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For: Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally
On The Great Lawn Of Central Park, June 27, 1982

By: Charles H. Cochrane, Jr.

Hello everyone. Happy anniversary.

There are people who see contradiction in my being a member of the New York City Police Department while professing to be a gay activist. Today's New York City Police Department is not comprised of narrow minded homophobes; there is no systematic plan for the oppression of gays by the Department. There are thousands of other gay men and women in police service throughout The United States and each of us have unique opportunities to contribute to improving relations between gay people and members of the police service.

I will not stand before you and say that every cop in New York City is free from prejudice; I cannot deny your personal experiences. I am not asking anyone to deny knowledge culled from recorded history, nor am I asking that the past be forgotten. But for our sake, we must cease preoccupation with that which was and view the future as the road of concern. It is not a contradiction that I am a gay cop. It was--long over due.

Last November I stood before the City Council of New York. Last January I appeared before The United States Congress. On both occasions I urged our legislators to enact proposed bills which recognized and would have secured in law our human rights. Both groups failed to enact the legislation before them.

Today, I stand before another group which has the power to secure our rights. That's right. Each of us has the power to shape our collective future. We can pool our power and build a community which must be listened to; we can create a community which has set aside its internal differences and acts as a collective for those who support us. We don't need to have monthly meetings which are attended by every lesbian and gay man. Where could we hold such meetings? We don't need a mailing list of the two million of us who live in or frequent this city. But I must admit, it would give me great pleasure to see the looks of astonishment on the faces of Aileen Ryan, Thomas Cuite, and ofcourse, Patty Burns were they to peruse such a list.

Machiavelli observed:

There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old system and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain by the new ones.

Machiavelli's observation is the basis for continued oppression of any group. The current garbage espoused by proponents of Falwellian propaganda must be combated but such trash is not our greatest enemy. Our greatest enemy, our greatest weakness, is borne of our own indifference. We must accept responsibility for everything which is done and everything which is left undone. Each of us must do more for ourselves.

The STONEWALLERS opened Fifth Avenue to us. They created an atmosphere where we can meet in the daylight. It is now our turn to experience the pleasure of power. If others will not give us power; if we cannot seize power; then we must create our own power. We must learn to exert our power in the voting booth during elections for public office. We have the ability to structure the world of tomorrow.

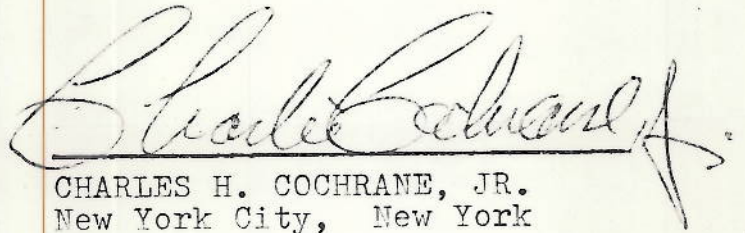
Let us enter into a lawful conspiracy which seeks to purge from society those who are bent on our destruction. Read the New York Times, the Daily News, the New York Post; read all the gay papers and magazines as well. Watch television programs with gay themes. Listen to radio shows which feature gay topics. Find out what others are thinking. Educate yourself. Inspect the voting record of your elected representatives in government. Identify our friends. KNOW OUR ENEMIES!! We must act as if what we do makes a difference! It does!!!

I am not suggesting that anyone devote all their energy to a cause but I am asking that each of us do more, each day of our lives. We must stop laughing at the anti gay and lesbian jokes which are thrown in our faces. If any of us are too frightened to abstain from laughing then laugh, but laugh with obvious disapproval. Write irate letters and notes to those organizations, including the media, whose statements and reports are biased. If you cannot sign the letters and notes then send them anonymously but author them and send them. And always, offer approval to those who present matters fairly. Someday, no one will need send an unsigned letter; and someday further on, we'll realize that we were in company with millions of others who helped defeat those who would have destroyed us. Each action will lessen the fear which perpetuates that sense of helplessness in all of us.

Who hasn't heard the cry? I shamefully admit I've uttered it myself, it goes something like this, "The evolutionary process will right the wrongs and the change will be lasting." That's nonsense! It just isn't true!!

Revolutionaries are often viewed as the enemy in governments which identify themselves as democracies. We are calling for social revolution but we are not the enemy of this country. And furthermore, I can guarantee you were the status of the rights of we and they exchanged, revolution would then be

called justice. We are entitled to justice and the freedom
to be ourselves. ^{AS free people} We do not ask for justice. We demand it!!
That!is what democracy is all about.


CHARLES H. COCHRANE, JR.
New York City, New York

Dear Sam,

This is the final presentation. It is significantly
different from the copy you have.

Love,
Charlie C.
6/18/82 1800hrs.