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UPDATE & REPORT TO ALL CONCERNED FROM RANDY WICKER ON
SUNDAY, 7/12/92 11:30 A.M.

MARSHA'S DEATH: -
9-12 noon - [REDACTED]
1:00-9:00 PM - [REDACTED]

FACTS WHICH HAVE COME TO LIGHT IN THE PAST FEW DAYS AS A
RESULT OF LEAFLETING & INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF MARSHA
P. JOHNSON (aka MALCOLM MICHAELS JR.) BY THE ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT,
MYSELF & OUTWATCH HAS VIRTUALLY OBLITTERATED MY INITIAL WISHFULL
THINKING AND DENIAL OF POSSIBLE VIOLENCE SURROUNDING MARSHA'S
DEATH..

THOSE FACTS? SINCE I LAST SAW MARSHA EARLY THURSDAY MORNING ,
AND NOT BEING A MEDICAL PERSON, THE DESCRIPTION OF MARSHA'S BODY
AS BEING SO DECOMPOSED WE COULDN'T EVEN BE SHOWN PICTURES OF IT
AT THE MEDICAL EXAMINERS OFFICE CAUSED ME TO FALSELY ASSUME THAT
MARSHA'S DEATH HAD OCCURRED WELL BEFORE HER BODY WAS FOUND ON MONDAY ,7/6 .

WE NOW HAVE RELIABLE EYE WITNESS REPORTS WHICH PLACE MARSHA
AT THE BOOKSTORE AT THE CORNER OF CHRISTOPHER & HUDSON STREETS AT
DUSK (NYT lists sunset as 8:30 p.m. on 7/6). Frank Thompson CH3-5610
OF MARSHA WAS LITERALLY A FEW FEET AWAY FROM THE VERY SPOT WHERE
EDGARDO (WILLIE) MEDINA WAS BRUTALLY BEATEN BY A GANG OF SIX YOUNG
HISPANIC MEN CALLING HIM "FAGGOTT" HOURS LATER , THE SAME NIGHT

(INSERT 7/14) Sebastian ^{Pernice} ([REDACTED]), a friend of Marsha's
who insists he heard Marsha laughing & talking with friends outside
his apartment on Sunday night 7/5, has been one of those diligently
attempting to solve the many mysteries surrounding her death.

He spend several hours on Sunday 7/13 going to the clubs, etc.,
in the area seeking out friends who might have been with Marsha
the previous Sunday evening--people Marsha regularly socialized
with at events on Sunday evenings. His footwork uncovered even
more interesting details. SAT. SUN. BOYZ TOWN - 929-5236

"Paul" who works Friday eves at the Zone DR saw Marsha AFTER
THE FIREWORKS ON JULY 4th at the corner of 21st Street & the West
Side Highway. Marsha was apparently acting in a paranoid and
bizarre manner, complaining that "the Mafia is after me" ..and
"they're (whoever that would be) are putting AIDS in the food."

manages at the Comeback reportedly told Sebastian that the young hookers on
the street "hated" Marsha. If that is true, the chances of foul
play could be higher still.

BY JULY 4th, A PROTECTIVE FENCE HAD BEEN PUT UP BY THE PIER & RIVER WHERE MARSHA'S BODY WAS FOUND TWO DAYS LATER. WE HAVE A VIDEO-TAPED DESCRIPTION OF THAT FINDING & THE VERY PERSON WHO FOUND MARSHA'S BODY INSISTS THAT SHE HAD A BIG HOLE IN HER HEAD. HE SAT WITH MARSHA'S BODY FOR SEVERAL HOURS WAITING FOR THE CORONER TO PICK IT UP..

~~AND~~ A LIVING MEMORIAL TO MARSHA HAS NOW BEEN ERECTED ON THE VERY SPOT MARSHA'S ~~BODY~~ WAS LAID, ^{where layed was} THE BODY OUTLINED WITH BOTTLES, GRASS COVERING ^{the} THE BLOOD STAINS ON THE PAVEMENT, A CROSS, ROASARY, CANDLES & FLOWERS ^{are being} LEFT BY FRIENDS IN REMEMBRANCE.

RANDOM VIOLENCE WAS EPIDEMIC IN THE VILLAGE IN THE DAYS BEFORE JULY 4th AND IN THE DAYS SINCE. A COUPLE NIGHTS BEFORE EDGARDO MEDINA'S BASHING, ANOTHER ATTACK HAD OCCURRED AGAINST ANOTHER GAY VICTIM A FEW BLOCKS AWAY.

