



Maine Gay Task Force NEWSLETTER

FEB 75

Vol. 2 No. 2

Last month the Maine State Legislature was presented with the final report of a special legislative commission which has been working for two years on a comprehensive revision of the entire state criminal code. While most of the ensuing publicity focused upon such controversial proposals as the decriminalization of prostitution and use of marijuana, the chapter entitled "Sex Offenses" attracted little or no attention.

Yet the effect of their revisions would be to eliminate the ancient sanctions against Gay sex that have long hung like the Sword of Damocles over the heads of Gay people in Maine, the most visible symbol of our oppression.

Under the proposed code, sex offenses would be limited to four general categories:

1.) Rape

An exclusively heterosexual crime

2.) Gross sexual misconduct

Entailing the use of force, threat, or other imposition in engaging a person of either sex in a sexual act, defined as "any act of sexual gratification between two persons involving direct physical contact between the sex organs of one and the mouth or anus of the other."

3.) Sexual abuse of minors

This statute would prohibit sexual acts of intercourse with persons between the ages of 14 and 18 years by a person at least three years older than the minor, in effect raising the age of consent from 16 to 18 years.

4.) Unlawful sexual contact

Sexual contact is defined as "any touching of the genitals directly or through clothing, other than as would constitute a sexual act, for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire."

Noticably absent from this proposed criminal code are any references to "Crimes Against Nature" which under the existing criminal code made sodomy, fellatio, and cunnilingus criminal acts punishable by lengthy prison terms. Although the old laws do not specifically limit these offenses to homosexuals, they are enforced almost exclusively against Gay people and are primarily designed to inhibit homosexual behavior. Indeed the term "Crime Against Nature" has often been used synonymously with homosexuality.

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The new code is given an excellent chance of passage by knowledgeable legislators and the Maine Civil Liberties Union which is lobbying for its adoption. The fact that the old strictures against fellatio, cunnilingus and anal intercourse per se have been deleted would, in the words of an officer of MCLU, "put the burden of raising these issues on the haters themselves." In other words our enemies would have to convince the legislature that sanctions against these acts should be reinstated into the law. This may prove a bit more difficult for them than if they had to fight back a bill specifically designed to delete them.

Legislative hearings on the proposed new criminal code will probably be held in March. There may also be public hearings in a few large cities prior to the state hearings. Members of the Maine Gay Task Force will attend all the hearings in the event that the homophobes attempt to raise issues of concern to Gay people. It is hoped that other members of the Task Force who have not been active in the past but who subscribe to this Newsletter will make an attempt to participate. MGTF will notify anyone who expresses interest in attending the hearings of their exact dates.

Although the repeal of oppressive laws will have little effect upon the daily lives of most Gay people, the fact that Maine may soon become one of only nine or ten states where it is not against the law for Gay people to make love is of some significance. It indicates that the Gay movement is beginning to be heeded in Maine and that the attitudes of some are changing, if only superficially. This represents an important step toward our ultimate goal: the complete elimination of heterosexist oppression in this state.

STAGE DOOR THREATENED

On February 5th a standing-room-only meeting of the Wells Board of Selectpersons was staged to determine the merits of granting a beer license to a popular local tavern. The unusual amount of interest in this little town of Wells, Maine on a dark Winter's night came as a result of a call to arms from supporters of the Stage Door, one of Maine's few Gay bars, owned and operated by father and daughter team, Robert and Susan Boisvert.

The Stage Door had been operating a booming business for 6 months when it was summarily denied the renewal of its liquor license at a town hearing on Jan 6th with only 3 days notice. At that hearing the Boisverts were not permitted to speak, although the opponents gave long and often contrived testimony. One witness claimed she had observed the hostess of the Stage Door go into her motel with a man and later entertain another one the same night. Ms. Boisvert, who is securely Gay, rose to her feet and announced to a somewhat startled Board of Selectpersons, "I am the hostess at the Stage Door, and I have never been in your motel--least of all with two men!!"

Apparently, the first hearing was a total farce with ex-Selectperson Albeo LaPierre, owner of a summer motel across Route 1 from the Stage Door, pompously sitting there

joking with his friends on the Board as he demanded the license, not to mention the Boisverts' civil rights. Of course, the real issue--homosexuality--is never mentioned, but everybody knows that people's sexual or affectional preferences determine their ability to work, to run a business, and their right to exist even.

So then what happened. The Boisverts decided not to appeal the decision but to apply for a beer license instead. A new hearing was set for Feb. 5th. That's the one the Gay community turned out for to insure a "fair" hearing. This one was classic theatre. The decor of the meeting room was in itself a strong portent of the bumper scenes to come: those ubiquitous (ubiquitous?) brown folding chairs on a brown linoleum floor--both accented neatly by the pale green concrete block walls. In fairness it should be mentioned that the monotony of the walls is lessened here and there by red and black NO SMOKING signs still visible through the nicotine haze. It's immediately obvious to anyone entering that the room is probably 85% homosexual, a Winter record even Ogunquit could envy.

Albeo LaPierre is back again from his Florida home to further

STAGE DOOR THREATENED (cont)

pursue his new career as a "queer-hunter", and after the meeting will return to Florida, although he testifies to how difficult it is to get to sleep at night "because of all the noise."

Calvin Haskell, proprietor of the Weathervane Furniture shop next door to the tavern, enters stage right and proceeds to employ all the classic public speaking tactics yet devised, including the more transparent ones like, my mother, the Senior Citizen, the beloved son in South Carolina who sent him a plant pot (or was it a pot plant) that was taken from his porch, all the time coming on like the Gentle George McGovern of Those Oppressed. He bought his shop after the Stage Door had opened for business. One suspects he may not have been aware of the politics of his neighbors at that time. Imagine his chagrin as it became more and more obvious he was right next door to a whole nest of "queers".

Police Chief Carter is next. He's one of those cops we used to see eating a burger in a small southern roadhouse while greedily sizing up Peter Fonda & Co. in a booth across the room. He delivered a three day police surveillance report in which a typical evening's "action" at the Stage Door made for rather dull reading. "11:05 pm--no action. 11:10 pm--freight train passed by. 12:05 am--no action. Music not heard 1:05 am--'Bye-Bye' heard from parking lot."

