of the gay community does not condone the actions of the real perverts, and we are glad the law was carried out and will be carried out to the fullest extent. It is one thing to be gay, but totally another to be sick like these men and we hope sensible people will not link us to this travesty."

The unwillingness of most gay people to support a group of homosexuals under official attack was a lamentable comment on the lack of solidarity in the community. This is how a witchhunt "succeeds." No one would oppose it until after it has dragnetted and ruined its victims. When it's all over and done, good-intentioned folks would regret that no action was taken, but by then it's too late. The damage is done.

Would anyone call the D.A.'s bluff and support the rights of gay men accused as "child molesters" in this climate of anti-homosexual hysteria?

This time, and for the first time, the answer was yes.
FIGHTING BACK

On 9 December 1977, the first day of massive publicity and the press's incitement to call the Hotline, members of Boston's radical Fag Rag staff (Sal Farinella, Charley Shively, Tom Reeves, Michael Bronski, David Eberly and myself) met and decided to do something. We smelled lynching in the wind. No matter what these men were accused of doing (none of us knew any of the accused yet), we decided we had to organize around the issue for two immediate goals: to stop the sinister Hotline which remained a threat to the safety of all homosexual men (and those perceived to be homosexual). And we wanted to work to guarantee that the legal rights of the accused were observed in the midst of this panic. We were aware of similar police dragnets that year in Seattle, Chicago, and in Baltimore (and to be followed in 2 weeks time by the police raid on the Toronto offices of The Body Politic). It has always been the Fag Rag position that an attack on any part of the gay community (particularly one of its "fringes") is an attack on all gay people. In this year of the witchhunt, this analysis proved to be bitterly true. No one, not even the soi-disant Good Gays, is safe.

We formed the Boston/Boise Committee (B/BC). The Committee's name recalled John Gerassi's 1965 book, The Boys of Boise, which detailed a previous anti-gay witchhunt in Idaho in 1955. In Boise, a panic was begun by one faction of the power elite (using the accusation "child molestor") to discredit the head of a newly-emerging financial group. But the witchhunt got out of control, as witchhunts invariably do, and when it started snaring
some of the town’s high-ups, the power elite began to defuse the scare as quickly as they had whipped it up — but not without suicides and life terms in prison for the victims. (As an additional ironic twist, as the anti-gay witchhunt unfolded here in Boston, Boise city fathers were again on the move. Eleven women were fired from the Boise police, accused of being lesbians. The women organized and won reinstatement.)

The momentum of a witchhunt, as Gerassi accurately demonstrated in his book, is something those who unleash it seldom understand. Elaine Noble came to see it this way too. In late 1978 she privately admitted that it was a good thing the Boston/Boise Committee had checked the witchhunt at the start. Had we not, she said, it was very likely that some honchos in Democratic Party politics might have been netted.

Boston/Boise’s first news conference:
Rev. Ed Hougen, Tom Reeves, John Ward, Mitzel (not pictured: Charley Shively)
THE HOTLINE DEFUSED

Meanwhile, all through the month of December, 1977, the D.A.’s Hotline was ringing. Once the Boston/Boise Committee got organized, the first action was printing up and distributing 2500 copies of a flyer calling for an emergency meeting.

Seventy-five people showed up at the mass meeting held in the Boston offices of the Gay Community News. Among these were one of the defendants (the one who had been arrested in Atlanta), his 19-year-old lover, and the 20-year-old youth who, after Dick Bavely’s suicide in 1975, had been taken in by the D.A. and lengthily questioned about sex with adult men.

A few days later, three members of the B/BC met with Asst. D.A. Thomas Dwyer. Dwyer was rumored to be Byrne’s successor should Mr. D.A. drop dead at his desk, which is apparently how he wanted to go. Dwyer has also been characterized, in print, by another lawyer, as the kind of man who would “indict his own mother.”

Dwyer, surprised by the concern of the gay community over the Hotline, promised to reevaluate its use. He assured us that the Hotline had been established to “expedite administrative procedure” — whatever that means. We asked to meet with Byrne personally but he refused as long as one of the B/BC’s demands was his immediate resignation from office.

The next day, the D.A. proclaimed the Hotline would continue.

Boston/Boise called for a public demonstration on City Hall
Boston/Boise Committee's first public protest, at Boston City Hall Plaza, 15 December 1977. This was probably the first time gay activists, pedophiles and their supporters publicly demonstrated support for boy-lovers.

