march halted for almost an hour in Long Acre, refusing to move until all the people arrested - now a total of ten - had been released.

Then, still escorted by police, the parade moved back to Malet Street with victorious chants and cheers - and the planned carnival went ahead as a roaring, if occasionally chaotic success.

Gay activists are still trying to construct an overview of all the events of the march, and many fear that the confrontation will have brought police-gay relations to their lowest ebb for many years.

Even so, the parade has been hailed as a success. Jackie Forster of Sappho told listeners to a Capital Radio phone-in that the number of gay women on the march had delighted her.

And, as one veteran gay campaigner commented, the police now know that gay people's anger can be forceful. "We're not just a pack of easily-controlled queers," he said.

A DEFENCE COMMITTEE for the arrested men has been set up and has appealed for money to fight the cases and finance publicity. The charges involve assault against the police and obstruction. They intend to plead Not Guilty at the hearings at Bow Street on July 23.

They have called on gays to help picket the court and for witnesses to the arrests and incidents of police harassment to get in touch by telephoning CHE headquarters on (01) 289 9335.

A benefit performance of *Sexual Outlaws* has been arranged at Action Space in Chenies Street on July 20.

QUOTE from Julian Hows after being released from Bow Street, showing journalists his torn costume: "Do I look as if I'm dressed for an evening on the barricades?"

Organizers blame police

THE POLICE have been blamed by the organizers of this year's Gay Pride Parade in London for causing an explosive confrontation which came close to a riot outside the University of London Union at the close of the official march.

The Gay Pride Committee claimed the police had not been prepared for the carnival atmosphere of the parade and that the hostile attitude of individual officers was the major factor in the initial arrest of several people in Parliament Square.

"After the first arrests, the police totally over-reacted and lost control of the situation, which resulted in the splitting of the parade into three sections," said a statement issued by the Committee.

"They made no attempt to liaise with the official parade stewards and in some cases actively prevented stewards from communicating with each other effectively, in particular with regard to the section remaining in Parliament Square."

The Committee claimed that the police decision to seal off both ends

of Malet Street, "forcing a large number of people into the University of London building" created panic and confusion.

They also stated that the police had refused requests for talks with the people responsible for organizing the events inside the building, and this had led to a panic culminating in the setting off of fire alarms in the building by ULU staff in an attempt to evacuate it.

"The anger generated by the inept policing of the situation and the time taken to make any decision about what to do about that potentially riotous situation that they had created led to tempers boiling over and attempts being made to break the police cordons."

"The failure of the police to take any notice of the Gay Pride Week Committee led us to wash our hands of any responsibility to the police at that point."

The Committee has demanded a full explanation "of the disastrous events that ruined a traditionally happy and peaceful annual parade" and has written with copies of the statement to Sir David McNee, London's

top police officer, and to the Home Office.

In a further statement to the gay community, the Committee condemned the police for failing to "eradicate prejudice, ignorance and blatant sexism from their own ranks, despite their repeated public statements to the contrary."

The Committee had been involved as individuals in resisting what they call "vicious police attempts" to clear Malet Street and to prevent the spontaneous march on Bow Street police station.

The Committee pledged itself to work actively with the defence committee to secure acquittals for all ten arrested during the original parade and the scuffles which followed.

Meanwhile the Campaign for Homosexual Equality has offered "full support" to the ten arrested men.

"CHE deplores the arrests on the Gay Pride Week March," said the Campaign's statement. "Had these not occurred, the march would have been peaceful as in previous years."

"We condemn the unnecessary police hostility towards individuals and offer those arrested our full support."

BOSIE adds...

I FOR ONE refuse to believe the normally reliable source which insists that the Vegetable Chopper That Launched A Thousand Gays (ie the item that caused the Gay Pride arrest of Frank Egan for wearing an offensive weapon) was in fact purchased in (gulp!) W H Smiths.

Otherwise not only would I refuse to go on the picket at Bow Street Magistrates Court on July 23 but I might well organize a picket all of my own in the close vicinity of Mayall and Railton Roads in Brixton in protest against a politically - less - than - pure purchase.

If it should be true (oh Heaven forfend), then all I can say - smugly - is that karma works in wondrous ways and we should all learn a lesson from it. W H Smiths indeed!

* *

A LOT of people - mainly men - got right into the swim of things at the CHE Carnival bash at ULU after the Day of the Marches. So much so that the spectator gallery at ULU's baths was crammed with people who'd paid 30p each to Switchboard funds to watch the unclothed aquatic antics - congas, Buzby Berkeley routines and so forth. Even Griff Vaughan Williams was seen to smile.

Pity, though, that reports of the showers becoming so hot they were almost steam rooms seem to be responsible for the reluctance of the resident non-gay lifeguard to do overtime and the watersports nearly came to a premature end.

Amazingly, organizer Bryan Green found at least twenty suitably qualified lifesavers and the fun was resumed.

* *



FROM The Guardian's Qmen column, Tuesday July 1 1980. 'Nuff said, except to add that the banner stemmed from an idea kicked around at Lesbian Line and was made the night before the Gay Pride Parade by Anna Durell of lezzy line and CHE's Administrator.

* *

DRAMA outside Ealing Common tube station when police thought they'd arrested Mary Whitehouse for stealing a newspaper to read about the events of the parade.

Robert Airtton of Thurrock CHE caused consternation when taken to Ealing police station still dressed *a la* Whitehouse. A woman police officer was mistakenly called to search 'her' but quickly retreated in favour of a very embarrassed policeman. Police people kept filing past to peep at the visiting 'celebrity', who was held, with friend Keith, until 3.30 before being allowed to go without any charges.