Such energy, imagination and force that went into the successful circumnavigation of the real issue was a wonder to behold. The only person to be so indiscreet as to mention the possible existence of bigotry in the room was NGTF's fearless Political Coordinator, Peter Prizer, who said, "It seems to me that the objections raised here are those that could be raised against any drinking establishment in Maine. The people who have taken such pains to detail these charges are motivated by bigotry and prejudice against a minority group they want to see out of town. The Board is not too pleased and THUD-THUD-THUD goes the gavel---that was as close as we came to coming out in that room."

Owner Robert Boisvert informed the Selectpeople, "We bring in lots of money to the town of Wells--and Ogunquit, too. When you put 200 to 300 people into our place in one evening, they all have to eat some place and to sleep some place. Maybe Haskell and LaPierre don't need the business, but the other business people in town do." But, no matter how hard he has tried to deal with their complaints and meet demands, it's not enough. It will never be enough.

At that meeting they forced us to address ourselves to "a bunch of bullshit" (I overheard from our ranks, but it was in an undertone.)

Jean Nielson, who works at the Stage Door denied the charges as did others, but the ultimate decision of the Board "after due consideration" to deny the Stage Door its beer license was politically predictable.

What keeps bothering me is that we were taken in again. We have known from the very beginning what this whole hassle is about, but we bought into their play, their direction. There is no way that people with power enough to defend and propagate their bigotry are going to face it willingly. We have to show them. We had before us classic homophobes doing a righteous number on us and all we could say was not angry enough nor loud enough nor outrageous enough to dent their consciousness.

Mother God, give us the courage to make scenes, to lift our voices and demand our freedom, to "HOWL" everywhere and anywhere we find injustice--even in Wells, Maine on a cold Winter's night.

swain & prizer
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DR. H. BROWN DIES
NGTF LIVES

Dr. Howard J Brown, founder of the National Gay Task Force and NYC's first Health Service Administrator died Feb. 1, 1975 of a heart ailment at his home. He was 50 years old.

In October, 1973, Dr. Brown made front page news when he came out publicly and announced he was a homosexual in an endeavor to end the prejudices that homosexuals face in obtaining jobs. In the same month, he helped found the Task Force and served as its Board chairperson.

His whole life was dedicated to the people. As Health Service Administrator, Dr. Brown tried to reshape NYC's health care system from the physician-oriented one it was into one that would serve the needs of the people first.

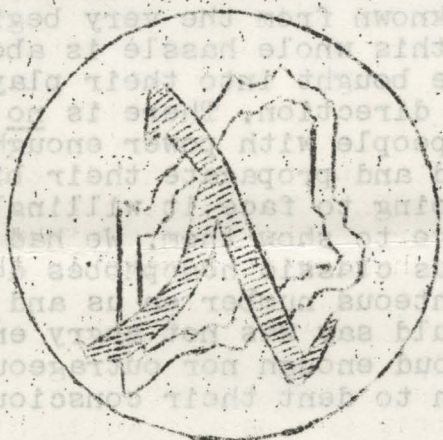
When Dr. Brown came out he expressed the hope that others in high positions would follow his example. We will all miss his tremendous energy and courage in our daily struggle. We hope that NGTF will continue to reflect his great strength of purpose in its efforts to free all Gay people everywhere.

GAY SUPPORT & ACTION, INC.

GSA's incorporation has been approved by the State Attorney General & has been filed with the Secretary of State. GSA will thus become the first Gay group in Me. to be incorporated as a non-profit organization. Congratulations!

SYMPOSIUM II DETAILS

The time and place of the Second Maine Gay Symposium have now been confirmed. Symposium II will be held April 4 and 5 on the campus of Bangor Community College (formerly University of Maine at Bangor). A pre-registration package, including housing and child care forms are available upon request from the Wilde-Stein Club, Memorial Union, UMO, Orono, Maine 04473.



The conference commences Friday evening, April 4 at 6:00 PM with registration and a reception. This will be a good chance for Gay sisters and brothers to rap and unwind. There will be several Gay performers who will read poetry and provide music. Gay arts, crafts and literature will be displayed and made available.

The program continues on Saturday morning with late registration and morning speakers. The welcome speech will be delivered by Sandra Swain. Keynote speakers will be Susan Breeding, active in the Maine movement since its inception, and Allen Young, co-editor of Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation.

Housing will be a problem. We shall try to house everyone. Please bring a sleeping bag! Child care facilities are also being prepared. Try to register early through the mail, so we can have some idea as to how many participants there will be. Send check or money order to Wilde-Stein Club (address above).

OUR STORY: STONEWALLERS VS. MATTACHINE
(second in a series)

The police told reporters they closed the Stonewall only because it had refused to apply for a liquor license. This statement is widely doubted. The Mattachine Society, in a hastily mimeographed pamphlet, charged the State Liquor Authority and the police with renewed homosexual harassment and vowed retribution. On the club's battered facade, someone had scrawled in chalk, "GAY POWER."

A meeting was called by the Mattachine Society after the July Fourth weekend. The head of Mattachine in a staid brown suit, strides to the front. From a distance, he looks somewhat like a dependable Cartier salesclerk. With professional aplomb, he opens the meeting. Police brutality and heterosexual indifference must be protested, he asserts; at the same time, the Gay world must retain the favor of the Establishment, especially those who

After lunch, the participants can choose from at least six workshops to attend. Topics include: Coming Out, Rural Gays, Sexism, Gay-Straight Relations, Lesbian Separatism (for Gay Women only), and Political Action. The last workshop period will be concerned with Female and Male Identity. We shall split up into groups along sex lines and discuss masculinity/femininity, sexism, the Feminist movement, stereotypes, role-playing, etc. Each group shall report to the conference as a whole during the feedback session. In addition, extra space will be provided for those who wish to hold a workshop on a topic which has not been covered. Additional topics should be submitted to the symposium coordinators prior to April 5.

Saturday evening, there will be a dinner and dance with a \$1.00 admission fee. This will run until midnight. Hopefully, an outing to the coast will be organized for Sunday.

