

# York has Canada's only homophile course

Over 14 percent of today's population is considered homosexual. Roger Wilkes, president of York's Homophile Association and a graduate student in the faculty of environmental studies recounts some of the difficulties he had trying to gain its recognition at York.

By ROGER WILKES

During the 1970-71 academic year, Excalibur championed the cause of sociology students who were endeavoring to inject greater Canadian content into their course offerings by petitioning for a course dealing with the Canadian Indian.

Eventually, this demand was met by the institution of a full-year credit course within the sociology department dealing with the problems of the Canadian Indian. York's Homophile Association, while not in any way denigrating the validity of presenting such a course, realized that the homophile population

represents a far larger proportion of the Canadian population than the native Indian, and that the sole treatment of homosexuality at York consisted of a six-week segment within a first-year Social Science course entitled "Society and the Deviant."

Representations to the sociology chairman John O'Neill failed to elicit support for the idea of at least a half-course devoted to the problems of the homosexual citizen in Canadian society. Reasons for the rejection included: "too specialized an area," "not enough student interest," "no one qualified to teach the course," "the present course set-up provides adequate opportunity to discuss (dismiss?) this topic."

Another avenue was provided by York's college system which required all first-year students to enrol in a non-graded credit tutorial arranged by the individual college of which that student is a member. These tutorials are not

bound by any academic department and cover an extremely broad spectrum of subjects. A rationale for the inclusion of a tutorial in homophile studies and a tentative list of topics for discussion was presented to each of York's seven colleges. Six colleges rejected the proposal, all loudly disclaiming the controversial nature of homosexuality as the reason for rejection. The seventh, College G, in its first year of existence and in an experimental frame of mind, endorsed the idea and accepted me as the tutorial leader.

The tutorial is now off the ground with 10 students enrolled (the maximum number allowed). Initial meetings have attempted to introduce the students to the subject with a multi-disciplinary approach which included several guest speakers, graduate students involved in research dealing with sexual orientation. Discussion throughout the year will attempt to break down the mind-set

of homosexuality as a strange, isolated socio-psychological phenomenon.

The effort required on the part of the student to view the homosexually oriented person as a functioning member of a minority group within society, rather than as a case study in deviancy, will involve many other important issues: the manifestations of subculture, the efforts of a minority to gain equality of civil rights, alienation, non-conformity, life-styles and the search for self-fulfillment, the interaction of heredity and environment, the place of free will, societal change, the origin and consequences of stereotyping, education in the face of traditional taboos. Each participant in the tutorial will be expected to investigate a specific topic using "real world" research techniques as well as the more detached bibliographic study.

## Ontario elections losers — Stephen Lewis and Pierre Trudeau

By THE LAST POST

There is a traditional truce that allows the ruling Liberals in Ottawa and the ruling Conservatives in Queen's Park to work together to prevent any opening to the left — but the magnitude of the Tory sweep in last Thursday's Ontario election gave little comfort to Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

The truce was in effect as strongly as ever in this campaign, which initially held out the promise of substantial gains for the New Democratic Party.

But what actually happened, so far from being an opening to the left, was a sizeable swing to the right. Both the Liberals and, to a lesser extent, the New Democratic Party lost seats to the triumphant Tories; the New Democrats increased their popular vote slightly (at the expense of the Liberals), but not nearly as much as they had hoped for.

This had little to do with issues discussed during the campaign, to the extent that there were any issues discussed during the campaign.

Davis had begun with a Trudeau-style no-promises campaign; although he relented in the last week and pledged a three-per cent tax cut, a Tory vote was a vote for little more than a continuation of the kind of government Ontario had now had for 28 years.

As the deep-blue Ottawa Journal put it, "shrewd, careful old Ontario was certainly not going to be lured from tried and true men and policies by an unreasoned cry that it was 'time for a change.'" No, indeed.

On election night, Davis appeared at his campaign headquarters in Brampton, in the western wing of the lush exurban sprawl that fans out from Metro Toronto, his wife and five children at his side, the picture of stability. It was the image that had been projected successfully by the multi-million-dollar Tory campaign; the leaders of the other parties said the voters had been conned.

But there were reasons why the safe, hard-rock image had been such a big seller. For if there were no issues in the campaign, there were strong undercurrents.

One was the latent Protestant-Catholic divergence that is still a factor in Ontario politics and that Davis injected into the campaign through the separate schools issue.

Davis' move to withdraw government aid from separate schools for the senior high-school grades was less important in itself than for what it represented.

Each party was able to express its position on separate schools in terms of freedom, democracy, equality and natural justice and the issue aroused little debate during the campaign.

