

## Gay YUPPIES meet in Metro

By ELIZABETH DONOVAN

OFFERING MUTUAL SUPPORT and an accepting environment, Atlantic gay and lesbian professionals from social, health and human services met for the first time in Halifax on March 30-31.

Sitting in a circle sharing "coming out" anecdotes, social workers, lawyers, nurses, and school teachers spoke of the fear, anger and hope when working in a predominantly homophobic work environment.

"It makes a difference if you can come out to your co-workers and boss. People take it for granted they can talk about their relationships. For many gay and lesbian professionals that support system is not there," says Ken Belanger, a social worker for gay and lesbian clients.

It's this lack of support and separateness that inspired Belanger to look into the possibility of an Atlantic Gay and Lesbian seminar. By January the possibility became a reality. Co-ordinated with Susan Bailey, the seminar was attended by 14 interested individuals from both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. "This idea of this seminar was to break the isolation (amongst gay and lesbian professionals in human services) and to move away from our own closets," says Belanger.

Testimonies from seminar participants echoed Belanger's concern. For many gay and lesbian professionals the decision about whether to come out to co-workers and employers was complicated by fear of the concrete

consequences.

"I fear that my job security will be threatened as well as future job prospects because of the possibility of poor references," says one school teacher.

And for those who choose to come out, often the stakes seem high. Many fear a negative or homophobic reaction from co-workers or clients.

"When I told my boss I was a lesbian she said if she had known before I got my job, she wouldn't have hired me," says one correctional worker.

Despite these homophobic reactions from colleagues, some professionals who did not hide their sexual orientation have had positive outcomes.

"Every one at work knows I'm gay; both co-workers and clients and everybody is cool about it. It really makes a difference if you can be out in your job," says another social worker.

An area of frustration for gay and lesbian professionals is an inability or refusal by agencies to address the needs of gay and lesbian clients. For the most part agencies' policies and laws do not take into account gay and lesbian relationships, making this clientele virtually invisible.

It's this invisibility that the Atlantic gay and lesbian professionals see a need to change through public education and greater access to information about gay-positive groups, professionals and services.

Although it is too early yet for Atlantic gay and lesbian professionals to establish goals, the group will be meeting again in May.

## Algonquin council picks on Muslims & newspaper

OTTAWA (CUP)—The Algonquin College student council has denied club space to a group of Muslim students on campus by changing the locks on their office door and removing their name from a mailbox.

The council has also poked fun of the Muslim religion in the council controlled student newspaper, *Impact*.

Abad Ghemraoui, president of the group of Muslim students who banded together to form an association, says the group received official recognition from the council in January but arrived at the office last week to find the changed locks and missing nameplate.

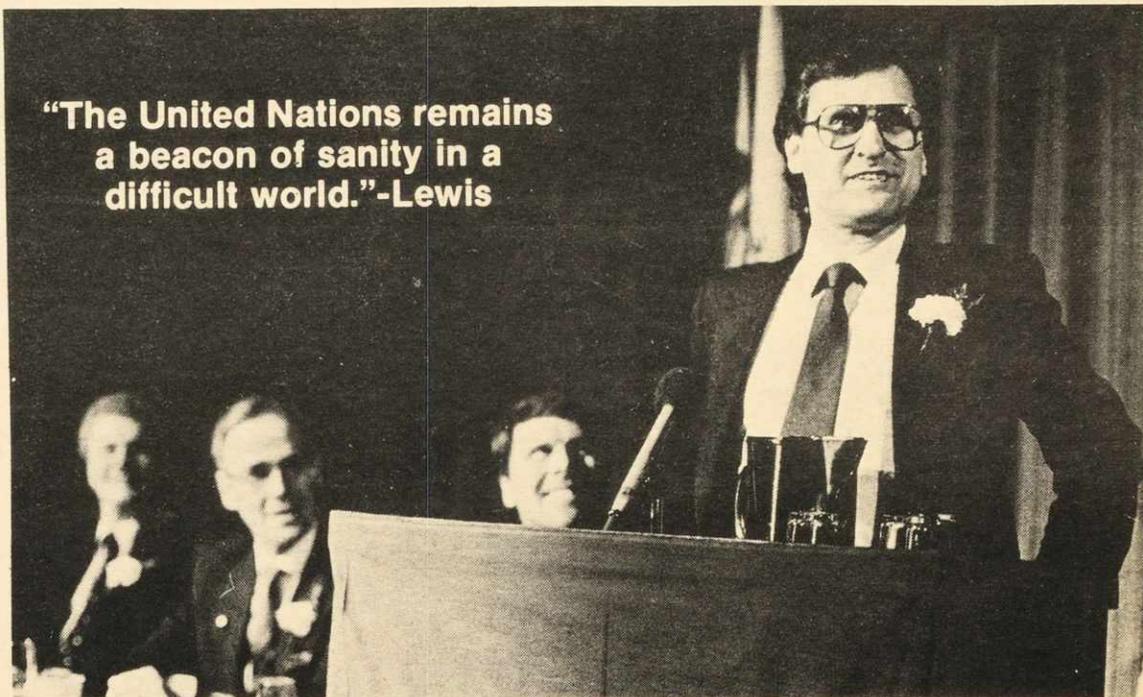
Student council president Daniel Carriere says there has been no change in council policy. "It's just that they aren't a club yet."