Tickets for Symposium II will cost \$5.00, which includes the Friday reception, two coffee breaks, Saturday's lunch, and the workshop program.

make and change the laws. Homosexual acceptance will come slowly, by educating the straight community, with grace and good humor and. . . Someone jumps up and shouts, "We don't want acceptance, goddam it, we want respect! Demand it! We're through hiding in dark bars behind Mafia doormen. We're going to go where straights go and do anything with each other they do and if they don't like it, well fuck them! Straights don't have to

(cont., on next page)

STONEWALLERS (cont)

be ashamed of anything sexy they happen to feel like doing in public, and neither do we! We're through cringing and begging."

Someone else cries out, "We're going to protest in front of St. Patrick's; the Catholics have put us down long enough!"

Then James Fouratt, the radical who burned real money on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange as a war protest, speaks out. "We've got to radicalize! Because as long as we accept getting fired from jobs because we are Gay, or not being hired at all, or being treated like second class citizens, we're going to remain neurotic and screwed up. Be proud of what you are, People! And if it takes riots or even guns to show them what we are, well, that's the only language the pigs understand!"

Wild applause; Fouratt goes on. "All the oppressed have got to unite. The system keeps us all weak by keeping us desperate (and separate). Do you realize that not one straight radical group showed up during all those nights of rioting? If it had been a Black demonstration, they'd have been there. We've got to work together with all the New Left."

A dozen people are on their feet cheering. They are the ones who will join other new Gay radicals to rally in Washington Square and march down Sixth Ave., halting astonished traffic, carrying lavender "Gay Power" banners, chanting "Gay Power to Gay People," singing "We Shall Overcome" solemnly in Sheridan Square.

From "The New Homosexual," by Tom Burke, Esquire, Dec. 1969. (edited for MGTF Newsletter but it is still male-oriented in case you didn't notice)

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WHISTLING THROUGH PRIORITIES

MGTF has decided not to initiate an amendment to the state Human Rights Act to include sexual and affectional preference this session for the following reasons:

- Lack of time to prepare comprehensive arguments including documented cases of discrimination.
- Shortage of available person-power to attend the legislative hearings and general debate due to other projects, such as Symposium II.
- Need for time to study the workings of the legislature and make contact with potential supporters among the legislators themselves.
- MGTF is supporting the revision of the criminal code now under consideration by the legislature, which will do away with victimless crimes.

In discussions with Terry Ann Lunt-Aucoin, Chairperson of the Maine Human Rights Commission, the Task Force learned that the Commis-

sion is not prepared on such short notice to give us the kind of needed support that it would otherwise be able to offer. Ms. Lunt-Aucoin advised us that the Commission is already overloaded with cases and would require an \$8,000.00 appropriation to handle the additional caseload that this amendment would conceivably generate.

MGTF realizes also that a poorly planned and executed effort might do more harm than good in what promises to be an extremely difficult task under the best of circumstances. A lopsided vote against such a bill, either in Committee or on the Floor, might make it much harder to revive in the next session.

For these reasons the Task Force feels that it would be wiser to concentrate on other areas of concern to Gay people while simultaneously preparing for a full-scale campaign to pass a Gay Rights Bill in the next legislative session.

Stephen Leo

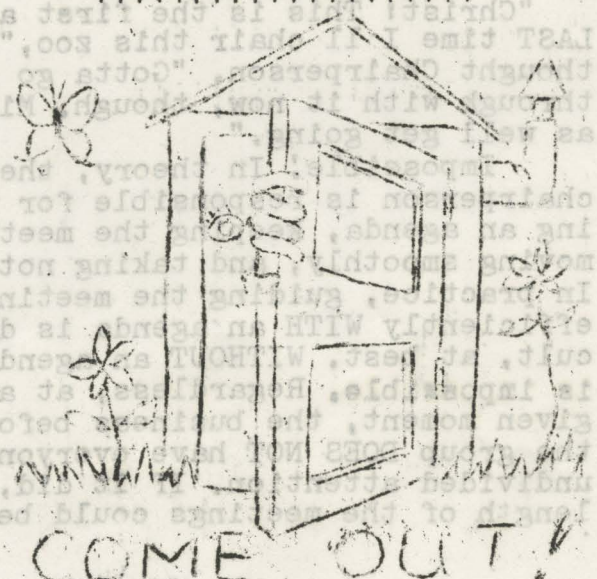
P.S. FROM AN EDITOR:

One other objection to spending energy on legislation gets to the most basic conflicts we face as radicals--priorities. Some of us feel that trying to make changes within the system is simply asking for a stay of execution from a fascist society capable of purging any segment at its whim.

For those of us who are skeptical of the liberal approach which siphons off energy in support of the existing superstructure-the question is: why buy into it on any level?

Who needs token concessions? Or toleration? What Gay people have to offer society is a positive alternative to the masculine tyranny which characterizes White-Male-Capitalist-Protestant-Heterosexual Amerika, and if we have to build an entirely new social structure to insure the individual freedom of millions and millions of Gays and other oppressed people, then that is our main priority.

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THE CHAIRPERSON

-or-

WHY NO ONE VOLUNTEERS

-KAREN BYE-

The scene is a church on a cold, snowy Sunday afternoon. Roaming the basement is a motley assortment of men and women; eventually a 7-to-4 ratio. Excuses are many for the absences: family obligations, the snow, sickness, "misplaced" meeting dates, ad nauseum.

The meeting is prefaced by a piano solo; three delighted queers for an audience. Plus one flaming fairy in gold choir robe camping it up with a Charleston imitation. Promptly, 25 minutes late, the group is gavelled into some semblance of order. But only momentarily. On all sides of the "referee" people are sitting, concentrating on marking quilt patterns, sewing, shuffling notes, talking.

First order of business is to find a volunteer to chair the next meeting. The man sitting nearest is "volunteered." That was easy. Would getting through the agenda be as simple? Of course not!

The treasurer's expected one-sentence report turns into a 20 minute monologue. Now THIS is a preview of things to come!

Back to the agenda. Next item under "old business: things people agreed to do and haven't." This is "urgent;" maybe that's why it has been on the agenda since the November meeting. Okay, gang. Here goes... Gotta get their attention first. Pairs and small groups are having their own conversations. And a few seem completely oblivious to the fact something is (supposedly) going on around them.