Plaza for 15 December 1977 (proclaimed by President Carter as "Bill of Rights Day"). Over 30 people showed up in a freezing wind. After demonstrating, the group, led by B/BC co-chair Tom Reeves, marched directly into Dwyer's office and angrily demanded the end to the Hotline. Startled by this invasion of his office, Dwyer once again stalled for time and promised reconsideration. He then ran to Byrne and was told the Hotline would continue.
THE BOSTON SEX SCANDAL

All direct contact having failed, Boston/Boise went to court and sought an immediate injunction restraining the D.A. from using the Hotline. We were joined in the case by the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts. B/BC argued that the Hotline was a patently unconstitutional police procedure, similar in its effect to the illegal police procedure used in San Francisco during the police investigation of the "Zebra Killings," when the SFPD simply scooped black men off the streets as suspects. The Hotline was even more sinister since anonymous callers could report anyone they didn't like and cause their arrest.

The night before the B/BC's suit was to be heard in Equity Court, First Asst. D.A. Jack Gaffney (whose reputation was that of a dirty gutter fighter) phoned B/BC counsel, Atty. John Ward,
late at night at his home. Gaffney threatened him. "If you dare show up in court tomorrow, we'll make sure you never practice law in this town again. We'll fix you, dearie!" Click.

Undaunted by this late night threat, Atty. Ward showed up in court ready to argue his case. The issue, it turned out, was moot. Knowing the court would have restrained them, the D.A.'s office announced they had "voluntarily" discontinued the Hotline. They were still urging people to call the D.A.'s regular phone number to report homosexuals. It was a big victory for the Boston/Boise Committee. We pressed on.

The D.A.'s staff had also promised a written account of the disposition of all the raw information gleaned by the Hotline. But after months of delay, it became clear this was just another lie. To this day, then, denunciations of hundreds of men as "child molesters" fill the files in the office of the District Attorney here in Boston, perhaps awaiting time when they can be pulled and used in some future attack on gays.
KNOW YOUR ENEMIES

We learned several things about Boston politics during Boston/Boise’s wranglings with the legal and political establishment. In 1977, Garrett Byrne had a staff of 105 Assistant D.A.s. This was 3 times as many as he had had over a decade earlier.* From them, he formed the elite SCIPP squad which included Thomas Dwyer, Jack Gaffney, Thomas Peisch and Boston Police Detective John O’Malley. Dwyer is the son of a sitting Superior Court Judge. This might be seen as a conflict in other jurisdictions, but not here in Boston. (When Ramsey Clark became Attorney General, his father, Tom Clark, resigned his seat on the U.S. Supreme Court.) O’Malley — source of the quote about poor policemen being sickened by the investigation — was a close personal friend of an ex-con homosexual father who knew many of the “Sex Ring” defendants and who was used as an informer in building the state’s cases.

O’Malley suddenly disappeared from the scene. It was said he had suffered a heart attack. Within a matter of months he had resigned from the Boston Police. In a 1979 grand jury proceeding in Norfolk County, O’Malley was named by an undercover cop investigating drug rip-offs, and he may have been subject to a

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* A note on lawyers. In 1975, there were 24,028 practising attorneys in the Commonwealth. This averaged out to one lawyer for every 240 men, women, and children in Massachusetts. Since 1975, the estimated population increase of the state has been about 50,000 per annum. Yet there were 1000 new lawyers hanging their shingles out each year since 1975. This figures out to one new lawyer for every 50 citizens in the Commonwealth. Glut, anyone?
Boston Police Internal Affairs Investigation prior to his resignation from the force.

First Asst. Jack Gaffney is in a class by himself. Many lawyers have told me they regarded him as the most despicable man in this city. They say there is no legal or quasi-legal tactic Gaffney won’t use to get those targetted for prosecution. Gaffney was the prosecutor in the famous Susan Saxe trial in 1975. Saxe, an anti-war activist who claimed credit for blowing up the U.S. Armory in Newburyport, Massachusetts, was involved in a 1970 bank robbery in which a cop got killed. She participated in the robbery with Kathy Power, Lefty Gilday and Stanley Bond immediately after Nixon's troops invaded Cambodia. Saxe had gone underground, but was arrested in Philadelphia (while crossing a street with her lesbian lover) and returned to Boston. She was charged with conspiracy to commit murder which, under Mass. law, brings the same penalty as actually committing the murder. (Ten years after the shooting, Kathy Power remains free, a hero to resistance forces everywhere. Her picture still decorates police bulletin boards throughout Boston.)