Robert and Thurrock CHE colleague John Thorpe (dressed as a rather hirsute nun) had caused a ripple of amusement during the parade itself with a disgusting version of the Festival of Light emblem and the even more tasteless legend "Festival of Shight". But I guess they made their point...

* *

I COULDN'T help but feel sorry for PC T 413 (or some such number) whose pulchritude brought a momentary stunned silence to the perturbed atmosphere in Parliament Square on Gay Pride Saturday. Gay men's stares were rapidly averted when a lesbian friend of mine quietly pointed out that being arrested for defending brothers and sisters from police harassment was one thing, but being arrested for ogling, chatting up, indecently assaulting or attempting to procure a police officer was quite another.

Surely it couldn't have been the same man who caused legal hearts to skip a beat when he was blushing sent into the room where delicate negotiations were taking place between gay lawyers and senior brass at Bow Street. I hear that Terry Munyard actually paused in mid-sentence and Derek Ogg had to be picked up off the floor before peace talks could be resumed. Gay men are incorrigible, I sometimes think.

And ah, have the police cottoned on to more subtle tactical use of their prettiest police persons to disconcert gay male activists? Much better than packing them into tight jeans and sending them down the cottages, don'tcha think?



A large pink triangle dominates the Gay's The Word bookshop float in the middle of the march



Prime Minister Ms Margaret Thatcher, alias Richard McCance, former CHE EC member and full-time organizer of London Friend, looking graceful



Two women flying high



Marchers gather outside the University of London Union in Malet Street to hear the news of the first arrests



The float from Heaven ultradisco and (inset) a cloned cherub it featured



Sunshine & Showers

A photo report of the smiles and conflict of the London Gay Pride March by BOB WORKMAN and Kevin Lee



A posse appears to have a strange effect on the lawman!

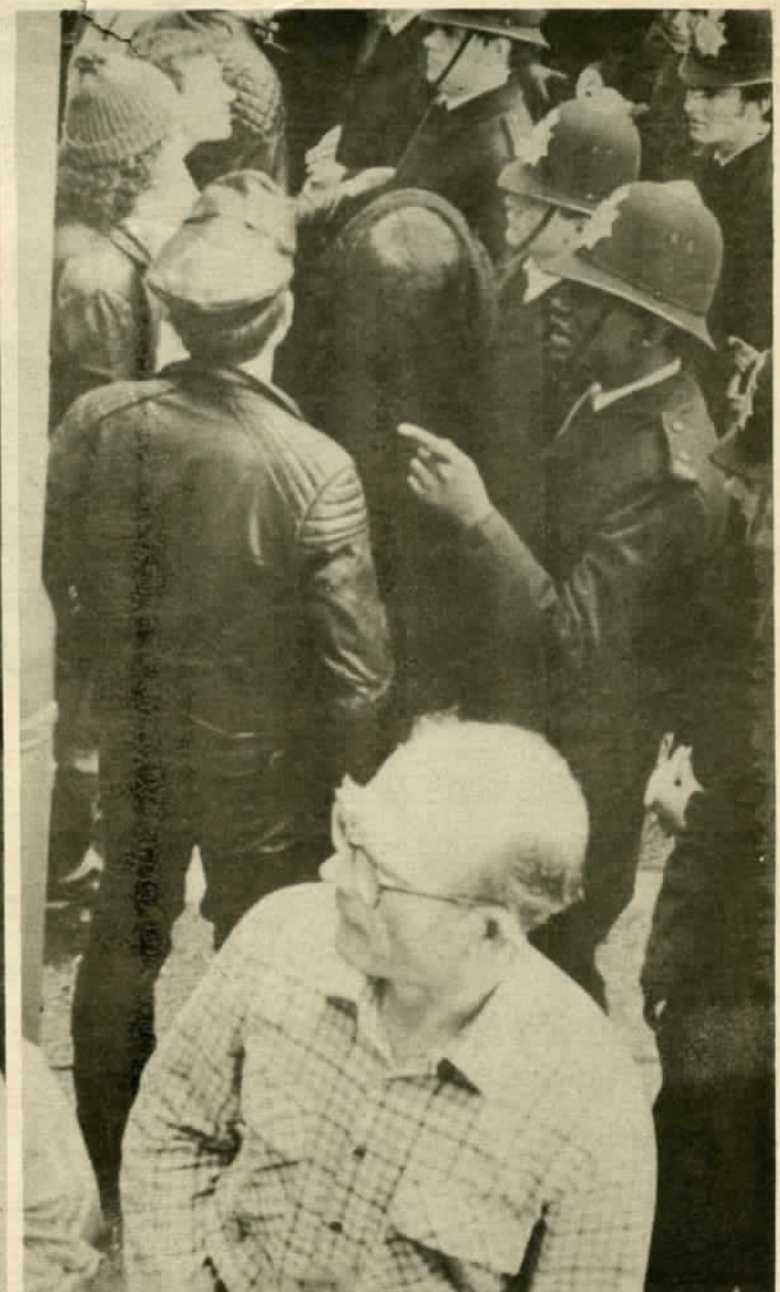
Never too y



e & Showers
 e smiles and conflicts on
 le March by BOB
 in Lee



A little rain never hurt anybody



Making a point: a policeman draws the (thin blue) line



University of London
 the news of the first



Never too young to be proud



The big push: gays heaving against the police line in an effort to leave Malet Street. After this incident the police allowed the march to go to Bow Street



effect on the lawman!



Smiles have given way to anger and one man makes his feelings heard



Released: two of the accused, Julian Hows and Russell Herring (giving the clenched fist salute) leave Bow Street police station to rejoin their friends