Next, in the same category, is a follow-up on TV air time offered us. Of course, the person looking into that isn't here. But that's okay; a two-sentence report/update has been relayed through the volunteer's lover to the Chairperson's lover to the Chairperson. No sweat. State the news, then move on. Yeah! Except...one person is extremely upset by the information relayed and attacks the Chairperson, because said arrangements are not entirely to Upset Person's liking.

"Don't yell at me; I'm only passing on the information. If you're upset, take it up with the Volunteer, not me."

"Christ! This is the first and LAST time I'll chair this zoo," thought Chairperson, "Gotta go through with it now, though. Might as well get going."

Impossible! In theory, the chairperson is responsible for writing an agenda, keeping the meeting moving smoothly, and taking notes. In practice, guiding the meeting efficiently WITH an agenda is difficult, at best. WITHOUT an agenda it is impossible. Regardless, at any given moment, the business before the group DOES NOT have everyone's undivided attention. If it did, the length of the meetings could be cut

in half, and there would be little or no need to backtrack. Robert's Rules of Order may be superfluous for organizations with a horizontal structure such as ours. However, for THIS particular group of individuals, I feel it is imperative to operate under SOME rules, at least until everyone learns a little consideration and courtesy. This would reduce -- or eliminate -- one major, all-too-common occurrence: two or more people talking at once.

In this situation, the secretary (in this instance, chairperson) cannot follow both/all conversations. (For those of you reading this who wondered why your profound contribution to the meetings was not recorded, kindly reread the previous two sentences.)

My final gripe about the last meeting--the density/obnoxiousness of two people in particular, deserves a little more explanation. To the one: if you disagree with the methods or arrangements of a third person, kindly don't vent your anger/irritation/frustration/whatever on whoever relays the information. Please yield the floor more often to others; i.e., shut up once in a while. Some people, myself included, are either too polite or too overwhelmed or perhaps too shy to interrupt the monologue. And finally, if it isn't asking too much, please tone down the impatient and surly way in which you communicate your opinions. Stating them once, in simple English, is enough. I think all of us are capable of understanding your point.

And to the other: women want and need a chance to be together without a "man-presence" around. It has been my experience that even relatively non-sexist men still inhibit women, particularly when discussing women, a subject you know nothing about. The tendency to dominate the conversation is great; that's one thing men are taught in this society. Face it: men in general, and perhaps, you in particular are not indispensable, the male ego notwithstanding.

This bitching--"constructive criticism" if you will--is aimed at everyone concerned with being an effective, active force for change. It is also an attempt to perhaps straighten out (if you'll pardon the phrase) the manner in which future meetings will be conducted, and to direct outward my feeling of great anger.

As it stands now, I feel stymied by the mess called "The Meeting" and its conduct (or misconduct). I would probably direct all my energy into and through the Task Force provided...

If all this has made those of you who attended the Feb. meeting angry, GOOD. For my part, I have just dealt with my feelings and feel extremely good about it.

"SYMPOSIUM II"

7 [Feb 1975]

Please complete the following questionnaire and return as soon as possible (but no later than April 2, 1975) to:

Symposium Planning Committee
c/o Wilde - Stein Club
Memorial Union, UMO
Orono, Maine 04473

HOUSING

For those who wish housing:

How many people: _____ Women _____ Men _____
Friday only _____ Saturday only _____ Both _____

Include: Name, address & Phone number of contact person: _____

For those who can provide Housing:

How many people: _____ Signify Preference _____
Men, Women or Both: _____

Friday only: _____ Saturday only: _____ Both: _____

Include: Name, address & Phone number of contact person: _____

CHILD CARE

For those who wish child care services:

Number of children: _____
Friday (evening) only: _____ Saturday only: _____
Both: _____

ARTS & CRAFTS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Do you wish to remain anonymous? _____

Type of art or craft work: _____

Will you show/sell your own work: _____, or do you want us to do it: _____

Do you need someone to transport your work? _____

Comments: _____

CRAFTS: Susan Henderson, C/O Wilde-Stein Club
Memorial Union, UMO
Orono, Maine 04473

ARTS: Tim Bouffard, C/O MGTF, Box 4542
Portland, Maine 04112

TICKETS

Will be attending: _____ (number) Wish to order prepaid tickets: _____ (number;
include payment) \$5.00 registration fee.

Will attend dinner-dance: _____ (number). (\$1.00 extra; not included with
registration.)

Make checks payable to: Wilde-Stein Club.

The Androgyny Essay

I recently read Carolyn Heilbrun's book, Toward a Recognition of Androgyny, which is a discussion of androgyny in the European literary tradition. It helped to coalesce in my mind some ideas for an essay on androgyny which I have been meaning to write for some time. The word "androgyny", a combination of the Greek words for "man" and "woman", means a combination of "masculine" and "feminine" qualities. As most of us realize, there are no such things as in-born masculine or feminine character traits; masculinity and femininity are defined by our culture, and the definitions vary infinitely among different societies. Nevertheless, the concept of androgyny is useful because we in this culture are so accustomed to gender roles and stereotypes that the idea of mixing these stereotypes within one personality leads us to some new insights into ourselves and into the quality of being Gay.

Most human beings are potentially androgynous, I think, simply because most people's personalities, if allowed free expression, do not fit the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. I hold a brief for androgyny, because I believe that stereotyped masculinity and femininity represent only half a human being, and because the acting out of these stereotypes has produced an unhealthy society of unfeeling, aggressive men who may wipe us out in a total war and frivolous, useless women who lead unhappy lives because they have no self-respect and cannot use

their talents.

Gay people have an advantage over straights in recognizing and expressing this androgyny, because Gays have already broken the most basic sex-role restriction, the demand for exclusive heterosexuality. Once that barrier is breached, other requirements of one's sex role seem trivial by comparison. Once on the other side of that barrier, there are no traditional roles to guide one's behavior (the old "butch" and "femme" stereotypes have always been rather weak compared to heterosexual sex roles). One must find one's own proper role, and this searching makes it more likely that one will discover androgyny.

As I said, I hold a brief for androgyny. I find great beauty in people who can love whom they love, and do the work they want to do, without caring whether they are "acting like a woman" or "acting like a man". Such people are truly the "real women" and "real men" because they are whole persons whose gender is a part of their totality, not a role to be played or a straitjacket to be borne.