At Saxe's trial, Gaffney played on what he assumed would be the Boston jury's natural (i.e. Roman Catholic) anti-semitism. The state's single major witness against Saxe (who could place Saxe in the bank at the time of the shooting) could only identify her because of her "big nose and lips." Gaffney kept coming back to this, pointing out Saxe's facial features. Even with this baiting, the jury (with a Beacon Hill gay man as foreman) ended undecided. The judge at this trial was Superior Court Chief Justice Walter McLaughlin, another Irish pol and old crony of Garrett Byrne. The state was crushed it couldn't get a conviction of an accused "cop-killer," as some of the straight press referred to Saxe. After the Saxe case, McLaughlin had to retire (he had reached mandatory retirement age for Mass. judges, 70). He immediately became chief fundraiser for the reelection of Garrett Byrne.*

*Saxe drew another hanging judge, Judge Roy, for her second trial. She pleaded guilty to manslaughter charges and went to prison. She is eligible for parole in 1981.
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Byrne, in order to meet the payroll of his bloated staff (and find enough crimes and criminals to keep his largely male staff busy) was always on the prowl for funds. Through the Nixon scandal-ridden Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), Byrne landed several million dollars to set up and finance SCIPP.

SCIPP was charged exclusively with investigating and prosecuting organized crime and political corruption. It was SCIPP, as Dwyer boasted to the press, which had handled all aspects of the "Revere Sex Ring." Since there were no allegations of connections with organized crime, the question was raised why SCIPP was involved at all. Dwyer and others never addressed the matter. I suspect that he and his staff were just lucky to have the work.
ORGANIZING

With the Hotline ended, the Boston/Boise Committee turned its attention to other concerns:
1) Investigating the facts behind the hysteria
2) Contacting the accused, making sure they had proper counsel and were not being pressured into deals against their wills
3) Working with the media to check their rampant homophobia and try to correct some of their more egregious errors.

As to the “Sex Ring,” we found out that police, local priests and psychiatrists had combined to pressure 13 youths to testify before the grand jury. The pressure was particularly intense on a 15-year-old named Gary.

Gary lived with his single mother at the time. Gary is gay and admitted that he had been sexually active since before he was 12. He had occasionally taken money for sex with men in the apartment of Richard Peluso and elsewhere. And many times no cash was involved. After police located him, he and his mother were visited no fewer than 6 times by their parish priest who urged him to cooperate with police. Police showed nude pictures of Gary to neighborhood kids and encouraged them to badger him. He and his mother (recipients of state social aid) were threatened with a cut-off of funds if Gary refused to cooperate. The police finally coerced his mother to sign over legal custody of Gary to the state. Gary was promptly locked up in a youth detention house under police guard and told that if he refused to testify he himself would be indicted for “sex crimes.” He relented and became the primary
THE BOSTON SEX SCANDAL

witness in 8 of the 24 cases.

In January, 1978, Gary did manage to escape his captors long enough to attend, at his own request, a meeting of the Boston/Boise Committee. While there, he ran up and embraced one of the men he had named in the grand jury. Later, at the same meeting, he gave a signed statement to the B/BC chairman and counsel detailing the various forms of coercion used against him and he asked the B/BC to arrange neutral legal counsel to represent his interests, something the police had failed to inform him was his right. He wanted out of the whole mess. It was a graphic illustration of what enlightened sex counsellors have long said: police and judicial interventions into instances of sex between adults and minors, when launched under the banner of protecting the children, always have the contrary effect. The “children” are traumatized by the publicity, notoriety and police manipulation of their lives.

Gary’s situation was typical. The “boys,” we discovered, were not 8 to 13 years of age. In all but one indictment, the ages of the youths at the time of the alleged acts — which occurred in a variety of places and turned out to be largely unrelated — were 13 to 15. However, since the indictments referred to sex acts which took place as long ago as 1971, many of the “boys” involved in these investigations were now men in their twenties.

The curious thing about the “Sex Ring” was that there were no complainants. There were no “victims” (in the usual understanding of the word) until police got involved and coerced some young men into saying they had been victimized. When the first case came to trial — that of Doctor Allen — the press finally learned that the “victim” was Gary, who had been selling his sex for years. This was a far cry from the D.A.’s image of an 8-year-old drugged, dragged, raped and kiddie-porned.

