

# PIGS HELP BEAT QUEEN

by Nick Benton

Another, perhaps subtle but yet real, incident of the police harassment of gays in San Francisco took place early Tuesday morning on Mason Street in front of the bar that openly advertises nude go-go boys.

This writer was walking down Mason shortly after the 2 AM bar-closing hour, and came upon two persons fighting in the sidewalk.

One was a straight, Marine-like male. The other onlookers confirmed was a drag-queen, a smaller Chicano male dressed as a woman. The muscular straight male was kicking and swinging at the drag queen, who was cornered in a doorway.

A cruising police car arrived, and when the police came upon the beating-up scene, the fighting stopped and the drag queen ran shouting to the police.

The police said a couple of words to the straight male, then physically threw the drag queen into the car, and angrily slammed the door. They then began to take notes while interviewing the straight male.

I then walked up to the two police (badge numbers 1308 and either 1944 or 1994) and asked, "Excuse me, but can you explain to me why you threw the one man into the car and not both of them, since they were both fighting?"

Officer 1308 inquired about my interest in what was happening.

"Well," I said, "All I know is that I saw this one guy that you are talking to was beating up and kicking this smaller guy you have thrown in the car, and I'm wondering why you haven't taken them both into custody."

"Did you see the start of the fight?" the officer inquired.

"No," I said, "But neither did you."

"Well," he concluded, "If you don't like the way we are handling this, it's too bad. Now move off the street, you are interfering with our investigation."

Witnesses huddled in the tiny Grubsteak Restaurant openly admitted their fear of "getting involved." They seemed to feel the little drag-queen either deserved it, or was just the victim of bad luck.

But as I tried to explain to some of the brothers in the restaurant how the police had dealt with the situation regardless of who actually started the fight, I found myself sadly confronted with only evasions and fearful stares.

Oppression has been with gays for so long, in so many forms, that it is the predominant gay style of life. Gay liberation seeks to throw off this style of life; and, as we can expect the oppression to be coming down harder and harder, those in the movement are beginning to feel the urgency of their calling.

The Gay Liberation message to gay brothers and sisters everywhere is: "Wake up. Get together. Resist."