

CUP Briefs

Elite club of one

ST. JOHN'S (CUP) — Gay and lesbian rights activists want sexual orientation clauses included in all provincial human rights codes.

Federal MP Svend Robinson joined a St. John's gay and lesbian march March 17 calling for the inclusion of such a clause in Newfoundland's human rights code.

"Many people don't understand that it is legal in Newfoundland today to fire someone from their job, to throw them out of their homes, to deny them access to goods and services, solely because they happen to be lesbian or gay," Robinson said.

The clause would prevent discrimination of lesbians, gays and bisexuals, based on their sexual preference.

Québec, Ontario, Manitoba and the Yukon Territory currently have the sexual orientation clause in their human rights codes.

Brenda Ponic of Gays and Lesbians Together said Newfoundland Justice Minister Paul Dick told CBC's On The Go that he was not certain that a sexual orientation clause was necessary. Dick also said he had not had any specific examples cited to him of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Robinson denied that lesbians, gay men and bisexuals were looking for any special rights, and called the campaign a "campaign for equality."

He also talked about the lack of openly-gay political representatives, and the reasons for it. He said he, as the only openly-gay M.P. in Canada, belonged to an "elite club."

Education control

HALIFAX (CUP) — Over a century after it was created to help exterminate the culture of Canada's aboriginal people, the Indian Affairs department is alive and well. And so is its trademark paternalism, say some First Nations educators.

"They seem so afraid of native self-determination, they're still not letting us take control of education," says Mi'kmaq Shirley Mitchell, director of the education centre at the Millbrook reserve in central Nova Scotia.

Officials of the department, now known as Indian Affairs and Northern Development, insist they are moving toward native control of education. Department figures show that bands control 75 per cent of the estimated \$184 million to be spent on post-secondary education this academic year. But Mitchell and others beg to differ.

"Although we're known in government terms as a band-controlled program, we control nothing," says Kathy Knockwood, education director for six Mi'kmaq bands in Nova Scotia.

Despite limited autonomy and funding, Knockwood feels the program she helps run has been a success. With an education counsellor based in Halifax and on each reserve, students have a much better chance of coping in an often-alien university environment. When Indian Affairs last controlled funding four years ago, there were six Mi'kmaq graduates. This year, Knockwood has her sights set on 38.

The Assembly of First Nations has identified aboriginal control of education as vital to the revival of aboriginal culture and the attainment of self-determination.

Safe sex continues

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Another student newspaper in Canada is under attack after running a controversial safe-sex article.

The student council at Douglas College voted overwhelmingly in favour of disassociating itself from "many of the items printed in the March 14 issue of the *Other Press*" at its March 18 meeting. It also condemned the issue as "inappropriate."

Several members of the council executive are also reportedly encouraging a petition drive that asks students what they "want to do with the *Other Press*." Most of the responses thus far ask for the paper to be shut down.

The *Other Press* is under fire for reprinting an article in its Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual supplement from the student paper of Newfoundland's Memorial University, the *Muse*. The article includes graphic language and sexually explicit descriptions of sexual activity in order to eroticize safer sex. The *Other Press* reprinted the piece with a graphic of two gay men embracing.

Many student newspapers that have run the *Muse's* article across Canada have been taken over or shut down by their student governments.

"Do you think that a newspaper has the right to print this sick material and leave it in a public concourse where kids can pick it up and read it?" said Andrew Burton, external vice-president of the student council. "It's not a matter of homophobia... it's the fact that this sort of thing is not appropriate. This is a paper that goes out to the community."

NEWS

B.C.'s newest export

Water free trading

by Paul Webster

Water may soon become a prime Canadian export commodity, if Snowcap Water Ltd. President Fred Paley has his way. Paley, who operates out of Union Bay on the B.C. coast, has been negotiating with Santa Barbara California officials for a contract to sell them 7500 acre feet of water a year. An acre foot is the amount of water which covers one acre of water to a depth of one foot.

"I'm not surprised that water is starting to be seen as an export commodity. Many businesspeople see water the same way they see other elements of the ecosystem, like trees—its something else to package and sell" says Lois Corbett of the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax.

Selling water, according to many environmentalists and business analysts, will emerge as yet another big environmental issue in Canada over the next decade. The recent B.C. Government decision to place a freeze on further export contracts to California has already touched off heated protest from Paley and his competitors at Western Canada

Water. The B.C. Government has established a review committee to investigate fresh water exports with respect to free trade, government royalties and environmental impacts.