Ghemraoui, however, says the council changed the rules to deny the Muslim club status.

Ghemraoui says the group is enraged by degrading comments in the newspaper, which ran a photo of a Muslim student in a traditional Islamic prayer position (kneeling, head bowed forward to the ground) with the caption: "Has he converted to Islam? No, he's just lost his contact lens."

Ghemraoui says the caption is not humorous and that council's actions amount to religious discrimination. Muslims on campus, he says, will not take this abuse.

The same Algonquin College student council, led by Carriere, shut down the school's democratically run student newspaper by changing the locks on its office doors and firing the staff last October. It has adamantly opposed a free press on campus ever since, choosing instead to fund a paper over which they have total financial and editorial control.



"The United Nations remains a beacon of sanity in a difficult world."—Lewis

More than 300 people shelled out \$28 each for baked chicken and Stephen Lewis. Lewis (not a baked chicken but the Canadian ambassador to the UN) spoke at a fundraising dinner (of baked chicken) in the McInnis Room (and not at Colonel Saunders) on March 28 (a date that has absolutely nothing to do with chickens). Photo: John (non-chicken) Davie, Dal Photo.

## Lewis learns to like Tories

By DAVID OLIE

A MASTER OF DIPLOMATY—the unofficial tongue of United Nations ambassadors—Stephen Lewis makes no apologies for his employer—the Conservative government.

Lewis, Canadian Ambassador and permanent representative to the UN, spoke to a gathering of about 300 UN supporters in the McInnes Room of the SUB on March 28.

Lewis was named to the UN post on Oct. 5 of last year, as one of the first appointments made by the new Progressive Conservative federal government. The appointment of Lewis came as a surprise to most observers, as he had been a long-time member of the Ontario legislature and leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party.

Lewis says he rejects the idea that he has compromised his political beliefs in accepting a job from the Conservatives.

"I beg you to remember my socialist roots," he says. Though he says he's "learned to like Tories," he also says the most important thing is that he "loves the job."

Both ignored and ridiculed, the United Nations has as many critics as supporters. And if Stephen Lewis has his way, that will change, especially where Canada is concerned.

Lewis says he has "little time" for "the detractors of the UN." Though he admits the work of the organization can sometimes become bogged down in bureaucracy and ideological wrangling, he says "it still doesn't begin to undermine the basic utility of the UN."

The ambassador points out the work done by the specialized organizations of the UN.

"UNICEF saves the lives of 400,000 children every blessed year," says Lewis. "For the

detractors, for the witless critics, it is necessary to remind them of the lives saved by UNICEF."

Lewis says he is also very proud of the efforts made by the UN to relieve the current famine in Africa.

"When historians write about the U.N. 20 years from now, they will say, 'This was their finest hour,'" says Lewis.

Lewis defends the new government's record in the UN during the last six months. He says the recent closer ties with the United States has not led to Canada becoming a puppet of the superpower.

Lewis says that out of 60 recent resolutions on disarmament in the General Assembly, 20 recorded different votes between Canada and the US.

"It has been possible to give expression to a different political ethos from that of the US," Lewis says.

Lewis is also critical of the US

pulling funding out of UNESCO. Though he admits UNESCO has been poorly administered under its current chair, Mr. M'Bow of Senegal, who Lewis calls "an incipient egomaniac," he says the agency can still serve a useful function.

"There are several western nations considering following the US," says Lewis, including the United Kingdom, which will be pulling out of UNESCO at the beginning of 1986. Despite this, Lewis says "Canada is working from within" to reform the agency.

Lewis was the guest speaker at a fund raising dinner for the Dal-King's model United Nations Society.

The funds raised at the \$28-a-plate dinner have been used to send 26 students to the National Model United Nations Conference in New York.

Dal/King's students are representing Grenada, Barbados and St. Lucia at the conference.

## Robbie Shaw reverses decision to leave Dal

By JONATHAN PLYMOUTH

DALHOUSIE ADMINISTRATION has announced that L. Robbie Shaw, vice-president for finance and development, will continue in his position until June, 1987.

The news came as a surprise, as Shaw had announced Dec. 16 that he would be leaving the position this summer, six months before his term was scheduled to expire.

Shaw has not yet explained his reasons for staying on.

Shaw says he welcomes the opportunity to restate his commitment "to the university, to the present administration and to the student body and staff of Dalhousie."

Shaw plans to devote increasing efforts to the Campaign for Dalhousie during the remainder of his term. The campaign is a programme of the administration to increase private funding for the university.