WISHFUL THINKING CANNOT STOP VIOLENCE NOR IGNORE THE MOUNTING EVIDENCE THIS EPIDEMIC OF HATE, MAYHEM & MURDER HAS CAST UPON US. ONLY GOOD POLICE WORK & COMMUNITY COOPERATION CAN MAKE OUR STREETS SAFE AGAIN AND BRING PEACE TO OUR COMMUNITY.

VERY LITTLE ON LOCATION INVESTIGATION WAS DONE REGARDING MARSHA'S DEATH. THE FACTS & CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING HER DEATH HAVE BEEN UNEARTHED BY UNPAID VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS & FRIENDS. THE SAD FACT IS THAT THE COMMUNITY HAS HAD TO DO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S JOB FOR THEM.

THE SIXTH PRECINCT, WHICH HAS OPENLY GAY OFFICERS ON ITS FORCE, HAS BEEN EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE & RESPONSIVE IN MANY INSTANCES INVOLVING GAY VICTIMS IN THE VILLAGE. IT IS TIME THAT THE HOMICIDE SQUAD AND/OR THE BIAS INCIDENT INVESTIGATIVE UNIT AT ONE POLICE PLAZA, RM 1307, DID THEIR JOBS AS WELL.

(INSERT 7/14) A delegation from the community, Bea Hanson from the Anti-Violence Project, Marsha's sister Jean Michaels, Out-In-The 90s tv news reporter Bill Bahlman, Esquire & Vanity Fair writer Jerimah Newton ([REDACTED]) & Marsha's roommate Randy Wicker descended on Det. Abreu minutes after his return to duty on Sunday /7/12. In a nearly two hour discussion, tape recorded by Jerimah Newton, Det. Abreu did a credible job of

Jeremiah [REDACTED]

answering some of the questions raised by this group which obviously seriously questioned the police efforts up to that point. Det. Abreu did not have a copy of the autopsy report. But after this meeting, there were several reports that he was out in the field showing Marsha's picture around & trying to get information. He insists that "the case remains open." Det. Abreu [REDACTED]

THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S LISTING "SUICIDE" AS CAUSE OF DEATH ON MARSHA'S DEATH CERTIFICATE HAS ABSOLUTELY NO REAL BASIS IN PROVEABLE FACT. NO NOTES. NO STATEMENTS BY MARSHA TO ANYONE. NO EYEWITNESSES: ONLY A UNIVERSAL CONSENSUS BY EVERY SINGLE PERSON WHO KNEW HER WELL THAT MARSHA WAS ABSOLUTELY INCAPABLE OF INTENTIONAL SELF-DESTRUCTION!!!!

(INSERT 7/14) The death certificate issued by the Medical Examiner's Office listing "suicide" as the cause of death was signed by Zoya Shmutter on July 7, 1992 LESS THAN 24 HOURS AFTER the body was found. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY A CLEAR CUT CASE OF A QUICK, RUSH-TO-JUDGEMENT DECISION THAT WAS DESIGNED TO MAKE A REAL INVESTIGATION OF THE CASE UNNECESSARY!! THIS WAS EVEN BEFORE ANYONE HAD TALKED TO RANDY WICKER, MARSHA'S ROOMMATE & FAMILY.

Case # M-92-5002
Phone #

[REDACTED]

EVEN IN THE NOW APPARENTLY UNLIKELY EVENT THAT MARSHA DID HAVE A MENTAL EPISODE DURING WHICH SHE MIGHT "HAVE WALKED TOWARD DECEASED FRIENDS SHE SAW IN THE RIVER'S WATERS OR FLOATING ON THE CLOUDS ABOVE", SUCH AN EVENT -- A DELUSIONAL PERSON GOING TOWARD IMAGINED SPIRITS -- WOULD MERELY CONSTITUTE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF AN ACCIDENTAL DROWNING.

THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE, THE NYPD, THE CITY OF NEW YORK BELITTLE THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS LOSS OF A NATIONAL TREASURE BY --WITHOUT REAL GROUNDS-- ACCUSING MARSHA OF INTENTIONALLY KILLING HERSELF.