We found that no force had been used in any of the alleged incidents. Most of what had transpired, if true, was casual tricking, some at Peluso’s apartment (where small amounts of money changed hands) but much in other communities too. There was no organization to it.
Contrast this to another "ring" we found out about in our investigation. The gross hypocrisy of the D.A.'s office was revealed to us in January, 1978, when we happened upon a real "Revere Sex Ring" merrily operating through all this storm, apparently with full police protection. In December and January, Frank Rose was in Boston, researching his cover story for The Village Voice on these goings-on, when he was informed of a boy-prostitution service known as BUY-FUCK (the name was the phone number). He called BUY-FUCK, said he was from out-of-town and would like to meet a boy. He was told to get to an address in Revere and they would fix him up. Rose hopped into a cab. When he reached the Revere address, he was welcomed into an apartment where several teenaged boys were lounging around in cut-offs and T-shirts. He identified himself as a reporter. The boys got nervous and called The Village Voice office to check him out.

Men & Boys Together

Sex for Love or Money: A Report on the Boston Scandal

By Frank Rose

The double house at 225-4 Mountain Avenue—that's where the sex was. Nobody had suspected a thing, the papers reported afterward: "You'd think the neighbor who lived there had never seen a young man before." And some of the boys were picked up around town drinking beer on the back porch would have suspected something, but they didn't. Yes, the man who lived there seemed a little strange—another neighbor told reporters he never saw him—but how can you really tell about these things? There hadn't been any strange cars parked outside. With a nationwide boy-searing scandal, you do expect to see some strange cars outside. So the neighbors were all stunned last June when the man who lived there was arrested, and they were stunned again December 8, when 24 more men were indicted. Everybody else in Boston was stunned, too. The reporter on police beat were stunned. The headmaster at Fenwender, the elite boys' school where two faculty members were indicted, was particularly stunned. Even the men in the district attorney's office were stunned. "This is a bunch of guys who liked to get together and party with little boys," Assistant D.A. Thomas Perch told the Herald-American. "This is out for love, money, and entertainment." The kids were selected from all over the country. It has been (Continued on page 17)

This VILLAGE VOICE front page story brought national attention to the scandal of prosecutorial abuse. As a result, all contact between the Boston/Boise Committee and the D.A.'s office was broken off by Garrett Byrne.
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The young man who boasted he was the operator of BUY-FUCK (he solicited out of several downtown Boston gay bars) bragged in public that he had a high-up police detective in his pocket.

After Rose visited BUY-FUCK, it moved from Revere to an apartment on Beacon Hill. It was not long after this that a boy I happen to know — who had learned about BUY-FUCK from the investigation of the B/BC and gone to work for it — was stabbed by a john he met through BUY-FUCK. The boy nearly died and he required extensive reconstructive surgery on his colon. After the stabbing, BUY-FUCK’s operator was arrested on a solicitation rap (a set-up job that David Brill, of the Gay Community News, claimed credit for arranging). BUY-FUCK then fell apart. But many questions linger. Was there police involvement in BUY-FUCK? Was BUY-FUCK used to retail drugs as well as sex? And why was BUY-FUCK as well as police-informant boy-lovers left completely untouched by a D.A. who promised the public he’d “clean up the child molesters”? Did police and the D.A. have the luxury of choosing which “sex-ring operation” they’d prosecute?

It should be noted that one great difficulty in organizing feminists to support the work of the B/BC was over this issue of “rape.” It took much explaining to a number of women’s groups that the so-called victims in these cases were in fact consenting and sexually active teenaged males and that the charge of “rape and abuse upon a child” was merely a legal designation and not to be confused with the emotional issue of forcible rape. Even so, many were not buying.

As to the defendants, a dozen of them contacted the B/BC or were contacted in turn by us. Several became active members of the Committee. A few were wealthy and/or professional men. Some were middle-class. Many were working-class. Bail and legal fees were enormous burdens to most of them. The wealthy among them were released on personal recognizance. The poorer had to post $10,000 bail.

Perhaps the most remarkable among them was Edmund Mede. Mede, a U.S. champion in the martial arts and an Air Force
Ed Mede, one of the 24 men indicted by the D.A., was selected as the featured speaker at 1978's Lesbian & Gay Pride Rally on Boston Common.

veteran, ran a successful martial arts academy in Revere. Like the others, Mede was shocked, stunned and angered by his arrest. The massive publicity over his arrest brought ruin to his school. He quickly became an active organizer with the Boston/Boise Committee. From the initial shame of being smeared as a "child molestor," Mede went on and decided that nothing he had done was shameful and he wanted discussion of the issues out in the open. He did public speaking, was the cover story on a local weekly paper and was also selected as one of the principal speakers at the 1978 Lesbian and Gay Pride Rally on Boston Common. His selection as a principal speaker was said to have disturbed Representatives Noble and Frank who thought that with a gay rights bill coming up for a vote in the State House Mede's prominence would give a "bad image" to our community. Sad to say, a group of young lesbians actually booed Mede while he spoke to the Gay Day Rally.
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Months after the original arrests, only 20 of the 24 men had been arrested. It was said that one of the men named in an indictment didn’t even exist! The remaining 3 eluded Mass. police. It was generally conceded that after the Boston/Boise Committee had politicized the issue of the attack on the gay community, the D.A. gave up seeking more victims.

