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FROM: CHICAGO GAY LIBERATION  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Saturday, April 18, 1970 Chicago Gay Liberation sponsored a "first" for the city of Chicago. Chicago Gay Lib. held the first city-wide gay dance that was not under the protection of any university and was open to all the public. Approximately 2000 people attended a very successful event. Included in the crowd were men and women of Chicago's gay community, many straight couples and singles, members of the Chicago press and lawyers.

Putting on this dance was in no way easy. After Chicago Gay Liberation discovered that the Coliseum was the only suitable location available to them for the dance, the long battle to obtain the right to rent the hall began. Every obstacle imaginable was put in the way of our renting the hall, including the excuse that a religious organization was renting the hall the next day and it would be improper for us to be in there the evening before.

After Gay Lib had an agreement on leasing the hall, the problem

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of insuring the dance became the issue. As it turns out, homosexuals having a dance find themselves as a bad risk. A member of Gay Lib called a broker for the Interstate Fire & Casualty Company and told him that he and some friends were holding a dance: the broker said that that would be fine. Then when Gay Lib brought over a Chicago Gay Liberation check and received a Legal Binder guaranteeing the insurance four days before the dance, the company decided that the Coliseum was not a good risk and they backed out of the agreement. Finally, insurance was obtained from California one day before the dance by the company that covered the Black Muslims in the Coliseum some time ago.

The good, benevolent power people of Chicago having failed in preventing our little dance were now determined not to let us enjoy our victory. Friday afternoon our attorney, Mrs. Renee Hanover, a well known movement lawyer, recieved word through an ACLU attorney from Sergeant Garrity of the Chicago Police Department, Prostitution Division, that the Chicago Gay Liberation dance was going to be busted by the vice squad on charges of public indecency. Our attorney, the ACLU attorneys and many other lawyers felt that this was not only unfair to Chicago's gay community, but also unconstitutional, a violation of our 1st ammendment right to assemble and that there was nothing illegal about two people of

the same sex dancing together. The pressure put on the Chicago Police and the State's Attorney's office prevented a raid at the Coliseum Saturday night on 2000 people who were guilty of only having a good time and dancing with each other.

This dance not only set a social precedent but also a legal precedent that Chicago's gay people have just as much right to dance together as their straight counterparts. The ACLU is now working on a written agreement with the Chicago Police Department that people of the same sex do have the right to dance together in a public place. This precedent will take away the excuses of the gay bar owners of Chicago for not allowing dancing in their establishments.

One of the objectives of Chicago Gay Liberation is to improve the situation of homosexuals in their own gay bars. The Syndicate controlled bars have been oppressive to the gay community by discriminating against women and Blacks, not providing a comfortable place in which to drink and socialize and by not allowing their patrons to dance (with the excuse that they are under pressure of City Hall). By throwing this dance, Gay Lib was attempting to provide an alternative for homosexuals who, because of their position in society, are forced to socialize in these

oppressive bars while bar owners are able to make huge sums of money at the expense of gay people without giving them any benefits in return.

This is only the first dance to be held by Chicago Gay Liberation and we are planning to have many others in our continuing effort to show all people that we are not ashamed of our homosexuality; we are free people and ready to assert our rights.

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