A FEW PHONE CALLS. THE SLOPPY GATHERING OF SPECULATION & GOSSIP. THE CONVENIENT LABEL OF SUICIDE DO NOT HIDE THE FACT THAT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IS NOT DOING ITS JOB!!!

MARSHA'S DEATH SHOULD BE CLASSIFIED AS "C.U. P.P I" -

(Cause Unknown Pending Police Investigation). THE RUSH-TO-JUDGEMENT CONCLUSION OF "SUICIDE" CAUSES MARSHA'S FAMILY EMBARRASSMENT AND MAY ACTUALLY CAUSE THEM FINANCIAL HARM BY CAUSING THE BENEFITS OF A LIFE INSURANCE POLICY THEY'VE HAD ON MARSHA SINCE THE 1960s TO BE DISHONORED .

ANYONE REALLY AWARE OF THE FACTS SURROUNDING MARSHA'S DEATH KNOWS SUICIDE IS AN IMPOSSIBILITY . AND NOW IT IS APPARENT THAT THE REAL CAUSE IS PROBABLY MURDER AND NOT EVEN ACCIDENTAL DROWNING .

NOTHING WAS DONE IN WASHINGTON HEIGHTS UNTIL THE COMMUNITY MARCHED ON THE LOCAL PRECINCT & DEMANDED THEY DO THEIR JOB . DOES THAT HAVE TO HAPPEN IN THE VILLAGE TOO??

THE MEDICAL EXAMINERS OFFICE WILL NOT ALLOW THE FAMILY TO SCRUNTINIZE THEIR RECORDS. A REQUEST HAS TO MADE IN WRITING AND A COPY OF THE REPORT WOULD TAKE 8-10 WEEKS TO COME. THIS IS AN OUTRAGE! OUTRAGE! OUTRAGE! OUTRAGE! OUTRAGE!

UPDATE 7/15/92- 3:30 p.m. Since the death certificate was signed on tuesday 7/7 & Det. Abreu said that the conclusion had been based in part on "conversations with the psychiatrist who had been treating Marsha for depression" The St. Mary Mental Helath Center at 314 Clinton St in Hoboken was visited by Randy Wicker. Sally Davis, assistant director, said any such inquiry would have had to come through her & that their were no calls from the NYC Medical Examiner's Office or the NYPD Dept on 7/7. In fact, until my visit, they did not even know of Malcolm Michaels death. The Executive Director of the Clinic, Michael Swerdlow ([REDACTED]) & Sally Davis explained that they had very strick professional guidelines & that even if such an inquiry had been made, it was against their policy to even confirm that someone was even a client of theirs, much less connecting them to a psychiatrist treating such a person, etc. The stairement, whether based on conjecture or on fact, by Det. Abreu is NOT TRUE. The Medical Examiner's Office is lying if they are making such claims to Det. Abreu and/or us. We know & can prove differently. The question has been raised as to whether or not their really was an autopsy done at all. Why the cover up? Bad professional work and/or no work at all buried under an insult to the memory of Marsha and in the insulting lie on her death certificate that she committed suicide.

To Be Continued -

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update

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SUMMARY OF PROBLEM. LIST OF QUESTIONS. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.

On Wednesday evening, 7/15, the attached updated information sheet containing all last names & phone numbers available, with pertinent passages marked in red, was left for Det. Abreu with Det. Massanova. This was done to assist Det. Abreu in the investigation surrounding Marsha P. Johnson's (Malcolm Michaels Jr.) death.

In the conversation with Det. Massanova, after discovering that Det. Abreu wouldn't be in for a few days, I pointed out the parts marked in red & said that I thought it would be useful to see Conrad regarding those transvestite hookers who supposedly "hated" Marsha.

I also asked if they had a list or anything of those arrested during the July 4th weekend in that area for hooking because they might be able to add details.

In an occasionally emotion^{al} exchange of views (this is a matter very close to me & I do feel very strongly about it all & can get very excited & angry easily) I told them that last time Det. Abreu was away for a few days with no one covering this case it caused me to feel that really nothing was being done & that this was a low priority matter for them.

I had told Det. Abreu on Sunday about my anger at the bartender Veron at the Dugout over his disinterest in helping to poll patrons over who someone named "Louie" from Kearney, NJ. --who reportedly saw Marsha Sunday night 7/5 in the area where the body was found. I told Det. Abreu that I felt like organizing

the people in the park & zapping the Dugout bar but had decided it just wasn't worth the time & effort.