Byrne and his staff had, probably correctly, assumed that those charged would quickly plead guilty. But, through the work and the support of the B/BC, all defendants (except one who did plead guilty and another who made a deal to cooperate with the D.A.) demanded open trials. When the D.A. suddenly realized that he would have to prosecute all 18 cases in court with, in most cases, the same two teenaged boys as “victims,” the witchhunt looked less productive — at least this phase of the witchhunt.

As a direct consequence of the monumental publicity given to the indictments and arrests, many of the defendants were harassed and/or actually victimized. Many received threatening calls; others had damage done to their property. Several lost employment.

The Boston/Boise Committee from the start deliberately chose not to be a defense committee for any or all of the 24 men under indictment. We had many reasons. There were too many men, each with a different lawyer and different legal strategy. Some lawyers warned their clients to stay away from us since we were gay activists (this did not, however, prohibit them from sending around letters soliciting us for money).

Boston/Boise, from our very first meeting, set itself up as a civil rights group concerned with the civil rights of all homosexuals as a class of citizens during this homophobic witchhunt. This position — and the inability of many straights to understand why gay people needed to watch out for their rights — would later become the center of much nasty argument and contention.
CHANGING ATTITUDES

The press was a problem from the beginning. Reporters and broadcasters swallowed whole everything the D.A. and police put out as "facts." Boston does have two independent weeklies, The Phoenix and The Real Paper as well as a couple of progressive radio stations with inquiring and probative news departments. Boston/Boise began its work with these and met with some success.

Bastions like the Globe and the Herald-American, as well as the major TV news departments, were hard to penetrate. Most of the problem was their lack of information about the gay community and their gross insensitivity to the problems facing homosexuals. But a lot of the problem was plain old homophobia on the part of reporters and editors. Tom Reeves was talking to a black female court reporter for the CBS-affiliate in the press room of the courthouse one day and she just burst out with a shrill homophobic tirade that shocked us as well as the other reporters there. She was later promoted.

Boston/Boise continued to protest the Globe's inaccuracies. We sought time and again to meet with their community-relations ombudsman. Again and again, we were put off. Finally, we were told, in so many words, to just go fuck off.

The Committee's demonstrations and victory in halting the Hotline brought some serious press attention. Frank Rose's front-page story in The Village Voice brought a national audience to this story. As a result of this particular piece, the D.A.'s office ceased having any direct contact with the Committee and its members.
THE BOSTON SEX SCANDAL

Boston/Boise's most significant work vis-a-vis the media was our publication of a four-paged set of Media Guidelines (see appendix) which provided conscientious reporters with sensitive and fair ways to handle news about persons charged with "sex crimes."

Boston/Boise also set up a legal subcommittee to do legal research investigating the history of the age of consent statutes and the variety of ways such statutes are used in states around the nation. This subcommittee published its preliminary findings in the form of a draft *amicus curiae* brief that could be adapted and used as part of a legal defense in cases where an adult was accused of non-forcible sex with a minor. It was this subcommittee which sponsored, on 2 December 1978, the first meeting of what was to become The North American Man/Boy Love Association, the first U.S. conference by, for and with homosexual pedophiles. Over 150 persons attended.

In March, 1978, John Gerassi was in Boston. He spoke to a meeting of the Boston/Boise Committee. He was pleased that his book had been a catalyst to action. He spoke on the importance of

John Gerassi speaks to the B/BC, March 1978. It was Gerassi's documentation of how anti-homosexual prejudice is used by political factions, in THE BOYS OF BOISE, which provided the founders of the B/BC with an analysis to a similar witchhunt here.
resistance to authority and the necessity of all peoples under attack to join their struggles together. Though not a boylover himself, he expressed great personal sympathy for the men under indictment. He detailed how the powers-that-be use sexuality to frighten people and divide them.

Gerassi:

"My instinct when I went out to Boise proved right. That anything that is a witchhunt is political. Whatever it is — gay rights, women’s rights, children’s liberation — whenever one challenges a part of American society, one challenges all of American society.