INTERNATIONAL GAY MOVEMENT GETS ORGANIZED - COOPERATION SOUGHT...The International Gay Rights Congress, held in Edinburgh on 14-22 December, adopted the lambda as the international Gay Rights movement symbol and urges all groups to use it. An all-Lesbian conference is being planned for Oslo in August, 1975. Four international Gay task forces have been established to pursue Movement activities. Anyone interested in working on any one of them should write to: Derek Ogg, Senior President, Edinburgh Univ. Students' Assn., Old College, Edinburgh EH8 9YL.

"AFFECTIONAL PREFERENCE"

The term "affectional or sexual preference" is defined in HR-166 as "having or manifesting an emotional or physical attachment to another consenting person or persons of either gender; or having or manifesting a preference for such attachment." Usage of the term is urged by Gay Rights organizations because it protects our right to express affection openly.

"Nothing short of everything will really do!"

NBC PASSES AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT including protection on the basis of "sexual preference". This is "a major breakthrough in the area of gay people and the media," according to Loretta Lotman, NGTF's Media Advisor. In addition to the inclusion of Gays in this statement, NGTF was told, NBC will hold a series of meetings on both coasts to allow direct Gay input to production personnel and program executives. Lotman continued, "It seems that 'Policewoman' - negative though it was - served to sensitize NBC management to the needs of the gay community in a big hurry. Every person who wrote a letter, called or complained - you were a part of the gay strength that helped us to change the corporate minds at the network. HOORAY FOR ALL OF US!!"

S.A.G.A.

Seacoast Area Gay Alliance is an outreach of Gay Students' Organization of the University of New Hampshire. GSO was founded last year by Wayne April and Lou Kelly. S.A.G.A. was established in August 1974. They publish a newsletter, Breakthrough (see Bits for subscription and ad info.). They meet every Sunday at 7:00 PM at the Stage Door. For more information, contact Linda Groneng, Win Allen, Frank Starret, Betty MacDonald, or Mary Johnson.

THIS PETITION FROM THE FEBRUARY ISSUE OF MS. MAGAZINE along with the signatures of 100 prominent political and social figures, including Bella Abzug, Sissy Farenthold, Elaine Noble, Joanne Woodward, Lily Tomlin, Anais Nin, Joyce Carol Oates, Gail Thain Parker, LaDonna Harris, Dolores Huerta, Karen DeCrow and many others, has already been sent to Washington. Other names will be forwarded as they come in. All groups have permission to reproduce the petition directly from the magazine and distribute it. The response to the petition has the potential for being the most massive public demonstration for Gay Rights that has yet been possible. We urge that everyone participate. Sign it!!

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, wish to state publicly our opposition to an archaic practice that is still alive in this country: the attempt by government to interfere in the sexual lives of consenting adults, and the failure by government to protect the civil rights of people who suffer such interference from others.

We believe all people have common cause in eliminating this practice. Though laws and regulations governing private sexual behavior tend to be selectively enforced against lesbians and male homosexuals - particularly from poor, minority, and politically unpopular groups - they potentially affect every person, regardless of personal power or sexual orientation. Not only do these laws and regulations leave privacy and individual freedom to the whim of employers and legislators, landlords and judges, but their enforcement results in a tragic waste of human talent. Even when not enforced, their existence serves to inhibit the free choice of lifestyle.

Therefore, we urge every person, regardless of race, age, class, sex, or sexual orientation, to join us in establishing this fundamental right to privacy and individual freedom.

As feminists, we sign this petition for one additional reason. In the history of women's struggle for self-determination, it has been a painful fact that almost any woman who did not choose to play a traditional or secondary role might find herself labeled a lesbian, and restricted

in her efforts for fear of that label. Indeed, even the Women's Movement itself has sometimes been divided and weakened by this fear. Therefore, we must unite on the issue of all women's right to a free choice of lifestyle, regardless of sexual orientation. Only when the word lesbian has lost its power to intimidate and oppress, when it is as positive as other human choices, can each individual woman be fearless and free.

As women and as feminists, we pledge to work toward the following goals which we believe will benefit all citizens:

1. The repeal of all regulations and the elimination of institutional practices that limit access to employment, housing, public accommodations, credit, government or military service and child custody because of sexual orientation.
2. The repeal of all laws that make sexual acts between consenting adults criminal.
3. The passage of legislation that will guarantee each individual's rights, regardless of sexual orientation, so that those who suffer discrimination for that reason will have the same access to redress as do the victims of discrimination because of race, sex, religion, or national origin.
4. The creation of a social climate in which lifestyles may be freely chosen.

THIS STATEMENT AND ITS LIST OF SIGNERS WILL BE SENT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, STATE LEGISLATURES, AND THE WHITE HOUSE; TO NATIONAL GROUPS ALREADY FIGHTING FOR SUCH CHANGES; AND TO WOMEN'S GROUPS IN OTHER COUNTRIES THAT MAY BE ORGANIZING SIMILAR CAMPAIGNS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INCLUDED, PLEASE FILL IN THE SPACE BELOW AND SEND TO WOMEN'S PETITION FOR SANITY, MS. MAGAZINE, 370 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017.

Signature: _____
Name: _____ Occupation/Organization: _____
(please print)
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

"Feminism is the theory...Lesbianism is the practice." - Ti-Grace Atkinson

NATIONAL EMERGENCY ALERT NETWORK: NGTF is setting up a nationwide telephone tree to speed up the spreading of information among the Gay community. If you have access to a WATS line or a time line, or have the funds to make some long-distance calls, and can reliably be

reached within any 24-hr. period, let them know. Tell them what time of day you can be reached, phone no., what geographical area you can cover (several states, your own State, one other city). They will send you a list of participants in your region. Address: Suite 903, 80 5th Ave., NY, NY 10011.

MGTF MINUTES, FEBRUARY
KAREN BYE, CHAIR/SEC

The next meeting will be March 2, at the Gay Community Center in Bangor, 1:00 PM, John Croxford to chair.

Treasurer Stan Fortuna reported \$42 in the MGTF Account & \$85 in the MGTFN Account. It was agreed to send \$10 to the Nat'l Gay Task Force in memory of Dr. Howard Brown who died Feb. 1. Stan also reported 56 new subscriptions in 3 weeks as a result of the ads placed in the Portland and Bangor papers.

