

# 75,000 March in Capital in Drive To Support Homosexual Rights

By JO THOMAS

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 14 — An enthusiastic crowd of at least 75,000 people from around the country paraded through the capital today in a homosexual rights march and gathered afterward on the grounds of the Washington Monument to marvel at their own numbers and to urge passage of legislation to protect the rights of homosexuals.

"Almost 30 years ago I thought I was the only gay person in the world," said the keynote speaker, Betty Santoro, of New York, as she looked out over a sea of banners that proclaimed "Alaska," "Wyoming," "Gay Mormons United."

"There are still gay people who feel alone and isolated," she said. "We are here today because we refuse, we refuse to allow this kind of suffering to continue. Our message is today they need not be alone, not ever again. Our very presence here is living proof we are, indeed, everywhere."

Most of the marchers were young, although all age groups were represented. Most were white, and it appeared that men slightly outnumbered women. Many of the marchers were parents and there much talk about family.

## 'Sharing' and 'Flaunting'

"When a heterosexual person shows a picture of his family, it's called sharing," Robin Tyler, a lesbian feminist comedian told the crowd. "When we show a picture of our lover, it's called flaunting. We want to share."

"We are family," said Howard Wallace, a homosexual activist and candidate for city office in San Francisco. "A new day is coming. It will come so much sooner if we cast out the great authoritarian father figures housed in our minds; if we shed our self-hatred and shame; if we stop assuming that the President, the governor, the mayor, the official, knows better than we."

Estimates of the number of people in the crowd varied. The United States Park Police first put the number at 75,000 but later said between 25,000 and 50,000 showed up. Eric Rofes, an organizer of the march, said he thought there were "more than 100,000."

Speaker after speaker cited an estimate that there were 20 million homosexuals in the United States, a sizable minority group.

The demonstrators and speakers called for legislation to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to protect homosexuals against discrimination. They also have urged that President Carter sign an executive order banning discrimination in the military, civil service and among Government contractors.

While the demonstration was under way, a coalition of ministers met on Capitol Hill to organize a National Day of Prayer on Homosexuality to ask God "to deliver them from their lives of perversion," a spokesman for the group said.

The Rev. Richard Zone, executive director of the religious group, Christian Voice, said that the coalition had asked 40,000 ministers to urge their congregations to petition the President to resist efforts to give homosexuals special consideration under the law.

"God didn't create Adam and Steve, but Adam and Eve," said the Rev. Jerry Falwell, a television evangelist from Lynchburg, Va. He called homosexuality "an outright assault on the family."



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Supporters of equal rights for homosexuals marching down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington.

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