In my conversation with Det. Massanova, I told him that I had come to keep communication lines open, that we had discovered the Medical Examiner had not talked with the psychiatrists treating Marsha, that I was going to make an issue of this to get the cause of death changed from "suicide" to "cause unknown."

At that time, I told Det. Massanova that I feared that the only way to raise that issue effectively was to raise a little hell about the entire matter, that I was going to propose an action at the Queer Nation meeting & if worse came to worse, I'd personally go down to the people's memorial in the park at the end of Christopher Street & organize a march on the 6th precinct.

I had come to understand at that point that the real argument about the cause of death on the certificate was with the Medical Examiner. But their office is way up on 33rd & 1st Ave, is empty & removed on weekends, etc. I admitted, almost apologized for the "situation" which made it necessary to raise the entire matter in front of the 6th Precinct.

This morning, 7/17/ Rev. Karen Ziegler called me to say that Duane Methodist Church had been called by the police & told that I was planning to turn the memorial service THERE next weekend 7/26th into a demonstration against them & a march on the 6th. This caused such alarm that they nearly cancelled the service--which has already been announced in Newsday, a \$400 obit in the NY Times, the NY Native, the Villager & on thousands of small tickets distributed by Marsha's

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friends throughout the community.

On Thursday evening, Dr. Zoya Shmuter, the Dr. who signed the death certificate declaring Marsha's death a suicide called me. (I had left a message earlier for her to please do so.)

She said that her determination of "suicide" had been based on the lack of any evidence of violence on the body & on "the police investigation."

When I explained this matter to her, including the new information & my own culpability in misleading Det. Abreu in the first place, who apparently then, in good faith, misled her, she said: "Well, if Det. Abreu will call me in the next couple days & tell me that he has found new evidence indicating that the cause of death was quite possibly 'accidental' or 'wrongdoing', I will be happy to issue a new death certificate listing the cause of death as 'unknown.'"

Faced with the deadline of a weekly meeting, short notice, & the unavailability of Det. Abreu (till sat)- (I thought he would be back on friday) & also officer Mc Loughlin, who I understand is in charge of "community affairs" before the meeting, I gathered a "Queer Nation working group" to help me leaflet & organize a demonstration at the foot of Christopher Street for THIS SUNDAY 7/19 IF DET. ABREU PROVED UNWILLING TO ACT IN GETTING ZOYA SCHMUTER TO CHANGE THE CAUSE OF DEATH TO UNKNOWN.

If Det. Abreu did help us in that regard, I would cancel the demonstration, leafleting etc. I hope that this will happen. I would rather spend my time chasing down Conrad & seeing what the other transvestites in that area know--than in fighting with the local precinct over this matter.

7/17 - 3:00pm.

UPDATE Friday 7/24/92

Fri 7/24 ⑧

After marching on the Sixth Precinct on Sunday 7/19 only to be met by barricades manned by a couple dozen uniformed officers, a meeting was negotiated through Acting Commanding Officer McShane for Tuesday 7/21 between Det. Abreu, his supervisor Det. Sgt. John Mullally & Commander Kennedy. [REDACTED]

The meeting took place on Tuesday 7/21/92 between Det. Abreu, Sgt. Mullally & gay activist attorney Bill Dobbs, [REDACTED] roommate Randy Wicker, friend John Gray & writer Jeremiah Newton. Commander Kennedy was on vacation caring for a sick relative & could not attend but was briefed about the matter via telephone.

For an hour and half, a frank exchange of views took place. Just before the meeting commenced, City Councilman Tom Duane's office talked with Det. Abreu to convey their concerns about the perception in the community that the investigation had been inadequate & the classification of "suicide" premature.

Sgt. Mullally agreed that persons calling with information should always reach a detective aware of the case & said that if Det. Abreu was not available, persons calling should ask for him--& in the unlikely event neither he nor Det. Abreu were available they should ask for Det. Richardson. This effectively satisfied one of the demands made during Sunday's demonstration for continuous 24-hour 7-day-a-week detective availability.

Det. Abreu, who had earlier indicated a willingness to have "cause unknown" substituted for "suicide" on the death certificate seemed to change course a bit and insisted "more hard factual information" was needed for him to do this.

Bill Dobbs asked for a subsequent meeting involving Sgt. Mullally's superiors, representatives of the Anti-Violence Project, Tom Duane's Office, the Mayor's Office, the Medical Examiner's Office & those concerned about the matter to settle the issues at hand. That is currently being planned.