Stephen Leo reported that the MCLU symposium on sexual privacy will be held April 19. It is possible for MGTF to participate. Stephen will make necessary arrangements.

On Feb. 13 Peter Prizer, Anne Garland, Wendy Ashley and Stan will have met to hammer out a statement of purpose for the Task Force. Good Luck, Folks.

On Feb. 16 a meeting to formulate a comprehensive editorial policy for this newsletter will be held.

Media Coordinator, Peter Prizer has relinquished his position to devote more time to Political Action. Stephen Bull, (Possibly) Priscilla Poe in the North; Sandra Swain and Stan Fortuna in the South will take over Media work.

Theatre Meeting: On Jan. 19 the Education Committee met at Anne's to discuss doing a Gay play for Symposium II. John Croxford reported that they decided to do a dramatic reading, possibly using film clips. Fewer rehearsals and no royalties were two considerations.

Symposium II: Meetings were held on 1/12 & 2/9 to discuss details. Stephen Leo contacted Allen Young & Elaine Noble as keynote speakers. Young accepted; Noble requested an honorarium of \$200.00. We can't afford her. Susan Breeding has agreed to be a keynote speaker and Sandra Swain will deliver the welcome speech.

John Frank will order 500 buttons & 5 dz. T-shirts, and will arrange for books to be sold at the Symposium.

Richard of W/S Club will silk screen 2 dozen posters. Workshops: There will be at least six with space open for others if people want them.

Rural Gays Coming Out
Gay-Straight Relations
Sexism Political Action

The Gripe Workshop was dropped. A pamphlet to serve same purpose is going to be prepared instead. Anne and Sandy, supported by Susan Henderson and Karen Bye (all of the women present, in fact) wanted a Lesbian Separatism workshop, but some of the men objected; Robert was insistent upon his being allowed to attend to "observe," remarking that he thought it would be "interesting." The women remained united in their determination to have it "women only" however. As near as I can guess--since six people were talking at once--the topic for the 6th workshop is Lesbian Separatism for women only.

MGTF OFFICE: Lambda has offered MGTF the use of their office at 136 Maine St. in Brunswick. The mailing address of MGTF will remain the same (P.O. Box 4542ds, Portland, 04112).

FORD DECRIES PROPOSED RATE INCREASE
OF MAINE GAY TASK FORCE NEWSLETTER:
LABELS ACTION AS "MOST DISRUPTIVE."

Bitter Language Stuns Senators:

Washington, Feb. 5.- (MGTFNS) President Ford today bitterly protested an announced hike in the rate of MGTF Newsletter subscriptions before a prayer breakfast attended by thirty Senators of both parties.

Senators available for comment reported him as saying, "This is a brutal example of what this nation gets when the economic radicals run wild through the semi-permeable membranes of our....how did that phrase go you used last week at Camp David, Strom?"

"Our Father, who art in....."

Speaking without notes in the newly repainted Lavender Room of the White House, Mr. Ford described the planned hikes as "dumb" during the early morning assembly of the 27 Presidential hopefuls.

Later at a noon press conference, Mr. Ford and Chief Economic Advisor Ronald McDonald stressed that although the rate increases are "most disruptive," no overt military action is planned at this time.

"The United States Government will not tolerate the economic strangulation of MGTF Newsletter readers," however, by what was termed "an MGTF Cartel".
Peter Prizer

GAY BOOKS

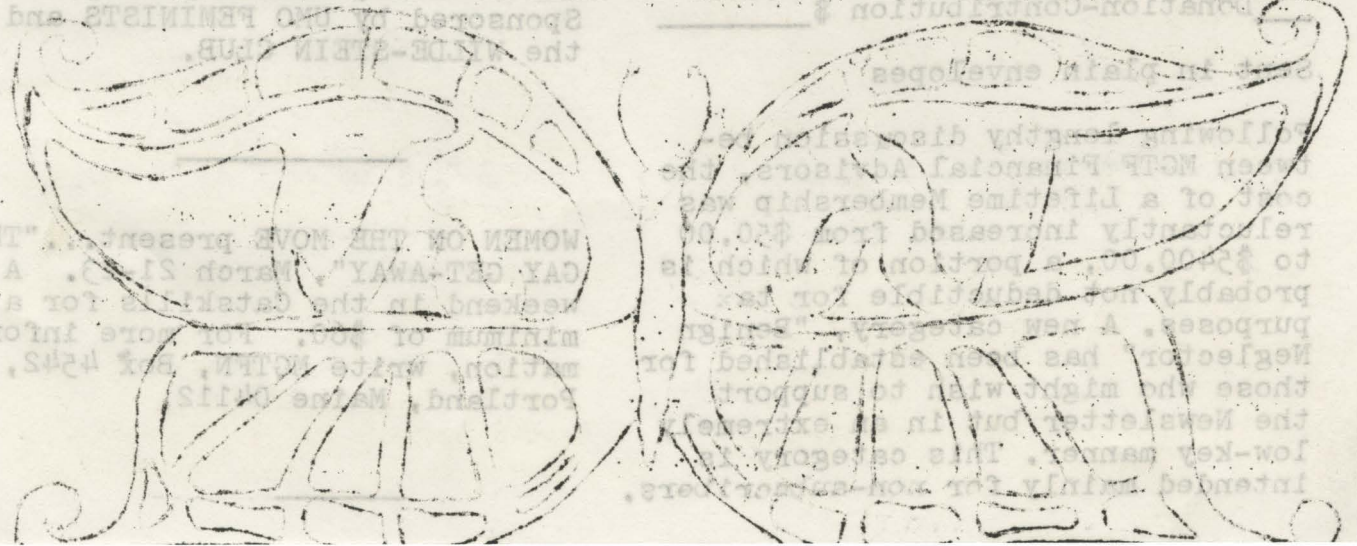
Feb 1975

The MAINE GAY TASK FORCE has created a book distribution program for the purpose of dispensing Gay Literature to our sisters and brothers who would otherwise have no access to positive Gay material. Here is a list of some of the good Gay books which MGTF has acquired along with their respective prices. If you are interested in purchasing any of these books, please enclose the appropriate amount (including 25¢ postage for each book) specifying which book you desire, to the following address:

MGTF Book Service
Box 4542
Portland, Me. 04112

- | | |
|--|---|
| * <u>Sappho Was a Right-On Woman</u> 1.95
-Sidney Abbott & Barbara Love
(Excellent non-fiction on Lesbianism by two lovers) | * <u>Monster</u> 1.95
-Robin Morgan
(Mind-blowing poetry by an amazing Radical Lesbian Feminist) |
| * <u>Trying Hard To Hear You</u> 5.95
-Sandra Scoppettone
(Brand new novel about oppression of Gay male high school students -written for adolescents, but worthwhile for everyone) | * <u>The Lord Is My Sheperd and He Knows I'm Gay</u> 1.50
-The Rev. Troy Perry
(Founder of the Gay Metropolitan Community Church, relates his experiences) |
| * <u>Patience and Sarah</u> .95
-Isabel Miller
(Fictional yet based on fact-Lesbian couple make it up as they go along in pioneer days) | * <u>Rubyfruit Jungle</u> 2.95
-Rita Mae Brown
(Hilarious and moving novel about a Lesbian growing up in America) |
| * <u>Out of the Closets-Voices of Gay Liberation</u> 1.95
-Ed by Karla Jay & Allen Young
(Anthology covering the whole spectrum of homosexuality and Gay Liberation) | * <u>Homosexual Oppression and Liberation</u> 1.65
-Dennis Altman
(Examines the Gay experience in our time from his experiences) |
| * <u>The Male Muse - A Gay Anthology</u> 3.95
-Ed by Ian Young
(Current poetry for Gay men) | * <u>The Gay Mystique</u> 1.95
-Peter Fisher
(Superb book about male homosexuality) |
| * <u>The Cook and the Carpenter</u> 3.00
-A Novel by the Carpenter
(Great Lesbian novel-neuter pronouns) | * <u>Riverfinger Women</u> 3.50
-Elana Nachman
(Interesting new Lesbian novel) |
| * <u>Is Gay Good? - Ethics, Theology & Homosexuality</u> 3.50
-Ed by W. Dwight Oberholtzer
(Scholarly Christian anthology with a positive answer) | * <u>The Gay Insider</u> 3.95
-John Francis Hunter
(Guide to bars, baths, restaurants, et. al., in Gay America with many good articles - esp. Finishing David Reuben - male oriented) |
| * <u>Great Gay In The Morning</u> 1.75
(All about life in a Gay commune) | |
| * <u>The Gay Crusaders</u> 1.25
-Kay Tobin & Randy Wicker
(Anthology of pieces about early Gay Liberation) | |
| * <u>Society and the Healthy Homosexual</u> 1.95
-Dr. George Weinberg
(This book is highly recommended for everyone. It is extremely well written, simple and to the point. It has a great chapter for parents of Gays. We cannot say enough good things about this book.) | |

Please keep this list for future reference. Allow a few weeks for delivery. Several of these books we have in short supply and may need to reorder them. New books will be added to this list in the future.



Bites -

WANTED: person to share spacious apartment with Gay, Double Virgo, somewhat of a perfectionist, who demands his home to be quiet at times but open to entertaining--great location in Brunswick. Available Mar. 15. \$94.50 (heat included) small electricity bill. Potential to decorate as you wish. The apartment will be as much your home as mine. Call 729-4398

It's IMPORTANT to keep GCN ALIVE AND WELL in Boston.....

SUBSCRIBE

To: GCN - Gay Community News
A weekly forum for
\$3.00 New England
22 Bromfield St.
Boston, Mass. 02108

MGTF is seeking any information on instances of discrimination because of affectional and sexual preference. This information may be documented, asserted, sworn, claimed, annotated or whatever. All letters kept in strict confidence, whether or not you sign your name. Send to MGTF Legal Rights Box 4542 Portland

THE MAINE GAY TASK FORCE NEWSLETTER IS YOUR EXPRESSION

We need you, yes, -YOU- the person reading this paper. We want & need your insights and revelations, your letters, happenings & criticisms. Share your thoughts with us--WRITE-

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Box 4542
Portland, Me. 04112

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One Year - 12 copies(+) - \$3.00

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Sent in plain envelopes

Following lengthy discussion between MGTF Financial Advisors, the cost of a Lifetime Membership was reluctantly increased from \$50.00 to \$5400.00, a portion of which is probably not deductible for tax purposes. A new category, "Benign Neglector" has been established for those who might wish to support the Newsletter but in an extremely low-key manner. This category is intended mainly for non-subscribers.

MGTFN has started to put together the Literary Issue that we've talked about, but we still need more material--prose, poetry, and graphics, to do up a healthy issue. Size is the same as the newsletter, 8 1/2 x 14--take note artists and know too that we will electro-stencil for good reproduction. Any questions, doubts, call us up.

WE'D LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR
THANKS TO PRUDENCE FOR
HER UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION
TO THE GAY COMMUNITY.
THANKS!

People in Brunswick area interested in body movement classes call Melissa 729-4398.

A CRAFT FAIR, FOOD SALE & ART SHOW are being planned as part of Symposium II. Artists and craftspeople may sell their wares, 30% of the sales to go to meet Symposium expenses, 70% to go to the seller. If you can't be present, we will sell your works for you. Donations of items to be sold for the benefit of the Symposium will be gratefully appreciated. Tim Bouffard is taking care of the art and he is anxious to find out from people planning to exhibit the amount of space each will need. Susan is taking care of crafts and food. If you have any helpful information for either of them, they can both be contacted c/o MGTFN, Box 4542, Portland 04112.

There is a GAY & BI WOMEN'S RAP group in the Bangor-Orono area. New members are always welcomed. For details, call: 581-2571. Sponsored by UMO FEMINISTS and the WILDE-STEIN CLUB.

WOMEN ON THE MOVE present..."The GAY GET-AWAY", March 21-23. A weekend in the Catskills for a minimum of \$60. For more information, write MGTFN, Box 4542, Portland, Maine 04112.

Dear Friends;

As a subscriber to the MGTF I would like some help if possible. My wife and I moved up here from Mass. last August and rented a place with a lot of understandings with the owners regarding fixing up before we bought. It just has not worked out and we need a place, preferably a small farm as we have a retired race horse, a few chickens and ducks. We need a place as soon as we can get it.