"American society is repressive against gays not because it likes to repress gays for the sake of repressing gays, but because the system will crack if people begin to challenge the hypocrisies and its value system. That system is the same system which leads to exploitation all over the world, the murders, assassinations, racism and sexism. For those of you who were arrested for child molesting, your arrests were for the very same reason Allende was overthrown in Chile and that 30,000 Chileans died."
THE WITCHHUNT INTENSIFIES

During March, 1978, another massive assault against gay men was launched by police.

103 men were arrested in the Boston Public Library. Three plainclothes policemen were assigned to entrap suspected homosexuals on Library premises. One was assigned to the men's room, one in General Fiction (!), and the third upstairs. They were, literally, arresting anyone who "looked gay." Those arrested were charged with "open and gross lewdness," a felony. One gentleman was charged with prostitution.

Forty men were arrested before word started getting around town. These forty were taken to District Four station house and booked. Police recommended to them an Irish courthouse lawyer who boasted, in open court, that his price was "fifty dollars a fag." These men were then encouraged to admit to "sufficient facts" (i.e., that the police lies that they were all masturbating were true), and the charges would be filed. If no further arrests took place in 90 days, everything gets dropped. It's a nice little money-making racket for police and the courthouse gang.

It was a strange sight that spring, but paddy wagons were actually pulling up to the front door of the new Library building in elegant Copley Square and being filled with those arrested. One of those taken in by the cops was a gay South American man whose visa had expired. He was at that time recovering from severe stab wounds he had received after thugs had followed him home from a local gay bar where he worked. Boston police promptly turned him
Over 500 people protested the entrapment of 103 men by undercover police at the Boston Public Library, 1 April 1978. Of all those arrested, only one man was convicted, and his conviction was overturned on appeal.

over to police at Immigration and Naturalization and they just as promptly deported him.

By the time 90 men had been arrested, the story finally broke. It was page three news in a San Francisco daily before our local crusading Globe saw fit to run the item.

Gay people were outraged — again, especially the men. Another mass meeting was held in the Gay Community News office. Over 100 persons showed up, including some of those arrested who detailed how they had been entrapped and humiliated by police.

What to do?

The anger was great. The overwhelming sentiment was for a demonstration within 72 hours in front of the library. A split took place between the Good Gays and the Bad Gays regarding the "image" problem. Some feared a mass rally would be perceived by straights as our endorsing what the police accused us of — public sex. Most activists finally made clear the central issue: that gay men were being systematically harassed and arrested to discourage a class of citizens from using a municipal facility.

A flyer was completed that night and 3500 copies distributed the next day. There was great popular support for resistance to police.
Police in turn started a rumor campaign through the press and their own agents within the gay community that they would arrest everyone at the demo. Of course this was just another lie.

On Saturday, 1 April 1978, over 500 people congregated in front of the Boston Public Library to chant, picket, leaflet and make demands. The large turnout was a shock to many, particularly to all the Respectables on the Library's Board of Directors, who had asked the police to initiate the arrests. (Mayor White's mother is on the Board.)

For a brief moment, there appeared to be a turnaround in the press. Our charges of witchhunt were taken more seriously. Once the gay activists and movement attorneys got involved and took over the library cases, only one of the remaining proceedings ended in conviction and that lone case was overturned on appeal. One of those falsely accused has filed a suit in Federal District Court seeking recompense for false arrest and proven perjury by a cop at his trial. An agreement was reached between The Mayor's office, a State Representative, clergy and gay leaders that this kind of entrapment would not take place again. But of course it did. Almost two years to the day later, in March 1980, the same Boston police again entrapped 30 men on Library premises in the exact same way. The police in this town are clearly the problem and they appear to be answerable to no public official. Attempts to establish a police review board in Boston have gotten nowhere.

The Boston/Boise Committee had invited Gore Vidal to speak at a public fundraiser. He agreed. He was scheduled to be in Boston anyway to promote *Kalki*, his latest book. We had informed him of what was happening here and he volunteered to help.

