

GAY PRIDE

VS.

CITIZENS FOR DECENT ATLANTA THE MARCH

June 20-27 is a week of national gay pride celebrations. During the third week of June, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn on Christopher St. in New York, gay people stood up with force against a police raid for the first time in our country. For three nights lesbians, gay men, and drag queens battled New York's "finest."

In remembrance of our resistance at Stonewall and to affirm gay pride, Gay Pride marches and activities were held around the country this year. Several thousand homosexuals and lesbians marched in New York. In an enormous show of gay strength and pride, 100,000 to 150,000 people marched in a parade replete with elaborate floats in San Francisco.

Here in Atlanta on Saturday, June 26th, 300 gay people and supporters of gay civil rights marched down Peachtree St. to Piedmont Park. The march was a couple of blocks long and included several cars (Atlanta's version of floats) with people atop. One proud mother of a homosexual rode in the parade. The feeling of the march was intense: pride, happiness, and guts. On the sidewalks more women and men cheered the march on. We were marching down *Peachtree St.*! We wore buttons with pink triangles in memory of our 10,000 homosexual brothers who were murdered in Nazi concentration camps. We clowned for the tv cameras hugging and kissing each other alternately with clenched fist salutes. This was coming out of the closet and it felt great!

Banners proclaimed the march's sponsors and supporters: Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA), Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), Atlanta Women's Union, Dykes for the Second American Revolution (DARII), the Gay Center, Dignity, Integrity, Workers World Party, Socialist Workers Party, and other groups. Posters ranged from the serious "Free Susan Saxe and All Political Prisoners" to the lighthearted, "Take A Dyke to Lunch."

At the Piedmont Park rally, following the march, speakers emphasized that gay people must fight for their rights. They urged support for Mayor Jackson's proclamation of June 26 as Gay Pride Day and for his refusal to rescind the proclamation in the face of vehement and organized opposition. Support and financial aid were sought for Mary Jo Risher, a lesbian mother, who is fighting in the courts to regain custody of her child. It was also pointed out that women and homosexuals have traditionally been oppressed in patriarchal

societies such as ours. One of the major cornerstones of male supremacy is heterosexism, which assumes that all women are attached to men and are treated as wives or daughters, not independent individuals. Patriarchy and capitalism have functioned together as world wide systems of exploitation.

—margo george

CITY OF ATLANTA OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

WHEREAS as this nation approaches the celebration of its 200th birthday, it is appropriate that all people re-evaluate the phrase "human rights" so that it may apply to all citizens in equal fashion; and

WHEREAS all citizens deserve basic legal rights regardless of race, sex, age, religious belief, economic status, national origin or sexual preference; and

WHEREAS the Gay Pride Planning Committee is organizing the Gay Pride Week celebration to emphasize two things: solidarity among the gay community and the need for legislative change to eliminate discrimination so that, as myths and stereotypes are shattered, change can come about:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maynard Jackson, Mayor of the City of Atlanta, do hereby proclaim Saturday, June 26, 1976, as

GAY PRIDE DAY

in Atlanta, and urge our citizens to recognize the rights of all people.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Atlanta to be affixed.

MAYNARD JACKSON

Mayor