But it was nevertheless a factor leading a substantial number of people to switch their votes, in some cases away from the Tories, in many more cases in their favor.

To voters, Davis emerged as a man



Loser Stephen Lewis.

who would stand up to the Catholics. His victory bodes ill for the advancement in English Canada of the hated bilingualism, and for the increasing presence in high places of French Canadians — policies particularly identified with Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

A second undercurrent dealt with the uncertainties caused by the changes in Canada's relations with the outside world, and particularly the United States.

Ontario's Americanized economy was one issue that singularly failed to take root; the only statement of Davis' on the question that attracted any public attention was his identification of the interests of the U.S. with those of Ontario soon after becoming Conservative leader last March.

Nor did the other party leaders succeed in making American control a major issue in the campaign. The instance of American intervention that caused the biggest stir was the revelation that the Tories had employed a Detroit polling outfit during the campaign.

Davis repeatedly refused to deal with the question of U.S. president Richard Nixon's New Economic Policy, saying that it was the responsibility of Trudeau's federal government.

And Trudeau, meanwhile, was busy entertaining Premier Alexei Kosygin of the Soviet Union, who was regaling his

audience in Ottawa's Rideau Club with a strong denunciation of American economic policies.

Just how Trudeau's move away from exclusive dependence on the American connection will work out has not yet been settled, and Ontario voters are vaguely uneasy. On top of that, the large Eastern European population in the province is unhappy about the PM's flirtation with the Soviet Union. As one observer said, "Richard Nixon won this election and Alexei Kosygin lost it."

Charles Taylor, the political science professor who has several times run unsuccessfully as an NDP federal candidate in the Montreal area, noted the depth of anti-Trudeau feeling in the province. "The first thing that happened is that the Liberal vote collapsed," he said. "The second thing that happened is that we failed to pick it up. Ontario voted against Trudeau and for stability."

The third undercurrent is economic. Ontario is a province that has not yet experienced the reality of widespread economic hardship, but is faced with the possibility that it will happen in the not too distant future.

September's seasonally-adjusted unemployment in Ontario was 5.6 per cent, an increase of 0.6 per cent since the Nixon surcharge was announced in August — too high, but considerably less than the Canadian average of 7.1 per cent. By contrast, in the Atlantic

provinces the rate went up 0.9 per cent to 10.3 per cent, and in Quebec it went up 1.1 per cent to 9.3 per cent.

There have been factory shutdowns here and there in the province, mostly of American-owned branch plants, and layoffs at General Motors and elsewhere. Something is happening; the voters are not quite sure what it is; they are neither disillusioned enough to cast a massive protest vote nor secure enough to take a chance.

For the NDP, the result means that some long-accepted truths will have to be re-examined.

The door-to-door canvass technique that is a staple of all NDP campaigns seems to have produced some results; the most successful constituencies for the NDP, like Ottawa Centre where candidate Mike Cassidy won by 200 votes in what had previously been a dry area for the party or Dovercourt in central Toronto where Stephen Penner came within 50 votes of winning in equally unpromising territory, were also among the most heavily canvassed.

But the other major element of the campaign, Stephen Lewis' leadership, is already coming under serious scrutiny.

Jim Laxer, who ran unsuccessfully as the Waffle candidate for the party's federal leadership against Stephen's father David last April, agreed that Stephen Lewis tried to sell conservative and moderate social democracy and failed because he did not fight on a socialist platform, whereas in ridings where the Waffle fought a campaign on an avowedly socialist stance it actually gained a surprising number of votes.

The NDP lost because it was not a significant alternative. Where it was, it made impressive gains. Lewis was more scared of socialism than a lot of voters."

The worst shock of the night came when the NDP lost the United Auto Workers bastion of Oshawa. Dennis McDermott, Canadian District Chief for the UAW, could only blame the people. They were "naive", "unsophisticated", and "it seems that the farmers of Saskatchewan know better where it's at than the people of Ontario."

The major significance of the election within the NDP itself is unspoken so far, but obvious; Stephen Lewis, who even in his own seat won by less than 400 votes, is politically ruined. He led the party to defeat, with fewer seats than it had before dissolution. His worst enemies, the Waffle, which ran campaigns without any support from the NDP establishment, made great gains. The lesson will not be lost at the next convention of the provincial NDP. There's a good chance now that the Waffle, which got around 30 per cent of the votes at the last convention, can push it up to 50 per cent and take over the Ontario party.

And after the Ontario party, the federal party is not far out of reach.

If the NDP establishment is going to try to crush the Waffle, it will do it now.