The event took place Wednesday night, 5 April 1978, in the historic old Arlington Street Church. Tickets went for $5 apiece — for those who could afford it. Many got in for less. Over 1500 people jammed the pews. Vidal's topic: "Sex and Politics in Massachusetts" (neither of which he told us he had practiced). After a number of speakers from the Committee, Vidal was introduced. He sparkled. His comments included these:
“If politicians no longer have monolithic World Communism to run against, what do you run against? You must never run for anything; this is not the American way. The right-wing in the country has been accummulating quite a lot of money and is going to back a lot of candidates. They want to put a lot of people into office. They can’t do it so much running against Communism, so they have what we call Hot Buttons that they press that get people excited. The Panama Canal they thought was a Hot Button. We have Cuban Imperialism — a gripping issue. But above all, Anita Bryant, who sings the ‘Battle Hymn of The Republic’ — whenever asked — stumbled upon an issue that a lot of people didn’t like fags and this was going to be a Hot Button she could press. I think it began accidentally, although there is in this country a great market for sort-of washed-up show-business types who discover Jesus. And she got onto that circuit. And it did well for her — that and the oranges. She stumbled onto this issue. Now it’s sweeping the country. I find it kind of interesting that suddenly homosexuality should become of such urgency to the politicians. I suspect it is because they have a really good Hot Button. There is an instinct that this is
very good politics, and they will blur it into anything . . .

"I can see this getting quite serious, which is why I am here tonight. As to stopping it, apparently communities have to do it . . . I think you should always keep in mind where you are going. There's obviously something here that needs fixing. Police departments ought not to be allowed to entrap people. District Attorneys ought not to be allowed to have a Hotline so anybody can call up and say who's a witch and who was last seen down on Boston Common with Goody Bellows. And you should certainly change sex laws. As to Anita's fear that she'll be assassinated? The only people who might shoot Anita Bryant are music lovers."

In the audience that night were Massachusetts Superior Court Chief Justice Robert Bonin and his wife. And, at this juncture, our story takes an incredible turn of events, and we must digress.
CHIEF JUSTICE BONIN

In Massachusetts, as mandated by a recent law, a state judge must retire at age 70. (Some have been recalled to the bench to help process the backlog of criminal cases.) Former Chief Justice Walter McLaughlin, whose last trial was the Saxe hung-jury case, retired at 70 and expected he'd get the Governor to name one of his like-minded Irish cronies as his successor.

But liberal Governor Michael Dukakis (President Carter's "favorite Governor") had other plans. Dukakis, a dedicated reformer of state government and no friend of the entrenched Irish Catholic political machine, decided to select an outsider who could clean up the legal cosy-cosy that has for so long characterized the workings of the Massachusetts court system. He appointed Robert Bonin.

Bonin had been a law instructor at Boston University. He had worked in the Attorney General's office on Beacon Hill since 1975. He was young (46), liberal, Jewish, independent-minded, and had a reputation for fairness, hard work and brilliance as a trial lawyer. For all these reasons, he was instantly hated by the machine pols and their friends. They set out, as soon as he was confirmed, to bring him down. Walter McLaughlin, Garrett Byrne, and their flunkies in the press and in the court system spread and publicized every controversial move Bonin made. Bonin had made the mistake of retaining as his chief administrative assistant a toadying appointment of McLaughlin, who remained personally loyal to McLaughlin and who called the former Chief Justice regularly to snitch on Bonin's activities. This was Francis Xavier Orfanello.
Meanwhile, members of the press began digging into Bonin's past. Bonin had decided to return to the judiciary a power McLaughlin had let slip to the D.A., i.e., the matter of assigning judges to cases.

Anti-semitism, long a prominent feature in Boston’s public affairs, bubbled up in the attacks on Bonin. Since the Chief Justices of the Boston Municipal Court and the Probate Court were also Jewish men, one heard whispers of the "Jew-diciary."

Bonin had assumed office in March 1977. By December the press was running front page stories about some alleged prior favoritism and potential misconduct.

Looking back, it’s interesting to note that the Boston Evening Globe which ran the first front-page story on the “Revere Sex Ring” also featured a prominent story attacking Bonin. These two developing stories were given space daily until they finally collided at the Vidal lecture.

Up until that time, there was little dirt on Bonin his enemies could use to dislodge him — something about free use of a car paid for by a client involved in some investigation. They tried to make a fuss because he had asked two competent secretaries to move from
the Attorney General's office to the Courthouse. Bonin's second wife, Angela, said to be "the second most beautiful woman in Boston" (don't ask me who's the first) grated on the old pols. She is intelligent, outspoken and critical, far from the traditional cut of mousey judges' wives.

Bonin continued in his job, unaware of the gathering of his foes. Curiously, after Bonin bought tickets to the Vidal lecture, two attorneys for defendants in the sex cases — William Homans and Brian McMenimen — decided to call up and "warn him away." How these attorneys had even heard that Bonin had bought tickets remains a mystery. At any rate, McMenimen called Bonin's office and told Francis Xavier Orfanello, Bonin's chief administrative aide, to warn Bonin to stay away. Orfanello promptly called Walter McLaughlin and passed on all the news. Bill Homans called Massachusetts Senate President Kevin Harrington, who had also purchased tickets, and likewise "warned him away" from the gay civil rights fundraiser. The witchhunt chills.