The next day, on Wednesday 7/22, the Mayor's office of Lesbian & Gay Community affairs (Jan Park) promised to call the Medical Examiner's office "to see what can be done" to get the death certificate with the insult of suicide changed to unknown.

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On Wednesday, an invitation was issued to Mayor Dinkins, schedule permitting, to drop by & say a few words at Marsha P. Johnson's Memorial service on 7/26 at Duane Methodist Church.

Jan Park indicated that he would convey the invitation faxed to the Mayor via their office to the Mayor. While it was unclear if the Mayor would be available himself on such short notice, Mr. Park said he & Marjorie Hill-the director of the Lesbian & Gay Community Affairs office intended to attend & thought they would at least bring a letter of condolence to be read at the service.

On Thursday, ^{Bob Kohler} Christopher Street Merchant (owner of The Loft clothing shop & leader in the Christopher Street Merchant's association) & ^{Home} Susan Lori, a volunteer & longtime friend of Marsha's, decided to use the area between the Stonewall Inn & the Gay Monument in the park--7th Ave to Waverly Place--^{for} which they had successfully obtained a permit to shut off the street for entertainment & a street fair honoring Marsha between the hours of 2:00 to 8:00 p.m.--to host an alternative "open mike" remembrance service for those unable to fit into the church.

The entertainment was originally scheduled to begin at 5:30 so as not to conflict with the memorial service at the church. Now, it was decided that on the march to the river, lead by the Big Apple Corp Band, the group from the church would pass by the Sheridan Square area where those attending the street memorial could join the others in the march to the People's Memorial in the park where Marsha's ashes would be returned to the Hudson river at the exact spot her body was pulled out.

Then, everyone would return to the area in front of the Stonewall for some variety entertainment featuring Drag Queens like Lady Bunny & the sensuous Boy Bar Beauties (luscious go-go boys that Marsha always got off on).

Thursday night, 7/23/92, Randy Wicker appeared before the Christopher Street Merchant Association meeting to propose that Marsha P. Johnson be memorialized by a flagpole erected in her honor at the foot of Christopher Street where a gay flag would fly & a bronze plaque would explain who she was & what she stood for. The idea was warmly received. An hour later, Queer Nation with only one dissenting vote endorsed the Memorial Flagpole Campaign.

Continued ...

Among those attending the Queer Nation meeting at the Gay Community Center was one a transgender person & prostitute named Chelsea ([REDACTED] 5) who although semi-retired remains active in the prostitute rights group PONY.

Chelsea told the meeting of the harrowing facts of life faced by transvestite prostitutes working in the area a few blocks from Marsha was last seen on July 4th. In the area from 13th to 16th streets from the West Side Highway to 8th Ave.

Beatings by both homophobes & police officers--especially those connected with the Sixth Precinct. Murders. Unreported assaults.

Writer Jeremiah Newton & Randy Wicker had taken to the streets in that area on Wednesday evening 7/22 from 9:00 to 10:30 p.m. to "do the job the Detectives aren't doing."

On 13th Street, the first black woman to approach their camper vehicle recognized Marsha's photograph, told them that "this is mainly a drug area, not so much a prostitution area."

Moments later, a police car pulled up behind, its lights flashing. Wicker & Newton explained to Officer Bonaventura what they were doing. Arrogant at first, Officer Bonaventura became more cooperative upon learning of their project--asking that they have the Det. inform them in the future that they would be coming out, saying that they had successfully driven most of the prostitutes from south of 14th St. (6th Precinct) into the 15th, 16th & 17th St. area (10th Precinct) where they were "rounded up now and then in mass" but where their presence as better tolerated.

On 17th Street a few minutes later, while talking to "Shelly" a white transvestite working in a frilly blond wig who knew Marsha well, a 10th Precinct patrol car pulled alongside, was cordial to Wicker & Newton--apparently alerted by the other officers they were headed that way.

They asked "Shelly"--calling him "Ralph" to tell "this tourist from Grand Rapids in the back seat what the scene is down here, how it's different from things further uptown." Obviously, a straight "john" who'd been talking to those he didn't know were anatomically male. Then they left. Shelly described the Mews, a new Jamaican Club on 14th St, as a source of physical abuse, especially on Saturday nights (like July 4th) when it was open...

To be continued.