

# TIME FOR CHANGE

by Jason Wheaton

On Sept. 26, in MacLaggen Hall, Mr. Stephen Lewis, Honorary Graduate of UNB and four year ambassador of Canada to the United Nations gave a speech on the condition of our world in the past and its present condition.

An amiable man, who received a warm welcome from over 100 people that were present, he opened his speech with a few jokes to lighten the mood. He then explained why our world was in turmoil during the years of 1983 to 1987.

He passionately stated that the UN had a sense of failure as the Superpowers Arms Race went out of control. To make things worse former American President Ronald Reagan was cutting funding to the UN. This left the UN with much anger towards the US.

But from 1987 - 89 things changed. Lewis heaped praise on Gorbachev and George Bush. The world stepped forward towards peace and the US was taking new actions to support the UN.

But at the same time, the world economy fell into disrepair, such that now, there exists a chasm between the developed and developing world which is growing larger. The only people holding up their end in foreign



aid are countries like Switzerland, Sweden, Holland, Canada and the US foreign aid is actually dropping. "It's a disgrace," claimed Lewis.

"We need these countries economically sound or we'll destroy our own planet." He continued that if we do not aid these countries they will continue using methods that are dangerous to our environment for survival.

Using a quote from Dr. Suzuki, Lewis reinforced this claim. "Without the international community coming together to aid these countries, the world will hit a major disaster. The world as we know it will be gone by the year 2050."

He concluded his lecture by describing how Canada is needed in worldly affairs. "We are the one country with peace bred into us." Canadians are respected worldwide, he argued, and our ambassadors are all well-linked with other countries. "If Canada would take a solid unmoving stand most countries would follow," stated Lewis, "But, we are pressured by the US not to." He assaulted US policies for their greedy motives and disruption of international aid.

After a brief question period the lecture ended with everyone on the edge of their seats clapping, ready to give Lewis a standing ovation.



ATLANTIC HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

By Melynda Jarratt

Faith constitutes an important aspect of life in a socially and culturally pluralistic society such as ours. As such, faith is an important part of cultural pluralism and is a potential force of Canadian unity. However, issues of faith and culture can sometimes lead to problems among groups. How they deal with these problems and solutions to them are the focus of a national symposium on interfaith and multiculturalism that will be held from October 26-28, 1989 under the auspices of the Atlantic Human Rights Centre at St. Thomas University.

Dr. Abdul Lodhi, Director of the AHRC said the purpose of the symposium is to develop a Canadian Code of Etiquette for our multicultural and multi-faith society. He points out the symposium will try to bridge the gap of understanding among different cultural and faith groups through workshops and lecture sessions over the two and a half day conference.

Dr. Lodhi concedes that contentious issues do arise among groups practicing different faiths because they do not

understand the form of devotion or the cultural practices of others. Seemingly innocent cultural behaviours can be misconstrued and lead to tensions between groups.

"Freedom of expression, for example, which we in the West hold as a principle basis of constitutional rights can offend some religious groups, as the Salman Rushdie controversy has proven this past year."

Lodhi said the symposium will also provide a forum for discussion of interfaith issues. "Interfaith conversation such as this symposium is necessary to promote peace and social justice through understanding and mutual respect, which are the essential virtues in a multicultural society."

He points out that the presentation of ideas at the symposium in an atmosphere of scholarly discussion will increase our understanding of diverse beliefs and practices. He adds it will also help identify research priorities in the area of interfaith awareness and education.



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