Bonin sat through the lecture and afterwards in the vestry, I introduced him and his wife to Vidal. Vidal had been critical of judges in his speech so Bonin quipped: "I hope you don't think all judges are troglodytes." A photographer from the Hearst paper had snaked his way into the room — B/BC had specifically not told that paper of the event — and his camera snapped away. That the Hearst paper's photographer was so intent on showcasing Bonin with Vidal made later interpretations of a set-up seem accurate.

Next morning. Front page Hearst press. "Bonin At Benefit For Sex Defendants." Picture and lurid story. All the earlier lies recycled. Eight to 13 year olds drugged and raped by homosexual men. Within hours, Garrett Byrne called for Bonin to remove himself from the Revere cases (he wasn't sitting on any of them). Walter McLaughlin was trotted out and said Bonin should resign. Gubernatorial candidate Ed King demanded Bonin's resignation. Others thought the man should be impeached. The attack seemed carefully orchestrated. The witchhunt launched against the gays had found, tangentially, a new victim, someone equally hated by the old Irish pols. They figured: why not smear Bonin with the
THE BOSTON SEX SCANDAL

same brush as the fags?

Suddenly, the Boston/Boise Committee was depicted as a tightly-organized, hard-driving Defense Committee, soliciting funds to “defend child molesters.” And the Chief Justice was pictured as a contributor. The yellow press loved it. The bigger the lie the better the copy.

To counter the entrenched press lies, the Boston/Boise Committee held a news conference. It didn’t help. The fix was already in. A machine lawyer, Robert Meserve, was designated by the Committee on Judicial Ethics to draw up charges of misconduct against Bonin. He did. Bonin was charged with nine counts of alleged misconduct. Six of these involved his listening to Vidal. Charge #4 actually accused him of meeting Gore Vidal and “engaging in pleasant conversation with him.” The troglodyte judges had not been pleased.

When the charges were issued, Bonin was suspended from his duties until his trial. This was the first time such action had been taken in the over-300 year history of the Massachusetts judiciary. The Get-Bonin scenario was in high gear.

And so, in the spring of 1978, Boston — to the view of an outsider who hadn’t been poisoned by the corruption here — went loony. Every day, the newspapers had stories about two prominent men accused of misconduct: Robert Bonin, a liberal Jew, and U.S. Senator Ed Brooke, a liberal black Republican. What made one suspect that nativist (and Irish Catholic) prejudice might be behind the exploitation was that the difficulties of both men arose, in part, from their divorce proceedings. Unlike many other states, Massachusetts still regards marital fidelity (except for the Kennedys: they are beyond reproach) as a qualification for holding high office. Divorced office-holders are not permitted. At least not for long.
ENTER ALLEN GINSBERG

A little comic relief was provided by Allen Ginsberg when he hit town to do a reading at Boston City Hall. Appearing on a live morning TV talk show, Ginsberg ignored requests to reminisce about The Beat Days. Instead he talked about the witchhunt. “I can’t believe Garrett Byrne is still the D.A. here. I remember him 20 years ago, prosecuting Naked Lunch. Why don’t you get rid of him?” Ginsberg said he thought the sensational issue of sex between men and boys was no big deal. “I had sex when I was eight years old with a man in the back of my grandfather’s candy store in Revere, and I turned out OK.” The talkmaster hustled Ginsberg right off the set — Allen’s parting line was “Out of the closets, onto the screens!” — and hurried into an ad. The following day the press carried big stories that famous poet Allen Ginsberg endorsed men having sex with 8-year-olds. The TV station issued an apology and said such were the risks of live broadcasting. What a terrible embarrassment to all — except those of us who loved every bit of it.
ANGELA BONIN STRIKES BACK

Angela Bonin stormed into the press room at the Superior Court in Boston and was surrounded by reporters for an impromptu news conference. She said her husband was the latest victim of the witchhunt which had been initiated to get-the-gays but was now out to purge all those who would reform the traditional brokers of power.

She said: "If, through extraordinary publicity, judges or their families are so intimidated that they become recluses, then the media will have forced judges to become second-class citizens. If a judge cannot attend a lecture by an author in a church, none of us is safe. A support of gay rights is a support of all civil rights!"

Later, privately, Angela Bonin admitted to a member of the Boston/Boise Committee that her young daughter was being baited by other kids at her Brookline elementary school with the taunt: "Your daddy's a faggot lover!"