I go to Orono every Monday night to school; believe me it is a long ride alone from here and back. I would also like to drop in to the W S Club if I knew where the room is. (It's on the 3rd (top floor) at the parking lot end of the building--the Women's Group is in the same office.)...also, if any of the Gay men or women know of a place, call immediately. Tel: 528-2606 -- collect. We have very good references and not from some of the asses up here.

What a beautiful job Sandra Swain did on that write-up on Deanna Francis; believe me, our hearts go out to her, my wife and myself. We enjoy reading the paper, between this paper and the GCN and my wife's Focus from Boston, we do know what is going on in our community, we are proud of them. Another reason we would like to move to civilization. Best of luck to you all. Yours Truly, John Kingman.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to put my change of address under "BITS" as follows: James Bellmore is a brother in the Me. St. Prison. Jim would like to correspond with Gay Brothers and Sisters. He is lonely and needs word from someone. Please write: J. Bellmore Box A, Thomaston, Me. 04861.

Dear MGTF,

I have written a number of Gay Organizations and centers to no avail for my request. If you could be of any help, I would like information in getting correspondence from a Gay person since I am in prison and (get) little contact with others who are Gay. If you can be of any help it would be greatly appreciated. Yours, Cordially, Leroy Smith Box 112, Joliet, Ill. 60434.

DEAR MGTF - TO INFORM EVERY ONE HOW MY CASE IN COURT IS GOING - I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT IF I DON T GET INTO ANY TROUBLE THE CHARGES WILL BE DROPPED. IF I STAY OUT OF TROUBLE FOR ONE YEAR THE MOST I WILL GET IS 2 YEARS PROBATION. THOMAS MAXWELL.

Dear Friends,

Find \$3. for year's membership. I live out in the country. Will you have a pen pal column, as I am interested in travel, music, the arts, reading, film and I'd like to meet, via letters, Mainers also Gay. Write to: G.S.F., c/o MGTFN.

MGTF

I am presently incarcerated at the Florida State Prison. I do not companionship and I have no friends who are concerned for my welfare and consequently, I receive very little mail. I am seeking for correspondence from the outside world, from some of your interesting people, their religion, sex, race, or philosophy - doesn't matter so long as they write.

I can never tell you how much just a small letter from the outside world means to a man in prison as such I would like to communicate with as many people as would write, and would deeply appreciate it if you'll please mention my name and address in your wonderful magazine; it could be one of the best things that has ever happened to me.

Thanking you in advance from the very depths of my heart for your understanding considerations and invaluable assistance; do in this matter Please. well - , whatever you can do for me. I can assure you it will be deeply appreciated. Most Cordially yours, Gesse Anderson, P.O. Box 747, Storke, Fla., 32091.

MGTF

I received your newsletter and was glad to get it; it brote joy to my heart to know so much was going on out there for all those Gay people; for one thing your newsletter is learning me a lot of things I did not know. I did not know you was doing so much until I read your newsletter. I would like to receive many more of your wonderful newsletters. I wish you all the luck in the world with your organization and every thing you go after I wish that you get it and more beside it. It is hard for me to say what I want because my letter mite not get to you. Close until I hear from you again. Peace & Gay Love, Gesse.

FREE ALL GAY PRISONERS***FREE ALL GAY PRISONERS***FREE ALL GAY PRISONERS

GROUPS NEEDED! We've had many requests from Gay people all over the state looking for groups to join. We suggest you try to start groups in your own areas. We realize that this will be no easy chore, but MGTF is willing to help you in as many ways as we can. If you are interested, let us know and we'll give you information and possible contacts. Write MGTF, Box 4542, Portland 04112.

FEBRUARY is a real DRAG! It's hard to keep going amidst this very depressing weather and there's been so much going on - Wells - the Legislature - the criminal code business - Symposium II - colds and flu - break-ups and make-ups. Anyway, sorry we're late with this issue but what do you expect from February? Please forgive the patchwork appearance of this issue, caused by two different type-faces. With our workers scattered all over the state, we can't always match machines. The content, however, is guaranteed good.

NOTICE - to ALL people who are now typing or would like to type for the Newsletter. We ask that your article(s) be typed in column form, and the MAXIMUM width of these columns be 3 1/2 inches. If the typewriter you use has elite (small) type, 3 1/2 = 42 spaces, and if it has pica (large) type, 3 1/2 = 35 spaces. This is MAXIMUM! It's no great hassle for you and it saves us one hell of a lot of work. Thank you. (P.S.-This does not mean everything sent must be typed, but if you have access to a machine, please...

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We pay half the postage for mailing and handling.

Published by SAGA - Seacoast Area Gay Alliance, P.O. Box 1424, Portsmouth, N.H. 03801.

GAY RIGHTS BILL HR-166

INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS

"A bill to prohibit the discrimination on the basis of affectional or sexual preference" was introduced in the House by Bella Abzug (NY) and other sponsors. The bill will amend the 1964 Civil Rights Act to protect Gay people in the areas of employment, public accommodations, public education, and Federally funded programs.

It is now important for individuals and groups to write their Congresspeople in support of the bill. Write soon and often.

CALENDAR

Feb. 27: Special on homosexuality, ABC, channels 7 & 8, 11:30 PM.

Feb. 27: Pot-luck supper, GSA, 23 Franklin St., Bangor.

Mar. 1: Quilting party, Kerry's home, Bangor. Call Wilde-Stein for details. (207) 581-2571

Mar. 2: MGTF meeting, GCC, 23 Franklin St., Bangor, 1:00 PM.

Mar. 14-16: New England Gay Conference, Provincetown, Mass.

Mar. 23: "A Very Natural Thing", 3, 5, 7PM 100 Nutting Hall, UMO.

April 4-5: SYMPOSIUM II.

April 19: MCLU conference.

DEAR MGTF - TO INFORM EVERY ONE HOW MY CASE IN COURT IS GOING - I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT IF I DON'T GET INTO ANY TROUBLE THE CHARGES WILL BE DROPPED. I STAY OUT OF TROUBLE FOR ONE YEAR THE MOST I WILL GET IS 2 YEARS PROBATION. THOMAS MAXWELL.

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