Closer to home, Corbett points out that access to fresh water is a crucial issue in the conflict between the Nova Scotia Power Corporation and Cape Bretoners who are watching their wells dry up as the Point Aconi Hydro Project is built on Boularderie Island. "The industrial complex in Cape Breton, particularly with Point Aconi, has priority access rights to water. Consequently people's wells are drying up just because of construction. Industry is getting water before people" Corbett says. She adds that the Project will consume vastly more water once it comes on line.

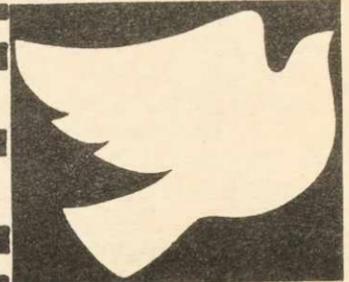
In Saskatchewan, water rights have become a crucial element of the controversy over the Rafferty Alameda dam. The Rawson Academy of Aquatic Science has submitted a report to the Project's environmental assessment panel stating that the Saskatchewan Government gave away vital con-

trol over fresh water from the Souris River in its backroom, secretive negotiations with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Corbett points out that water rights, and the controversy over the use of water as a commodity began attracting concern during the acrimonious Free Trade Debate in 1987-88. "I saw the progression of environmentalists getting involved in the Free Trade Debate. It was a big thing to see the environmentalists getting involved in "economic" debates. They became involved because water is on the trade agenda. Even the most mainstream environmentalists felt that water must not be treated as a resource commodity."

"Water," Corbett insists, "should not be bought and sold. I wouldn't deny anyone access to water who needs it to survive. But when industry and population in Southern California have mistreated the resource as badly as they have around L.A., Canadians should not respond by turning a precious part of the ecosystem into an export commodity. Its up to the Americans to use their own resources sanely."

PEACE



by Mary Jane Hamilton

The opening ceremony for the Peace Centre on Gottingen Street was held on March 14.

"The Peace Centre was established... for people who desire peace and want to work for positive social change," said Peter Davison, a founding member of the Metro Peace Action Network.

Nine-year-old Kayle Levey-Purdy lit a candle, the universal symbol of hope, at the ceremony to symbolize the peace flame which is sent around the world by Hiroshima-Nagasaki in hope that no one else will suffer as they did, Davison said.

Emily Levey-Purdy sang "Piece the World Together" as people placed symbols of their own personal peace for the world on the table at the Centre. These objects included: paper cranes, bread, perspective magazine, the peace symbol, a children's drawing, significant jewellery, and a rock.

"We live in an extraordinarily violent society," Davison said. "We, as a society, have not turned our heads around to the concept of war as an illegitimate means of solving conflicts."

The Centre houses a wide variety of things. The resource centre contains information on everything from violence against women and children's war toys, to naval nuclear weapons, and Canada's sales of weapon's grade uranium, says Davison.

The Centre also offers brochures, T-shirts, and a children's centre for play.

As a result of the conflicts which began in the Middle East in November, a group of concerned citizens formed the Metro Peace Action Network. As they worked on to promote peace, they realized the need for a permanent facility.

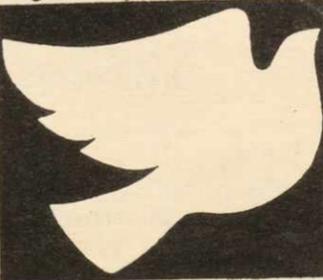
Volunteers staff the Centre which is open from 1-4 p.m. Tuesdays to Saturdays, and 1-7 p.m. Thursdays.

The Centre was made possible through donations, mostly from the public and various organizations. A computer was donated by the Pearson Institute at Dalhousie University.

Davison said the Centre is open for anyone who would like to meet and plan their meetings. There is a speaker's bureau with a speaker's list for such issues as censorship in the media, nuclear weapons in Halifax harbour, peace education, women's issues (and peace) and men and violence.

There is a Third Thursday Workshop Series which occurs at the Peace Centre on 2164 Gottingen Street every third Thursday of the month. The workshops deal with issues of peace. Admission is free. The phone number at the Centre is 422-1931.

An Events Hotline was put in place during the Persian Gulf conflict and is still functional at 435-6165.



CENTRE